

From: [Daniel Ph.](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Proposed Cannabis Ordinance
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 1:46:16 PM

I am a Ward 4 resident and I want to briefly write against the proposed cannabis ordinance. Existing rules on smoking tobacco in public are adequate enough for regulating smoking cannabis in public. This ordinance just seems a ridiculous attempt to recriminalize something that never should've been illegal in the first place. I don't smoke and I don't particularly like the smell of it, but that's not reason enough to make it a petty misdemeanor. Please, do not pass this ordinance.

Daniel Phillips

From: [Eric Foster](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis ordinance
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 2:40:24 PM

Hello,

I'm very concerned that rushing an ordinance into law without consulting community will result in further harm to the very community that has been harmed by decades of prohibition and whose harm was a main factor in the legislature's decision to end prohibition. Let's take the time to consult with the community and with experts to see if any local law changes are needed to supplement existing state laws. Thanks.

Eric Foster, Ward 7

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kristin Koziol](#)
To: [Greg Weiner](#)
Subject: Fw: Please support ordinance to limit public cannabis use
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 1:48:11 PM

Kristin Koziol | Executive Assistant to Councilmember Russel Balenger

Pronouns: she/her

P: 651-266-8613

E: kristin.koziol@ci.stpaul.mn.us

From: Andrew Wagner <awags777@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2023 02:40 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Please support ordinance to limit public cannabis use

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

Councilman Balenger,

I'm writing to respectfully request your support for an ordinance restricting the consumption of cannabis in parks and other public areas. Several others cities, [including Duluth](#), have passed similar ordinances.

Saint Paul residents should be able to enjoy public spaces without being subjected to the stench of cannabis. In addition, allowing widespread public consumption will only further encourage the black market that will exist in Minnesota until retail sales begin in the next year or two.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Wagner
Ward 1 Resident
238 Victoria Street N
Saint Paul, MN 55104

--

Andrew Wagner
awags777@gmail.com
mobile | 651.895.2451
@andrewwagner
andrewwagner.org

From: [Brittany Delacy](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Council](#)
Subject: Public hearing Sept 6
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 9:24:41 AM

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

I cannot attend the meeting regarding cannabis use in city controlled spaces. So I wanted to share my thoughts.

The whole point of the bill we passed was to stop criminalizing cannabis use for ALL people. NOT just for home owners or wealthy people. Those folks are already able to use cannabis without fear of punishment.

This proposal would be a tremendous step backwards for our city. We have entire generations who can't afford to own homes. I understand the need for rules but this proposal is too broad. In practice, this ordinance will absolutely become an enforcement trap for younger residents, low-income residents and residents of color, who are more likely to be renters and more likely to need public places to use cannabis. Please oppose this proposal. Revisit cannabis rules when you find a way that is equitable to all in our community.

Thank you
Brittany Delacy, St Paul resident

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [David Hertz](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis smoking ban ordinance
Date: Monday, August 28, 2023 3:28:45 PM

Hello,

As a Ward 1 resident in St. Paul, I oppose the proposed cannabis smoking ban in public spaces and urge my city council members to oppose it as well. Indoor smoking is already banned via the MN Clean Indoor Air Act. I haven't seen any convincing evidence that there's a need for an additional ordinance covering cannabis smoking specifically. In addition, the \$300 fine and petty misdemeanor charge the ordinance imposes will have a disproportionate impact on low income residents.

Let's not create more hardships for low income residents to solve a problem we've already addressed in other ways. Drop the proposed cannabis smoking ban and let existing laws take care of issues if they arise.

David Hertz

From: [Jeanne Weigum](#)
To: [Amy Brendmoen](#); [Chris Tolbert](#); [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Support for smoking regulation in public spaces
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 12:41:56 PM
Attachments: [20230829123821273.pdf](#)

Please accept this letter of support for the regulation of smoking in parks and certain other public spaces.

--

Plant a tree you will never Climb
Jeanne Weigum



August 22, 2023

Council Member Chris Tolbert

Council President Amy Brendmoen and members of the Saint Paul City Council

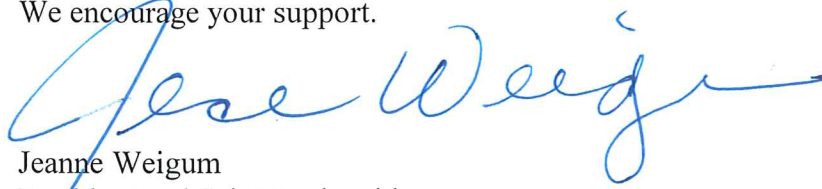
We are writing in strong support for the proposal to prohibit smoking in public parks and in certain other public spaces. This is good public policy because it sends a strong message that parks are a healthy place to be and a place where people can safely congregate without unnecessary exposure to secondhand smoke. While some people believe that smoke outside is not harmful, that is incorrect. According to the US Surgeon General, no level of exposure to secondhand smoke is safe.

It is also good public policy because it makes it clear to staff and park users what the expectations are. Saint Paul adopted a tobacco-free park policy, not an ordinance, in 2003. This policy relied on good community education and signs to alert users to the policy. We expect that will be the primary enforcement tool for this updated smoke-free ordinance. ANSR will work with the parks department to develop appropriate signage and will help with public education as appropriate.

Last year Ramsey County adopted an ordinance replacing their existing park policy. ANSR is working the County to gather data on how the community feels about that ordinance. While data collection is not complete, what we are seeing so far is there is wide public awareness of the policy and good public support for it. Given that the Saint Paul ordinance is patterned after the county's ordinance, we anticipate similar community support.

Some people may be concerned that the petty misdemeanor penalty that is the enforcement mechanism in the ordinance may disproportionately impact communities of color. That has not been ANSR's experience. We have worked with communities throughout the state on smoking ordinances and educational approaches are the go-to enforcement tool. Saint Paul and later the State of Minnesota adopted clean indoor air (smoke-free) laws. We know of no instance where anyone in the state has been fined for violating the statute. We consulted with staff at Ramsey County and no one has been cited in the county for violating their parks smoking policy. The reason there is good compliance is three fold: the ordinance is clear; there is good education, including signs, supporting it and; these are popular regulations that make sense to people. Most Minnesotans would be astounded if someone were to light up a cigarette in a grocery store or restaurant. It simply isn't done, not because police are issuing handfuls of tickets, but because people accept and support it as reasonable regulation.

The proposed smoking prohibition in parks and certain other public spaces is good public policy.
We encourage your support.



Jeanne Weigum
President and Saint Paul resident

From: [Ani Salinaz](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Legalize public use of marijuana.
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 10:51:03 AM

Banning use of marijuana in public spaces almost defeats marijuana being legalized. Adults should be allowed to responsibly consume marijuana in places other than their own home, because in short, it doesn't hurt anybody. Our city will allow the rampant epidemic of hard drugs on our streets and even in our metros, with absolutely no harsher enforcement but you want to focus on banning responsible public use. We NEED to start focusing on REAL issues that are affecting not only other adults in public but pregnant women, elders, and children. Proposing a ban on responsible marijuana use in public but not bringing light to the very real drug issue in our city that you will see the second you step foot in our city of Saint Paul, shows we have our priorities in the entirely wrong places. There are so much bigger problems than responsible public use of cannabis in our city right now. Alcohol has ruined countless of lives yet we don't ban clubs and bars, because we expect grown adults to be responsible. Why can't it be the same for marijuana when it is much safer? Allowing use in public will help boost tourism and community, and it will also help adults that use it get out of the house more! Adults would be able to enjoy going on a hike, bike ride, or swim with a spliff or even having a small get together or BBQ responsibly. Minnesota is an extremely beautiful place with many sightseeing activities, there are so many adults who want to responsibly engage in marijuana use but also be active and enjoy our gorgeous state. Why take that away from us? Do better as a state and as a city.

From: [Cory Pedersen](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis public smoking ban
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 12:03:06 PM

I'm writing to you today in hopes that you will vote no on the public smoking ban.

From: [Derek Lund](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis smoking in public places
Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 11:19:12 PM

I do not support the push for banning the smoking of cannabis in public spaces. This is overstepping and is no different than cigarette smoking being allowed in public spaces.

Derek Lund

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Juliana Milhofer](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [*CI-StPaul Mayor](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward3](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Minnesota Medical Association - Letter of Support for Smoke-Free Parks Ordinance
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 11:39:27 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Minnesota Medical Association - Letter of Support - City of Saint Paul Smoke-Free Parks Ordinance - 8.30.2023.pdf](#)

Dear Mayor Carter and Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

Good morning. Attached, please find a letter from the Minnesota Medical Association in support of efforts by the City of Saint Paul to adopt an ordinance that would prohibit smoking and vaping in public parks and certain other public spaces, regardless of whether the source is nicotine or cannabis.

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association, thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support, and if there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,

Juliana Milhofer, JD

Public Health and Policy Engagement Manager

Minnesota Medical Association

"The voice of medicine in Minnesota since 1853."

jmilhofer@mnmed.org

mnmed.org | Twitter @mnmed

612-362-3735 office





August 30, 2023

City of Saint Paul
City Council
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support on behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA) for efforts by the City of Saint Paul to adopt an ordinance that would prohibit smoking and vaping in public parks and certain other public spaces, regardless of whether the source is nicotine or cannabis.

The MMA is a non-profit professional association representing Minnesota's physicians and physicians-in-training. In our efforts to help make Minnesotans the healthiest in the nation, preventing death and disease caused by tobacco and secondhand smoke has long been an MMA goal. The MMA proudly and actively supported passage of the Freedom to Breathe Act to preserve clean indoor air, as well as the Tobacco 21 legislation enacted during the 2020 legislative session. Most recently, the MMA adopted policy that urged policymakers to recognize the potential health risks, particularly among children and adolescents, associated with exposure to secondhand cannabis smoke or vapor. Our efforts have highlighted the MMA's longstanding commitment to ensuring that the risks of secondhand smoke are taken into consideration.

In a 2006 report, the U.S. Surgeon General concluded that the scientific evidence indicates that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke, a known human carcinogen¹. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), secondhand cannabis smoke "contains many of the same toxic and cancer-causing chemicals found in tobacco smoke and contains some of those chemicals in higher amounts."² With the passage of adult-use cannabis in Minnesota, smoking is now allowed outside anywhere it isn't prohibited by the

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006. Available at:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK44324/>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Secondhand Marijuana Smoke. Available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects/second-hand-smoke.html>

Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act. As of August 1, Minnesotans can now smoke cannabis in a park, on a sidewalk or outside a restaurant or bar, unless their city has passed or has an existing ordinance prohibiting it. The ability to access and benefit from green spaces is a way to promote wellness and physical activity within a community – and the ability to breathe clean and healthy air while outdoors should not be an option.

The City of Saint Paul has an opportunity to help to shape healthy community norms, and an opportunity to ensure that those community members that use outdoor spaces such as public parks are able to do so safely. On behalf of the MMA, I urge the City of Saint Paul to acknowledge the negative long-term health effects of allowing smoking or vaping in its public spaces and adopt an ordinance to protect the residents of this community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Nicholson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" and last name "Nicholson" clearly distinguishable.

William Nicholson, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association

From: [Amber Erdman](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Upcoming marijuana smoking vote
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 11:16:14 PM

Please do NOT allow a smoking ban on all public places. That puts renters in a tough place. They will effectively have no place to smoke a toke of marijuana. You're restricting so much most people will be forced to smoke in some form of public place (own apartment, etc) effectively making the new laws legalizing marijuana that took effect August 1st moot.

From: [Malry Salisbury](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Public smoking ban
Date: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 9:00:30 PM

This is simply another attempt to legislate from the beach plain and simple. Your puritanical views and opinions have no place in public policy. The people of minnesota have already made it clear t by is is what we want, for adults to be able to consume cannabis in their home or another designated area. By placing a blanket ban on public use, you are not only infringing on the will of the people, you are also unfairly singling out renter's or the homeless for harassment or punishment. We already have clear and effective legislation on public use of tobacco or alcohol as to where it may or may not be used in public so why do we need another for cannabis? If you plan to place a blanket ban on cannabis use in public then I demand the same law be applied to alcohol as well as tobacco too. If you have a problem with that then you're clearly a hypocrite.

From: [Megan Lewis](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Public Hearing 9/6/23
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 11:47:52 AM

I'm a home owner in Como (Ward 4), as well as a parent of two minor children, and I oppose the proposed ordinance banning the smoking and vaping of tobacco and cannabis in outdoor public spaces. Existing public smoking bans created to address tobacco are more than sufficient. This proposed ordinance is government overreach. It's also a thinly-veiled classist, racist attempt to re-criminalize marijuana on the heels of the state legalizing it.

If passed, it will place an unnecessary burden of enforcement on the SPPD, which already has more pressing public safety issues to deal with, and exacerbate existing tensions between officers and the community. It's ridiculous that the city council is even considering placing the burden of enforcing this overly broad ordinance on the SPPD—or looking for further ways to deepen inequalities between home owners and citizens with fewer economic resources.

As a parent, I'd feel much safer allowing my teenagers to navigate public spaces in the city knowing that the SPPD is focused on catching violent criminals and hazardous drivers. Those are the areas where their limited resources need to be focused—not on saddling residents with outrageous fines and criminal records just because they don't have access to private property where they're allowed to smoke **legal** substances. And while I've never been tempted to move to Minneapolis or the inner suburbs over someone smoking *any* substance on a sidewalk or in a park, the state of our city's roads has me reconsidering my choice to own property and pay taxes in St. Paul literally every winter and spring.

Please reject this proposed ordinance and stop debating a “solution” in search of a problem. Focus on the issues the majority of city tax payers and voters actually care about and elected you to address—public safety and the deplorable state of our city's roads.

Sincerely,
Megan Lewis

From: [Graham & Peg Wright](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: banning smoking in public parks
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 1:03:59 PM

Please vote YES to ban all forms of smoking – not just cannabis – in public parks and other public places outlined in the ordinance.

Peg Wright

Como Park neighbor and district member

From: [Abdillahi Kahin](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Ward5](#); [*CI-StPaul_Mayor](#); [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: In support of smoke-free parks ordinance, Ward 5 resident
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 9:03:45 AM
Attachments: [Smoke-free Parks Ordinance Letter of Support.pdf](#)

Dear Mayor and Council Members, attached here is WellShare International's letter of support for the smoke-free parks ordinance. Apart from WellShare, as a Ward 5 resident, this is particularly important for me.

Thank you!

--

Abdillahi Kahin
Program Manager
WellShare International
122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 510
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Email: Abkahin@wellshareinternational.org
Phone: 612-913-6967

Check us out!

www.wellshareinternational.org.



"A hundred years from now, it won't matter what your bank account was, the sort of house you lived in, or the kind of car you drove, but the world may be different because you were important in the life of a child." ~ Author Unknown

From: [Anders Hanhan](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis Ordinance
Date: Monday, September 4, 2023 5:55:39 PM

I am writing in opposition to the City of St Paul's public smoking ban for cannabis. This would completely undermine the legalization of cannabis in the first place in many communities where people don't have private back yards. I strongly oppose any ordinance that will disproportionately impact poor and working POC, and it seems certain that like the War on Drugs and the Crime Bill, this would do exactly that.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Beth Bedell](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Regarding cannabis ordinance
Date: Monday, September 4, 2023 7:51:00 PM

I cannot attend the meeting regarding cannabis use in city controlled spaces. So I wanted to share my thoughts.

Allowing cannabis smoking in city owned property would make a hardship for those of us who don't smoke. The stench of it would keep me inside because of my asthma. I understand that this would make it a hardship for people who live in apartments, etc. who do use cannabis.

Perhaps a compromise would be to allow it in certain areas and not in others. Then, people can go to where they can enjoy being outside in a way that is comfortable for them.

Please do NOT allow people to smoke anywhere they like.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Bedell

--

Beth

*In my dream the angel shrugged & said,
"If we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination,"
and then she placed the world gently in the palm of my hand.
~ Brian Andreas*

From: caroline.e.daykin
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Ord 23-40 Public Comment
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 11:10:39 AM

Dear St. Paul City Council Members,

I support your efforts to protect the public from secondhand cigarette and cannabis smoke. St. Paul residents should be able to open their windows, walk on city sidewalks and paths, and enjoy city parks without breathing in secondhand smoke.

Despite concerns that the proposed ordinance will undermine legislative intent, the bill legalizing recreational cannabis specifically states that "a local unit of government may adopt an ordinance establishing a petty misdemeanor offense for a person who unlawfully uses cannabis in a public place."

The proposed ordinance is also in keeping with the policies of other states that have legalized recreational marijuana such as California and Colorado, where state law prohibits public cannabis use.

Despite decades of research documenting the harmful health effects of secondhand tobacco smoke, public tobacco bans are less common than bans on smoking cannabis in public.

Cities that have successfully implemented tobacco bans offer examples that St. Paul can look to.

- Calabasas, California bans smoking in all public places with the exception of designated areas of businesses.
- Waynesville, North Carolina prohibits the use of tobacco products on sidewalks within business districts and in public parks and greenways.
- Laguna Beach, California permits smoking only in private homes and cars.
- Numerous cities have banned smoking in public parks.

Winning the support of the public will mean clearing up misconceptions people may have about the ordinance and the problems it seeks to address.

- Comments submitted to the city council and on social media make it clear that some

members of the public believe the ordinance prohibits only cannabis smoke and does not regulate tobacco smoke.

- St. Paul residents should be assured that the ordinance would not undo the work of the legislature by criminalizing smoking cannabis in public. By deeming violations of local ordinances a petty misdemeanor the legislature ensured that no one will be charged with a crime as a result of violating these ordinances and placed smoking marijuana in public in the same category as speeding and other minor traffic violations.
- The public should be educated on the harmful effects of outdoor tobacco smoke. While it is well-known that indoor smoking poses a health risk, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency "whether the exposure occurs indoors or outdoors the adverse health effects remain the same" even though outdoor smoke dissipates more quickly than indoor smoke. Additionally, outdoor smoke can drift into indoor spaces. For that reason, the American Lung Association recommends that outdoor smoking areas should be located at least 25 feet away from doors, windows, and ventilation intakes.
- Public education is also needed regarding the health effects of secondhand marijuana smoke. While it is well-known that secondhand tobacco smoke is detrimental to health, many people are unaware of the similarities between tobacco smoke and marijuana.

Sincerely,

Caroline Daykin

From: [Hillary Birchem](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Cannabis Smoking Ban Ordinance
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 2:30:33 PM

Hello,

I am writing about the proposed cannabis smoking ban on all public spaces. The proposed action is too overly broad and would only negatively impact the community. It would place unnecessary targets on those of lower classes and non-homeowning individuals. While there does need to be regulation placed upon the newly legalized substance, the MN Clean Indoor Act contains regulations/guidance and that should be used to work with the community to establish healthy uses rather than criminalizing people for a legal substance.

Thank you,
Hillary Birchem

Sent from my iPad

From: [Sylvia Amos](#)
To: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Outdoor Air Legislation
Date: Monday, September 4, 2023 2:27:15 PM
Attachments: [Outdoor Air Letter.docx](#)

Good Afternoon,

Attached is a letter of support for the Outdoor Air Legislation from Runney D. Patterson, President of the Minnesota State Baptist Convention, and Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church located at 712 Burr Street, St. Paul. If you have any questions, Reverend Patterson can be reached at 651-769-4687.

Sylvia Amos, MSBC Community Advocate
on behalf of Reverend Runney D. Patterson



"We are Better Together"

• Pastor Billy Russell, President, Minnesota State Baptist Convention, Inc. • 612.237.9517

2600 East 38th Street • Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406-3022 • www.minnesotastatebaptistconvention.com • mnbaptistconvention@gmail.com

September 4, 2023

Dear Council President Brendmoen and Council Members,

We write this letter in support of the proposed ordinance to make all St. Paul City Parks and other public spaces smoke and vape free whether it is nicotine products or cannabis.

As a faith community we have worked hard to address the tobacco industry's unrelenting targeting of members of our community and promoting treatment services for those having a sincere desire to quit.

Many of our faith community members use St. Paul green spaces for gatherings and recreation. Keeping these green spaces healthy and free of secondhand smoke for all helps set healthy community norms. Smoke-free parks and recreation areas promote health for all and provide an avenue for all residents regardless of income, race, immigration status or religion, access to healthy green spaces.

We continue to share the story of Corinthians 6:19-20 where it is written that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we must honor God with our bodies. Keeping our body free of all substances be it nicotine, alcohol, or cannabis.

While respecting individuals' legal rights, we must be responsible in protecting the rights of the young, elderly, and vulnerable members of our community who are often unable to speak for themselves. We regulate use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis, all legal products. These policies help us set positive community norms of responsible use by adults. Legal use can, should and must be responsible!

Thank you for your long history of enacting regulations that keep our community healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Runney D. Patterson

Rev. Runney D. Patterson, President
Minnesota State Baptist Convention &
Pastor, New Hope Baptist Church

Member Directory - March 2014

MINNEAPOLIS CHURCHES:

Berean Baptist Church
Bethesda Baptist Church
Bible Based Baptist Church
Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church
God's Revelation
Greater Friendship Baptist Church

Greater Mount Vernon Baptist Church
Macedonia Baptist Church
New Beginnings Baptist Tabernacle
New Bethel Baptist Church
New Mount Calvary
Galilee Missionary Baptist Church
New Salem Missionary Baptist Church

North Community Baptist Church
NuWay Baptist Church
Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church
The Purpose Church
Redeemer Baptist Church
Seven Star Baptist Church
Greater St. Johns Baptist Church

True Vine Missionary Baptist Church
Zion Baptist Church
New Faith Missionary Baptist Church
Greater Mount Nebo Baptist Church
SAINT PAUL CHURCHES:
Morning Star Baptist Church
Mount Olivet Baptist Church

New Birth Missionary Baptist Church
New Hope Baptist Church
Pilgrim Baptist Church
Progressive Baptist Church
Mt. Mariah M. B. Church

From: [Catherine Graeve](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: I support smoke-free parks in St Paul
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 10:49:03 AM

Dear St. Paul City Council member and Mayor Carter,

As a St. Paul resident, mom, and nurse, I am writing in support of the proposed ordinance creating smoke-free parks in St. Paul. Cigarette litter and vape waste are harmful to the environment we all share and enjoy. Discarded cigarettes pollute the land and water and may be ingested by toddlers, pets, birds, or fish. Vape waste includes plastic, e-waste, and other harmful substances that leach into waterways and soil. These microplastics disrupt a body's system and may cause cancer. We need to do all we can to create a healthy environment- air, water, and soil for all.

Thank you,
Catherine Graeve
2136 Niles Avenue
St Paul, MN
55116

--

Catherine Graeve, PhD, MPH, CNE, AHN-BC, RN, PHN
Associate Professor/Program Director
BSN Program-College for Adults
St. Catherine University
Whitby 208
cugraeve897@stkate.edu
Pronouns: she/her/hers

From: [Charlie Tiller](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Proposed Ordinance 23-40 - In Favor
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 5:30:53 PM

Dear City Council,

I am unreservedly in favor of the proposed ordinance restricting ALL forms of smoking on public city property in ALL cases. This is simply a common-sense public health measure and in the interests of personal freedom for the vast majority of St. Paul residents and visitors who choose NOT to smoke for any reason they deem relevant or for whom secondhand smoke may pose serious health considerations.

While I might wish the ordinance could go further to establish reasonable reporting and enforcement provisions to protect neighbors from grossly negligent nuisance conditions on privately owned properties, I recognize the challenges to achieving that end and the great value of promptly providing the most critical public health and safety guardrails where the State failed to act responsibly. I do not begrudge residents the responsible use of cannabis or tobacco on private properties with the owner's consent, but as with any legal activity, there are lines beyond which the public interest may not be transgressed without reasonable constraints being employed. Enjoyment and abuse are not the same thing. We must agree at least to start with protecting non-smokers on public property.

With regard to the reservations expressed by a number of commenters, I appreciate that the proposed ordinance DOES NOT distinguish between cannabis and tobacco products or the delivery methods. Just because it is legal does not mean the city must accept – or, in effect, tacitly encourage – the unrestricted use of either dangerous substance and the accompanying nuisances in public spaces. A similar case could be made for alcohol, and it is currently restricted in many public locations and times (though certainly not all). This perspective is not based in puritanism, but rather a sober-eyed view of actual hazards and civil respect for our neighbors.

The argument that this measure would discriminate against poor members of the community in rental housing pales relative to the public health and quality of life considerations for the vast majority of St. Paul residents and visitors – many renters themselves – who choose not to smoke and have a right to safe surroundings. This is simply a question of encouraging personal desires and self-entitlements vs. protecting genuine needs and civil rights. Having started as a rather poor renter and settled, strived, succeeded and invested in this city for 29 years now, the “renter discrimination” argument here is frankly insulting. Let's keep St. Paul decent for all of us.

I appreciate the Council's willingness to take up this important measure so promptly, and I encourage its passage.

Sincerely,
Charles Tiller

Ward 5 resident and homeowner

From: [John Slade](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [Jane Prince](#)
Subject: Opposing 23-40 Smoking Ban
Date: Friday, September 1, 2023 3:46:28 PM

When I quit smoking tobacco 15 years ago, I swore I would not be "that asshole ex-smoker" who complained all the time about any smoke in public.

When I ran for state rep in 2018, the one thing that I got lobbied the hardest on was legalizing cannabis.

I was at the Speedway on Old Hudson and White Bear Avenue talking about this to the cashier, who was black. He said "yeah, now black people can do what white people been able to do."

Whatever the public health benefits might be, it's clear that drug policy enforcement in St. Paul has a massive racial bias. The ACLU study a decade ago said that it was 8 time more likely - 8 times! - that that black cashier would be busted for cannabis use compared to my white self.

Working class people smoke more often than middle class people. Black people get busted WAY more often for cannabis than white people. This ordinance is both racist and classist, and I oppose it.

John Slade, Ward 7

From: [Kerby Pettinelli](#)
To: [Kerby Pettinelli](#); [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [*CI-StPaul Mayor](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for Smoke-Free Parks
Date: Saturday, September 2, 2023 1:10:00 PM

Dear St. Paul City Councilmembers and Mayor Carter,

I support creating smoke-free parks for all in St. Paul.

As a mom of five kids 12 and under, a safe and healthy place to play is so important for our family. My husband has coached and my kids have played in St. Paul Park and Rec sports. I want all kids to breathe clean air in organized activities and while out playing. When my youngest is crawling around a park and picking up a cigarette butt or vape, it feels gross and unsafe. Not to mention these products are full of plastics that take years to break down. By creating smoke-free parks, all kids, families, and spectators will not have to worry about breathing in secondhand smoke.

Thank you for your time.

Kerby Pettinelli
1630 Victoria St. N.

From: [lisa.clasen](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Fwd: cannabis
Date: Sunday, September 3, 2023 12:51:43 PM

Good morning!

I just want to put my 2 cents in about the new cannabis reg(s). I support restrictions that keep me safe from inhaling intoxicating fumes or smoke against my will.

I absolutely do not want to walk through clouds of cannabis smoke as I am walking to work.

Please do not back down on the city property restriction. Sidewalks should be a safe space for all.

If smokers are allowed to use sidewalks outside their apartments to smoke, then the smoke will not just cause harm to other sidewalk users but to the apartment dwellers as smoke goes into their windows.

And a final note just to give you an idea how strongly I feel about this. Smells are not a one-way street, if I have to smell pot smoke because users think they have the right to smoke anywhere, then I have the right to utilize a large can of air freshener in the same space.

Thank you for listening.

--

Lisa Clasen
651-808-0895
lisaclasen@gmail.com
500 Robert St. N. #211
St. Paul, MN 55101

--

Lisa Clasen
651-808-0895
lisaclasen@gmail.com
500 Robert St. N. #211
St. Paul, MN 55101

From: [Eric Haugee](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Smoking ban
Date: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 6:00:20 PM

I am writing to oppose Ord 23-40, which aims to re-criminalize marijuana and ban the use of it and tobacco on all city property. It flies in the face of equity with regards to renters and low income citizens, and goes against the intent of the law.

Please vote no on the proposed ordinance.

Thanks.

Eric Haugee
Ward one resident

From: [Nicole Whitlock](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#); [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Statement Regarding City Council Meeting September 6, 2023
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 10:40:37 AM
Attachments: [Saint Paul City Council Meeting 9 6 23 Smoking Ordinance Opposal.docx](#)

Sent on behalf of Jen Reise.

Nicole Whitlock

I respectfully express my opposition to the proposed expansion of city regulations pertaining to smoking in public places by the Saint Paul City Council. I am in complete agreement with Councilwoman Mirta Jalali's assertion that this proposed ordinance, if modified, would run counter to the overarching objectives of the legislation that legalized adult recreational cannabis use.

This proposed ordinance would curtail the rights of a significant portion of the population, as it would prohibit smoking in all public areas, including sidewalks and outdoor smoking lounges (such as restaurants that wish to allow cannabis smoking on their patio). This effectively restricts the legalization of cannabis to those who own a single-family home – a minority of the population of St. Paul.

Furthermore, the proposal includes provisions for the imposition of petty misdemeanor charges on individuals who engage in smoking within public spaces. This proposed punitive measure re-criminalizes activity that the legislature acted to legalize, and diverts police and court time back to policing cannabis. This is in direct contradiction to the recently enacted legislation regarding the legalization of recreational cannabis.

I urge you to reject the proposed ordinance.

Jen Randolph Reise
Partner, North Star Law Group, PLLC
413 Wacouta St Suite 550
St Paul, MN 55101
jen@northstarlaw.com

From: [jonathan.feldman](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Marijuana smoking on city regulated land
Date: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 2:53:34 PM

Dear Councilmembers,

I am a downtown resident and I do not support the proposed regulation of marijuana smoking on city regulated land. My main reasons are it effectively only allows property owners a legal means to this luxury, it might distract law enforcement from more serious issues, and people are going to do it anyway but the enforcement would fall hardest on our BIPOC community.

Thanks for your consideration!
Jonathan Feldman

From: [Adam Yust](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [#CI-StPaul Ward3](#)
Subject: FW: Ord 23-40 Whether to prohibit the Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products in City Owned Public Places
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 10:35:29 AM

Please add this message to the Smoking item #44 on today's agenda. Thank you.

From: mburke1234@gmail.com <mburke1234@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 4:38 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Ord 23-40 Whether to prohibit the Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products in City Owned Public Places

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

Dear Councilmember Tolbert,

I support the proposed Ordinance to ban smoking from public parks. I assume and agree that the ban would cover tobacco, hemp and cannabis products.

I'm in Ward 4 but since the ban would cover all St. Paul parks (as I understand it), I thought I could write to let you know my opinion.

I smoked 40 years ago and luckily quit. I don't want to smell or ingest the smoke, I don't want my kids or grandkids to smell or ingest the smoke – at anytime, including when I'm at a park. The park is for everyone. I don't feel that a person who smokes has the right to inflict the smell and the second-hand smoke on those who don't want to smell or ingest it. I participate in outdoor activities at a park and some participants smoke while participating. I know the addiction as I've been there. But I think their right to smoke should not prevail over the rights of others who do not want to smell or ingest the smoke.

I ask that you and all council members vote to prohibit the Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products in City Owned Public Places.

Thank you.

Mike Burke
2103 Iglehart Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

From: [Tony Aarts](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Regarding Proposed Cannabis Ordinance-opposed
Date: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 4:04:48 PM

Council Members,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed cannabis ordinance as written. In talking with neighbors, friends, and seeing the reaction from community members across St. Paul, there is clearly a serious concern that the language in this ordinance is punitive, prohibitive, and looking to take us backward again.

The idea framed in this ordinance would mean that those without a private residence, property, a backyard, etc., would be virtually shut out from the cannabis law just passed this past legislative session. As well, the punitive effects of the ordinance recriminalize marijuana in the same way that we were actually trying to get away from. This language details a petty misdemeanor charge, a hefty fine, and furthers the implications of difficulty with securing housing and employment in the future should a fine go unpaid. This is disturbing. It is understood that people are aware of second-hand smoke, dangers to health, etc. There are policies and regulations around substances to help mitigate this very thing. We have worked with such policies around cigarettes for years and years. We can create needed safeguards without unjustly enforcing such an ordinance. So, why has this ordinance not been discussed in such a way across the city enterprise? Where was the community input and feedback? How could the Parks Dept be consulted in this regard? What about other related city offices like Library, SPPD, etc. ?

Given the framing of the ordinance, it is almost certain that the punitive effects will land hardest on young folks, working class, and communities of color. That is not acceptable. How can this conversation move forward in a way that is inclusive and just? 'Cause this isn't it. And St. Paul can and must do better for our communities.

Sincerely,
Tony Aarts
Ward 3 resident

From: [FREDERICK LEWKO](#)
To: [CouncilHearing_English \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Voice Mail (1 minute and 26 seconds)
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 6:39:00 AM
Attachments: [audio.mp3](#)

Hello, I would just like to make a comment. I'm watching the news and this statement is on the TV from council member opposing the marijuana ban. And the statement is it shouldn't be a petty misdemeanor to use a legal substance in wide open public spaces in Saint Paul. This proposal as written will absolutely have racist, harmful consequences and that was made by Mitra Jolly and I just want to know why do you have to bring everything to say that it's racist and harmful consequences? I want you to answer why you said that because why is it? Why does everything have to be related to racist people smoke? It doesn't matter what nationality, gender, whatever. They all smoke marijuana and when I go outside I don't wanna smell skunk smell. I don't wanna have the after effects of all that smoke breathing in second hand. It is absolutely something that should be addressed and be banned. It is and it has nothing to do with race. I just want you to know that. And please quit bringing everything to that is just not right. Thank you.

You received a voice mail from [FREDERICK LEWKO](#).

Thank you for using Transcription! If you don't see a transcript above, it's because the audio quality was not clear enough to transcribe.

[Set Up Voice Mail](#)

From: [President HMC](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [Jenne Nelson](#); [#CI-StPaul Ward4](#)
Subject: Comments on ORD 23-40
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 8:03:48 AM
Attachments: [HMC Letter of Opposition to Proposed ORD 23-40.pdf](#)

Greetings,

Please see the attached letter commenting on the proposed ordinance 23-40 regarding cannabis use in St. Paul.

Thank you very much.

Cole Hanson (he/him)

Board President
Hamline-Midway Coalition (D11)
hamlinemidway.org



HAMLIN MIDWAY COALITION
DISTRICT COUNCIL 11
1536 W MINNEHAHA AVENUE,
ST. PAUL MN 55104
651.494.7682 | www.hamlinemidway.org

September 6, 2023

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

The Hamline Midway Coalition, District Council 11, opposes ORD 23-40 as written because it would ban cannabis smoking in all city-controlled public spaces.

Minnesota's recent legalization of cannabis seeks to address the history of racial and economic injustice perpetuated by decades of criminalization. We see this ordinance as a continuation of past harms against cannabis users because it is so broad in nature. By banning use in all city-controlled public spaces, the sweeping language of this ordinance would ensure that only those who can access private property would be able to use a legal substance, criminalizing what in a neighboring city would be legal. The petty misdemeanor imposed on anyone who violates the ordinance could be disproportionately felt by renters and our unhoused neighbors, who are more likely to be low-income residents and residents of color. Furthermore, this is an issue of accessibility for our neighbors who use cannabis for medical reasons.

The process of writing this ordinance is also of concern. As a district council, we are here to engage our residents in important conversations like this one, but we were not included in this process. The lack of community engagement means that the voices of cannabis advocates, our state delegation who played a pivotal role in the legalization effort, our neighbors and fellow district councils, and key city departments responsible for public spaces, such as Parks and Recreation, Public Health and the Libraries, were left out of crafting this ordinance.

We are not opposed to an ordinance that shapes what public cannabis use in our city looks like, but we believe this iteration is too restrictive and comes with negative accessibility and equity implications. We support letting the MN Clean Indoor Air Act stand while following channels of local engagement and governance to create an ordinance which identifies publicly available, safe smoking places and includes more inclusive, less punitive methods of enforcement.

We appreciate your consideration of our position. Please feel free to reach out with questions.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenne Nelson".

Jenne Nelson
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cole Hanson".

Cole Hanson
Board President
on behalf of the Board of Directors

From: [Matthew Atienza](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Request to Reconsider Proposed Regulations on Public Cannabis Consumption
Date: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 7:44:31 PM

Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concerns about the recent proposals to prohibit smoking and ingesting cannabis in public spaces within our city. While I understand the need to establish regulations that promote public safety and wellbeing, I believe that implementing such a ban would disproportionately affect those who do not have access to private or residential spaces for cannabis consumption. It is essential to consider the unintended consequences and the impact on individuals like me, who rely on public spaces to enjoy legal cannabis responsibly.

I am a proud resident of Saint Paul, a CrossFit athlete, a small business owner, and a loving family member. Like many others in our community, I also happen to be a renter. As a renter, I do not have the privilege of a private space in which to consume cannabis. The current laws allowing the private use of cannabis were a significant step forward, as they acknowledged the rights of individuals to partake in a legal activity without jeopardizing their housing situation or facing criminal charges. The proposed restrictions on public cannabis consumption would, in essence, be taking a step backward and undermining the progress we have made with the legalization of cannabis.

Saint Paul has always prided itself on being a diverse and inclusive community. Banning public cannabis consumption would not only hinder the freedom of responsible adults but also disproportionately affect those who may not have the means to secure private spaces for consumption. Such a law would inadvertently create a divide between those who can afford private spaces and those who cannot, further exacerbating existing inequalities.

For individuals like me who engage in activities like CrossFit and own small businesses, cannabis can be an essential tool for relaxation, stress relief, and pain management. The ability to consume cannabis responsibly in public spaces provides a sense of inclusion and fairness, allowing everyone to enjoy the benefits of this legal substance without fear of discrimination or legal repercussions.

I kindly request that the Saint Paul City Council reconsider the proposed regulations on public cannabis consumption. Instead, let us work together to find a balanced solution that upholds public safety while respecting the rights and needs of all residents. Perhaps implementing designated areas for cannabis consumption in public spaces or considering restrictions that are less punitive would be more equitable alternatives.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns. I look forward to a continued dialogue on this matter and hope that we can find a solution that truly reflects the values of our great city.

Sincerely,

Matthew Atienza
580 Marshall Ave, Upper
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Matthew.atienza@mac.com
763-400-1064

From: [Selena Salfen](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#); [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Smoke-Free Ordinance Letter of Support - Central and Priority Pediatrics
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 9:13:58 AM
Attachments: [Central and Priority Pediatrics Smoke-free LOS.pdf](#)

Dear President Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Council Members,

Please accept the attached letter from pediatricians at Central and Priority Pediatrics to support today's public hearing on amending Title XXIII Public Health Safety and Welfare of the Legislative Code to add Chapter 222, titled Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products in City Owned Public Places Prohibited.

Thank you.



Dear President Brendmoen and Saint Paul City Council Members,

We are writing to share our support for the ordinance that would make all Saint Paul parks and grounds smoke-free.

Central + Priority Pediatrics is an independently owned practice of board-certified pediatricians. We serve many Saint Paul children, young adults, and families. Many of our staff also live and play in Saint Paul parks.

As pediatric experts in our community, we consider the health of our community's children our number one priority. Exposure to smoke, be it commercial tobacco, vape or cannabis smoke, is harmful to everyone it reaches. The 2006 Surgeon General's report concludes that secondhand smoke is a human carcinogen for which there is no safe level of exposure. Exposure to secondhand smoke has immediate health consequences on the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children who breathe secondhand smoke are at higher risk for ear infections, coughs and colds, bronchitis, pneumonia, and tooth decay. Smoke, whether it comes from burning tobacco or cannabis, has harmful fine particulate matter that lodges deeply in the lungs.

All our families deserve safe and healthy parks, trails, and outdoor recreation areas. Parents and caregivers should feel confident taking their family to a city park without the fear of dealing with clouds of unwanted and unhealthy smoke, or cigarette and vape litter that is sometimes ingested by young children. We want to encourage outdoor activity, which is linked to improved motor development and cardiorespiratory fitness and decreased depression for kids and adults.

Creating smoke-free grounds helps set and maintain social norms around smoking. Young people look up to those older than them, and this policy will set clear examples of positive health and our community's commitment to a healthy and safe community for all.

Thank you for protecting all.

From: [Grounded Gardens](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: letter to City Council about Cannabis Smoking ban
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 12:22:24 PM
Attachments: [city hall testimony.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern,
09/06/20203

Grounded Gardens is a cannabis farm (Hutchinson, MN) and manufacturer situated at 265 W 7th Street, Suite 200 & 300, with a dispensary and lounge located at 263 West 7th Street in St. Paul, MN. We've proudly occupied this location for over a year, striving to create a secure and welcoming space for cannabis enthusiasts.

With a personal history of more than 25 years as a cannabis enthusiast, I've experienced exclusion from various communities due to my cannabis use. Cannabis has played a transformative role in my life, serving as a crucial remedy for anxiety, depression, and autism. It has enabled me to actively engage with and contribute to our community.

For more than 15 years, I have been a dedicated activist in Minnesota, advocating tirelessly for cannabis legalization on the board of MN NORML and other organizations. Our collective efforts have culminated in the recent legalization, which represents a significant milestone for individuals like me who rely on cannabis for medicinal purposes.

We at Grounded Gardens are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for individuals who share this appreciation for cannabis and its potential benefits. Our journey has been one of persistence, resilience, and a belief in the positive impact of cannabis on individuals and communities alike.

At Grounded Gardens, we've diligently constructed an inclusive lounge and dispensary with the aim of providing a secure and inviting environment for cannabis enthusiasts. Our small patio on West 7th Street further enhances this space, allowing consumers to gather, relax, and enjoy cannabis in the company of friends.

It's noteworthy that our location stands in stark contrast to the nearby bars, where disturbances such as fights and loud altercations are commonplace. In our cannabis setting, the atmosphere is distinctly characterized by peace and a sense of joyful camaraderie. We're proud to offer a haven where individuals can unwind and savor the benefits of cannabis in a tranquil and convivial atmosphere.

Our request is a simple one: we urge you to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Indoor Air Act, as outlined in the legalization bill. We believe that if public cigarette smoking is permitted, there should be no reason to prevent public cannabis smoking.

It's crucial to note that while cigarettes have been proven to cause cancer through secondhand smoke exposure, there is evidence that cannabis may have potential medicinal properties, including cancer-fighting effects. However, the primary point here is not to debate the merits of either substance but rather to ensure equitable treatment under existing regulations.

In essence, if the decision is to restrict smoking in public spaces, it should apply uniformly to all smoking, regardless of the substance. We are advocating for a consistent approach to public smoking regulations that aligns with both the law and public health concerns.

The current situation highlights a critical issue: the strain on law enforcement resources in both the state and the city of St. Paul. A recent personal incident, where we experienced a theft on August 1, 2023, serves as a stark example. Despite our efforts to contact the police for assistance, no response was received, and we have yet to receive any follow-up regarding the incident.

This scenario underscores the challenges faced by law enforcement in effectively addressing the needs of the community. It raises questions about resource allocation and the capacity to respond to various types of incidents promptly.

We believe that by addressing more pressing matters and minimizing unnecessary demands on law enforcement, we can better prioritize community safety. This is another compelling reason to continue allowing responsible cannabis consumption in public spaces, in line with the Indoor Air Act and the recently passed legalization bill.

The opioid, meth, and fentanyl epidemic in our vicinity is indeed a critical issue that demands urgent attention. It's clear that the gravity of this crisis has a direct impact on our business and community.

We hope you share our concerns and believe that addressing these pressing public health and safety challenges should be a top priority. Allocating resources to combat the opioid epidemic, providing addiction treatment and harm reduction programs, and enhancing community safety measures are essential steps to mitigate the harm caused by these substances.

In this context, it raises important questions about resource allocation and whether efforts to restrict cannabis use in public spaces are the most effective way to utilize limited resources. A balanced approach that focuses on harm reduction and tackling more immediate threats to public health and safety is critical for the well-being of your community.

Many medical cannabis users live in federal housing or rented accommodations where cannabis use may be restricted or prohibited. Additionally, laws related to driving under the influence (DWI) often make it impractical or illegal to consume cannabis in a vehicle.

For these individuals, finding a safe and legal place to use their prescribed medication can be a challenging and sometimes impossible task. These challenges can especially impact veterans, disabled individuals, and other medical patients who rely on cannabis to manage their health conditions.

Considering the need for accessible and safe spaces for cannabis users is an important aspect of responsible cannabis regulation. Advocates often stress the importance of providing options for these individuals where they can legally and comfortably use their cannabis.

Our concerns highlight the real-world implications of cannabis regulations on your constituents, and it underscores the importance of finding equitable solutions that consider the diverse needs of the community.

Again, our request is a simple one: we urge you to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Indoor Air Act, as outlined in the legalization bill. We believe that if public cigarette smoking is permitted, there should be no reason to prevent public cannabis smoking.

At Grounded Gardens this week we have been collecting signatures, I intended to bring those to the meeting today, but I have covid and can't be there in person. One of our community members will be bringing them in for you all to see that our customers from all over Minnesota want to be able to smoke Infront of our store as a safe space!

Thank you for your time today and we are excited to work with you in the future!

Grounded Gardens Staff; Shane Guptill, Donovan Pinder, Cyndi Patrick, Sherry Sharstrom,
Tomas Sharstrom, Douglas Pinder

Grounded Gardens Owner and author of this letter; Bridgette Pinder

--

Thank You

Bridgette Bethke Pinder
952.212.0429

Grounded Gardens LLC
612.232.3527
groundedgardensmn.com

From: [Chyna Pfeifer](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products Ban
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 11:56:51 AM

I am writing to voice opposition to the proposed ban on smoking of tobacco, hemp and cannabis products. This ordinance and the resulting punitive effects will disproportionately impact BIPOC and unsheltered communities.

Thank you,
Chyna Pfeifer

From: [Kayla Fearing](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Re: Testifying at council meeting, 9/6/23
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:09:31 PM

I'd like to forward my statement to the council as well; I can provide a PDF if needed this evening.

“

My name is Kayla Fearing, and I have been a resident of West 7th, in Saint Paul, my entire life. I have now also rented on Rice street, and attended school on The West Side. I've played sports for Highland Park. I've gotten around Saint Paul. This year I played Saint Paul rec slow pitch and consumed cannabis drinks and joints along side my alcoholic drinkers and my cog smokers. So when I come before you today to say that I am AGAINST your proposal on cannabis use in Saint Paul, please hear me- I've worked in healthcare most of my adult life.

I now have a healthcare consulting company called Healing Fear Consulting where I specialize in patient advocacy and educating patients on cannabinoids and available legal products. Minnesotans, and Saint Paul residents use cannabis. They use it for health issues- some may consider them social issues, but any use of cannabis, in my mind as a healthcare worker, is for medical use.

I have been on public housing; with this proposal, I would no longer have a safe space to use MY medicine that I have a state issued prescription for; of a completely legal substance. I've never seen a proposed ordinance for public drinking or drinking in section 8 homes in Saint Paul, and drinking and alcohol has caused far more violence.

I was on west 7th, with my partner, and walking into Truck Park bar when a deathly shooting took place in October 2021. A girl that attended my high school and played sports with my friends was murdered that night- due to alcohol fueled domestic violence; there were people smoking cannabis over at neighboring bar with me that same night.. did our bar 15min beforehand as we passed around a blunt break out in violence? No. Cannabis users are safe patrons. We're safe users, and patients, and should have our rights enforced, not taken away. Again- this was before cannabis was legal, and residents of Saint Paul knew how to act safe, and appropriate "high in public." The drunks can't behave.

We've been hosting public education, and consumption events since July 1, and no police have been called; how many drinking events can say that? With every brewery that has opened in Saint Paul, this council has encouraged public consumption of alcohol. Our state law encourages uses all to grow our own cannabis and gift our family and friends of our craft. Just like beer.

I've had multiple friends die to fentanyl overdoses now, in Saint Paul, just in the last four years. My bestfriend died April of last year, due to fentanyl bought in lower town. Saint Paul advocates for safe spaces for narcotics, but takes away the space spaces for cannabis use? A plant medicine that's never taken anyone's life away, just by its single use? Who is Saint Paul, as the Capitol City, to be the ones to disrespect their tax payers, and their loyal residents like myself?

Businesses, such as Maharajas, or Grounded Gardens, have been vocal about how they would love to provide these safe spaces, while, operating businesses in YOUR Saint Paul- but this proposal but destroy them. It would give any other out of state online business the upper hand, rather than a local business who is providing a safe consumption lounge as well as education. I'm not sure why any city council would be against safety AND education of a completely LEGAL substance?

I've worked in the Michigan cannabis industry- TOURISM breeds cannabis. Saint Paul brings in a huge chunk of tourism, why again, would be hurt our city that can't house our home less, with a proposed ban of a legal substance that could bring in BILLIONS of dollars of tourism money? You will be enforcing this? I know our city paramedics are hurting- I was trained by Saint Paul Fire in 2014. Our police are short staffed. Again, will any of you come walk around and ticket us for smoking? You're expecting our emergency services to do this when they're already dealing with fentanyl ODs. Again, not sure what lens Saint Paul City Council is looking out of.

As a resident of Saint Paul, my promise to this council, is if you pass this proposal, my loyalty to this city, is gone. You live failed home owners with property taxes, you've failed our residents with affordable house, you've failed our police with staffing and funding -and now, you'll be failing Saint Paul residents by over stretching your proposal of banning cannabis consumption in Saint Paul.. if you as a council are not able to answer every question I had today as a resident, you should NOT be voting in this proposal. Stop pushing money to Minneapolis! Thanks. ”

Again, let me know if a PDF is needed. Thanks.

Kayla Fearing

On Wed, Aug 30, 2023 at 1:40 PM *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us> wrote:

That will be a public hearing item. You will get a chance to speak.

Thanks,

Greg Weiner

Executive Assistant – City Council

Saint Paul City Council

Greg.Weiner@ci.stpaul.mn.us

651-266-8512

He/him/his

From: Kayla Fearing <healingfearconsulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 1:20 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Re: Testifying at council meeting, 9/6/23

The cannabis proposal.

On Wed, Aug 30, 2023 at 10:35 AM *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us> wrote:

Public testimony will be accept for items listed as public hearings. What item were you hoping to speak to?

Thanks,

Greg Weiner

Executive Assistant – City Council

Saint Paul City Council

Greg.Weiner@ci.stpaul.mn.us

651-266-8512

He/him/his

From: Kayla Fearing <healingfearconsulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 30, 2023 10:30 AM
To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Testifying at council meeting, 9/6/23

To whom it may concern;

I am emailing to confirm that public testimony will be accepted at the Saint Paul City Council meeting, Wednesday September 6th, 2023? If I am correct, I would like to please testify. I will be in attendance and ready to speak.

Thank you.

Kayla Fearing

--

Kayla Fearing

Healing Fear Consulting

651-307-9269

Your Friend in HeaALTHCare

Go from Opioids to Cannabis, a Cannabinoid at a time.



[Please leave Healing Fear Consulting a review on Google](#)

--

Kayla Fearing

Healing Fear Consulting

651-307-9269

Your Friend in HeaALTHCare

Go from Opioids to Cannabis, a Cannabinoid at a time.



[Please leave Healing Fear Consulting a review on Google](#)

From: [Zeke McKinney](#)
To: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: re: St. Paul Ordinance Ord 23-40
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 2:47:56 PM

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

This e-mail is in regard to proposed St. Paul Ordinance Ord 23-40, entitled, " Amending Title XXIII Public Health Safety and Welfare of the Legislative Code to add Chapter 222, titled Smoking of Tobacco, Hemp and Cannabis Products in City Owned Public Places Prohibited", with the intent that this information be included in the public record regarding this ordinance.

This information is presented on behalf of myself, Dr. Zeke J. McKinney, MD, MHI, MPH, FACOEM, and does not represent views of my employer or any other organization with whom I am affiliated. For the record, I am a practicing occupational and environmental medicine physician, which is a medical specialty oriented around environmental hazards through the lens of prevention and public health. Of note, I am not a resident of St. Paul, however, I do have many patients that reside in St. Paul and I consider myself a public health advocate for the state of Minnesota.

There are many issues of concern regarding this particular ordinance that I will attempt to address as briefly as possible.

1. The primary concern regarding this ordinance is its enforcement mechanism via establishing a petty misdemeanor, which creates and/or exacerbates social inequities. Use of a petty misdemeanor as a mechanism of punishment for this ordinance will disproportionately impact some community members more than others. Specifically, in the absence of the ability to use a legal product in a public space, this ordinance creates an inequity in terms of which individuals may have access to a private space, such as a residential dwelling. Additionally, there is no lack of data demonstrating disproportionate contact with law enforcement by virtue of race, ethnicity, or skin color, i.e., it is at least plausible, but in reality is highly likely, that this enforcement will occur for different people at different rates and likely will also result in increased law enforcement contact with individuals as well. Most importantly, the establishment of a petty misdemeanor, which will be denoted on one's criminal record, has significant employment, housing, and likely several other implications by virtue of not only social stigma against cannabis use (regardless of its legality within our state), but also by virtue of ongoing federal regulations that continue to establish cannabis as highly illegal.

2. A second concern is regarding the philosophical orientation of this ordinance, which appears to be aimed at diminishing the number of toxic substances released into the air for which potential health and public health hazards may exist. While such an orientation or goal is laudable, this ordinance in reality would have a minor, if any, impact on human health and well-being. In fact, there are a variety of other mechanisms by which improvement of outdoor air quality could be better established, including, but not limited to: improved air quality monitoring in terms of frequency, geographic distribution, breadth of compounds measured, and sensitivity of levels measured; more stringent standards and enforcement of industrial pollutants, which comprise a much greater health and public health risk with respect to outdoor air contamination; establishing means to reduce the use of gasoline-powered motor vehicles and to reduce barriers to transitioning to electric vehicles;

3. Lastly, with the significant impact of COVID-19 in recent memory, and the increasing development of organic chemicals used in human environments over time, there is arguably significant merit to effort spent on considering methods to improve indoor air quality in addition to outdoor air quality, including through city-based legislative methods.

I will commend the City Council on continuing to consider methods of improving public health and safety, including reducing historical stigma around cannabis use by avoiding use of the word "marijuana" in this legislation, a word that continues to be used very commonly and perpetuates the century-long stigma against cannabis use in the United States that was specifically directed at non-white-skinned populations.

Thank you for your diligent work on behalf of the city.

Sincerely,

Zeke J. McKinney, MD, MHI, MPH, FACOEM (he/him)
Program Director, HealthPartners Occupational and Environmental Medicine Residency
Affiliate Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota School of Public Health
Research Investigator, HealthPartners Institute
HealthPartners West End Clinic, 1665 Utica Ave. S., Suite 100, St. Louis Park, MN 55416
zeke@umn.edu | zeke.j.mckinney@healthpartners.com
Social (Threads, Twitter, IG, Mastodon, LinkedIn, Facebook, TikTok): @ZekeMD
Phone: 952-541-2607 | Mobile: 612-567-9353 | Fax: 952-541-2626
Residency Coordinator:
Kristen Johnson, 651-293-8269, Kristen.L.Johnson@healthpartners.com

From: [Athena Hollins](#)
To: [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Cannabis ordinance
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:33:50 PM

I would like to publicly register my concerns and strong opposition to the proposed cannabis ordinance.

I am a State Representative in the Minnesota House and I represent the northern neighborhoods in the city of St Paul. I was also on the cannabis legalization conference committee where we negotiated the terms of the cannabis bill this year.

While I understand and appreciate the concern regarding smoke inhalation as a health concern, I see this proposed ordinance as being decidedly inequitable. The current state statute prohibits cannabis usage in multi-family homes. That includes duplexes and triplexes. Furthermore, many landlords restrict smoking in their units. Nearly 50% of all Saint Paul residents are renters, including many people who are low-income. By further restricting where people may use cannabis, the city council will have effectively rendered cannabis legalization meaningless. It will only be useful for those privileged enough to own their own home or have a backyard.

While on its face this may not sound like a serious issue, it's directly contrary to what we were attempting to accomplish at the state legislature. We have known for years that the war on drugs disproportionately impacts low-income residents and residents of color. Stopping these residents for "the smell of marijuana" has been a convenient opportunity for law enforcement interactions, which at best are traumatic to individuals and at worst, deadly. By criminalizing the use of cannabis on any City owned property, you are opening up the door for increased law enforcement interactions which was exactly what the legislature was attempting to reduce.

This ordinance also serves as one of the first restrictions set in place by a major metropolitan area in the state of Minnesota. Which means it will

be used as a standard for other municipalities going forward. This is especially worrisome when we consider cities that may not be as progressive or diverse as ours is. While our police force may use good sense and responsible tactics to enforce this proposed ordinance, I can almost guarantee that other cities will not.

I believe that this conversation warrants additional input from the community. A city council meeting at 3:30pm on a weekday certainly caters to those who are privileged enough to leave work early or have enough free time to attend. I.e. not those who will be impacted by this proposed ordinance. Furthermore, we cannot underestimate the burden of navigating our political system. I'm a sitting state legislator, and this process was nerve-wracking for ME. I can't imagine what it must be like for an average citizen.

In fact, that is why I felt compelled to come and testify. I own my own home, I have a backyard, I would not be meaningfully impacted by this proposed ordinance. But I represent literally thousands of St. Paul residents who would. And these are residents who are working right now, or caring for their children, or their elderly relatives, or they don't even know that this conversation is happening because they are busy just trying to survive. That's why I'm here.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude and respect for all of the council members. I know that your job is difficult, time consuming and often thankless. You are fantastic civil servants and I believe that you will do what is right.

Thank you.

Athena Hollins

From: [Sean Lim](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Sean Lim public comment — ORD 23-40 (9/6/23 item 44)
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:33:43 PM

☐ Sean Lim public comment — ORD...

LINK: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-VhmSfbU9UJTQyU4U3ajbRUFsaOBKxj5NhLI2AgU4_s/edit

Sean Lim, Ward 4.

I am here before you to voice my opposition to this proposed cannabis smoking ban for all city-controlled public spaces. I personally don't smoke weed but many of my friends, neighbors, with and folks I'm in community with do. And, I have the common sense to know that this ordinance will overwhelmingly do more harm than good. As it stands, the language of this proposed ordinance is so broad to the point that it would effectively ban and outlaw smoking cannabis in virtually all public spaces in Saint Paul - including our public goods like parks, trails, sidewalks and so much more.

I have seen members of this Council vote to override the will of the people of St. Paul more times than I can count. How many more times do your constituents, the residents of St. Paul need to appear in front of this body, stand at this podium, in front of the Dias to ask and plead this Council to not pass an ordinance that is overwhelmingly to the detriment of the poor, working class, black and brown residents, and renters of the City of St. Paul?

This ordinance does not make our communities safer. The only thing this does is give law enforcement a mechanism and a reason to stop, trap, harass, and penalize people in public spaces - disproportionately young people, poor people, people of color, unhoused neighbors and

renters who do not have a single family house that they own where they can smoke in the comfort and privacy of their property - and give out petty misdemeanors for something that was legalized by our State Legislature just this session. Where are they supposed to go if it becomes prohibited in every public city-owned space they have access to?

Furthermore, there is the aspect of the disturbing punitive nature of this legislation. The imposition of a petty misdemeanor, making cannabis consumption a petty offense for which a sentence of a fine of not more than \$300 may be imposed. For low income residents who live paycheck to paycheck, \$300 is anywhere from a quarter to half of their rent. Many of your own constituents will not be able to afford a \$300 fine, and if they are not able to pay up - it will go on their record, and that record could be used to deny them employment or housing for years to come. That is the real, tangible, material, substantive impact of this ordinance - drastically affecting the standard of living of the most marginalized and vulnerable St. Paulites across every single corner of this City.

functionally perpetuate racial and class discrimination and criminalization if passed. There has been very little intentional consultation nor community conversations in the creation of this ordinance, there was no series of no city wide listening sessions, or ways we could have given input. The proposed ordinance was not brought to State Legislators, District Councils, Community Organizations, City Departments, or issue advocacy groups

It is your job as City Council members to make it easier, not harder for the people of St. Paul, your own constituents, to go about their lives. As

such, any Council Member who cares about leaving a more livable city block by block for subsequent generations and posterity should vote NO on this proposed ordinance.

Sean Lim

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, 2021 Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management
| Political Science