

From: [Morgan Hamernik](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Comment on proposed smoking ordinance
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 12:04:02 PM

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Councilmembers,

I recently moved to the Payne-Phalen neighborhood in Ward 5, and have loved walking the trails around Lake Phalen, Round Lake, and Keller Lake. The green space is an invaluable part of our neighborhood. It would be a shame if our city's smoking policy hindered mine and my neighbors' access to these healthy, outdoor community spaces.

I understand the intention behind limiting smoking to youth activity areas, but doing so wouldn't protect kids completely. Kids don't solely use playgrounds or athletic areas at parks; they ride their bikes on the trails, get pushed around in strollers, and have birthday parties under the pavilions, among other things. Per Minn. Stat. § 342.09(b)(9), an individual may not smoke or vape cannabis where the smoke or vapor may be inhaled by a minor. If kids can access the entirety of a park, shouldn't they be protected wherever they play?

Children aren't the only group that deserve protection from secondhand smoke, either. What about my elderly neighbors, my neighbors in recovery, my neighbors who just want to get some fresh air? Someone's choice to smoke shouldn't take away our ability to breathe clean air.

Saint Paul must lead by example. All of the media attention around this ordinance puts the city in a unique position to make the right choice for public health and inspire other communities to do the same. We must avoid the normalization of any kind of substance use by keeping our parks smoke free.

The ["About Saint Paul" page](#) of the city's website claims "The sights, sounds, and aromas [of Saint Paul] are the breath of our unique, charming old neighborhoods." Can that be true if we greet our residents and visitors with the aromas (and health effects) of secondhand smoke and undermine one's ability to breathe in places that are meant to be safe, fun, and healthy?

Thank you,
Morgan Hamernik

From: [Mary Zanmiller](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Smoking Ban
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 11:42:25 AM

Dear Mayor Carter and Council Members Balenger, Noecker, Tolbert, Jalali, Brendmoen, Yang, and Prince,

I speak for a ban on smoking, of any substance, on, or near, public spaces.

Entities that allow smoking, of any substance, on public property assume financial responsibility for future adverse health outcomes for individuals and groups. Taxpayers and the insurers of said entities stand passively by and assume this financial liability. Scientific research has determined the health risks of smoking of any substance and of second hand smoke. We must not burden people with health risks and the financial burden of our current decisions.

Please maintain current smoking restrictions and explicitly ban marijuana use in, or near, public parks and other public space.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mary C. Zanmiller
Ward 2
St. Paul, MN

From: [Katie Engman](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#); [*CI-StPaul_Mayor](#)
Cc: [Catherine Graeve \(cugraeve897@stkate.edu\)](mailto:cugraeve897@stkate.edu)
Subject: Letter of Support: Smoke Free Public Places
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 9:44:31 AM
Attachments: [St. Paul outdoor air LOS MCA.pdf](#)

Please accept the attached letter on behalf of the Minnesota Cancer Alliance.

Thank you,

Katie H. Engman, MCHES
MCA Policy Committee- Co-Chair.



Sept 12, 2023

St. Paul City Council
50 West Kellogg Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Saint Paul City Councilmembers and Mayor Carter,

The Minnesota Cancer Alliance (MCA) strongly supports the proposed ordinance that would prohibit smoking in Saint Paul public parks and certain other public spaces. We urge you to move forward with this ordinance.

The MCA is a coalition of over 100 organizations dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer through prevention and detection, treatment, survivorship and end-of-life care. Our members include Fairview Health Services, the Masonic Cancer Center at the U of M, the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center, Health Partners, Medica, Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN and the MN Medical Association.

We support this ordinance because of the very strong prevention message it sends. We know that normalizing harmful behavior leads to more of that behavior. If youth are surrounded by people smoking/vaping, they think it is OK and something to look forward to when they grow up. People who are supported by a clear public policy that states that smoking in public places, whether that be a grocery store, airplane or park, are much more likely to advocate for their own needs and their own protection. Ordinances that cover the entire area send a clear prevention message and save lives.

Secondhand smoke is harmful to all regardless of race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Research shows our most vulnerable are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke. Smoke-free outdoor spaces are an necessary for all residents to live healthy lives. St. Paul leaders done fabulous work to protect all Minnesotans from secondhand smoke in public spaces, and they expect and deserve it.

Smoke-free spaces are essential in prevention.

Sincerely,

Sarah Manes
Chair, Minnesota Cancer Alliance Steering Committee

2023 STEERING COMMITTEE

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Global Liver Institute

VICE CHAIR: Sumedha Penheiter, PhD
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Colon Cancer Coalition

Melanie Peterson-Hickey, PhD
Minnesota Department of Health

Ashley Pohlenz, MPH
University of Minnesota – Masonic Cancer
Center

Kathy Scheid
Elder Network

Fsha Seth MPH

From: [Elyse Less](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Letter in support of proposed policy to prohibit smoking in all St. Paul parks
Date: Monday, September 11, 2023 6:32:15 PM
Attachments: [TFA LOS St. Paul 9 11 23.pdf](#)

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Dear members of the St. Paul City Council:

Attached please find Tobacco-Free Alliance's letter in support of the proposed ordinance that would prohibit smoking of tobacco, cannabis, and hemp products in all St. Paul parks.

Sincerely,

Elyse Less

Elyse Levine Less, JD, MPH *She/her*
Executive Director, Tobacco-Free Alliance
Office: 651-379-0196 Cell: 651-592-6061



September 11, 2023



Re: Letter in support of smoke-free St. Paul parks

Dear members of the St. Paul City Council:

I am writing on behalf of Tobacco-Free Alliance to express our support for the proposed ordinance that would prohibit smoking of tobacco, cannabis, and hemp products in all St. Paul parks. The Tobacco-Free Alliance is a nonprofit organization located in St. Paul, working in the Twin Cities to prevent youth from using commercial tobacco and to prioritize communities adversely affected by industry marketing and health disparities.

The City of St. Paul has long been at the forefront of implementing tobacco prevention policies to protect its residents, especially our children. St. Paul's parks are treasured communal spaces for everyone – children, families, individuals with respiratory conditions like asthma, the elderly, and those who simply wish to enjoy the outdoors without inhaling secondhand smoke, whether it be from cigarettes, vaping, or cannabis.

It is essential to recognize that restricting the use of these substances solely to designated youth activity areas within St. Paul's parks doesn't align with how these spaces are actually used. Children and youth freely explore all corners of the parks, making such a limited approach impractical and ineffective.

While Minnesota's recent cannabis law grants adults the right to use cannabis, the state legislature intentionally gave local governing bodies the authority to regulate public cannabis use, allowing them to tailor regulations to their communities' needs. If the legislature had intended to guarantee unrestricted public cannabis use, they would not have granted this authority to local governments to impose necessary restrictions. This delegation of power underscores the importance of local decision-making in preserving the health and well-being of the community's residents.

We urge you to vote for this policy without watering down its language. Your support will help ensure that every St. Paul resident can enjoy the parks and breathe clean air, free from the harm of secondhand smoke. This policy will make our outdoor spaces healthier and safer for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elyse Levine Less".

Elyse Levine Less, JD, MPH
Executive Director, Tobacco-Free Alliance MN

From: John Mannillo <John@mannillowomack.com>

Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 4:29 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Rebecca Noecker <Rebecca.Noecker@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; *CI-StPaul_Mayor <Mayor@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Prohibit smoking in public spaces

Think Before You Click: This email originated **outside** our organization.

Council President Amy Brendmoen
Mayor Melvin Carter
Members of the Saint Paul City Council

I support the proposal to prohibit smoking and vaping in city parks and certain other public places. While there are a lot of people calling for smoke-free air for kids, I am calling for smoke-free air for all. I stopped being a kid about seven decades ago but I am still a park user and live near a city park. I also Co-Chair the Friends of Mears Park. I want to be able to use this wonderful Saint Paul amenity without breathing other peoples' secondhand smoke and having to either look at or clean up other people's secondhand litter. Thanks for caring about and protecting all of us.

Thank you,
John Mannillo

From: [Thomas Kottke](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [*CI-StPaul Mayor](#)
Subject: Sustaining smoke-free parks and public areas in St. Paul
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:25:34 PM

I am writing in support of regulating smoking in parks and on public property.

I am a long time resident of Saint Paul and a physician with Health Partners. Early in my career I worked to help make Minnesota's hospitals smoke-free. Today it is hard to imagine that anyone would smoke in a health care facility, but back then it was the norm. Some said you couldn't possibly ask expectant fathers not to smoke in the hospital. Well, yes, you can. And even expectant fathers can skip smoking. In fact, most expectant fathers and mothers don't smoke today.

Smoking rates have been pushed down mostly through public policies like ones that create a nonsmoking norm. Policies create an expectation for clean air for all. That is a huge public health win. It is a win that I as a physician cannot, in my entire career, expect to equal. In my practice I help people one patient at a time. As policy makers you help the whole community.

Because what you do impacts moms, dads, children, grandparents, college students, and everyone along the way it is critically important that you do the right thing in protecting all of us.

Please don't backslide on protecting the community from secondhand smoke. Support the smoke-free proposal before you.