



District 6 Planning Council

Saint Paul's North End

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Saint Paul City Council President Russ Stark,
Councilmembers Amy Brendmoen, Dai Thao, Rebecca Noecker, Jane Prince, Dan Bostrom, Chris Tolbert:

District 6 Planning Council met on September 5, 2017, and discussed the proposed amendments to chapter 324: banning menthol-type tobacco products from being sold in stores other than tobacco shops.

No one denies smoking negatively affects an individual's health and is a public health hazard. No one wants their children to smoke. We know that most people who become addicted to cigarettes begin smoking in their teenage years. We also know tobacco companies target marketing of menthol products to youth and communities of color.

It is difficult to oppose any measure attempting to decrease the number of youth who smoke; however, we are not convinced this ordinance would accomplish that goal. Data show measures such as increasing the cost of cigarettes and raising the legal age to purchase tobacco are effective strategies to decrease youth smoking. Anything short of this would seem to punish businesses, especially small businesses, that are currently selling a product legally and would incentivize the expansion of tobacco shops to take advantage of this ordinance. Considering these factors, we cannot support the proposed ordinance in its current form.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Rich Holst

Rich Holst
Chair, District 6 Planning Council