

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

Dear Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee:

RE: Proposed amendments to the *Smoking and Vaping Bylaw* and the need to align restrictions on the smoking or vaping of any substance in the City of Calgary

On behalf of Action on Smoking & Health (ASH), I extend my support for the following proposed measures in to amend Bylaw 23M2018, the *Smoking and Vaping Bylaw*:

1. Prohibiting waterpipe (shisha) smoking in all public establishments by July 2021 (ideally sooner).
2. Prohibiting smoking in hotel/motel guest rooms.

However we have serious concerns with the proposed bylaw amendments as drafted since they *will not* provide adequate protection from children and youth who are being exposed to smoking and vaping in public places.

Unfortunately, proposed bylaw does not align the smoking/vaping of tobacco or other substances with the existing restrictions on cannabis consumption. The exemptions on smoking and vaping include many outdoor areas that are frequented by children and youth including city parks and public events.

Smoke-free policies and environments are a cornerstone of successful efforts to reduce tobacco use. Smoke-free environments have played a crucial role in changing norms regarding the acceptability of smoking and ultimately smoking behaviors.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

Within the last decade the use of vaping products has increased within the general population, resulting in vaping becoming more common in public spaces.<sup>5</sup>

Children are often unable to distinguish between smoking, toking and vaping especially when these products produce visible emissions. When youth witness smoking in public, they are more likely to perceive it as acceptable behaviour.<sup>6</sup>

Research indicates that exposure to public vaping behaviour has the potential to renormalize smoking among youth with vaping and nicotine addiction potentially leading to tobacco use among youth. This is due to the similarities between the form and function of cigarettes and vaping products.<sup>7,8</sup>

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1. U.S. National Cancer Institute and World Health Organization. The Economics of Tobacco and Tobacco Control. National Cancer Institute Tobacco Control Monograph 21. Chapter 6: The Impact of Smoke-Free Policies. NIH Publication No. 16-CA-8029A. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute; and Geneva, CH: World Health Organization; 2016.

2. Chapman, S., & Freeman, B. (2008). Markers of the denormalisation of smoking and the tobacco industry. *Tobacco Control*, 17, 25-31.

3. Tauras JA, Chaloupka FJ, Farrelly MC, et al. State tobacco control spending and youth smoking. *American journal of public health*. 2005 Feb;95(2):338-344.

4. Pierce JP, Leon M. Effectiveness of smoke-free policies. *The lancet oncology*. 2008 Jul;9(7):614-615.

5. Azagba, S, Baskerville, N.B., Foley, K. Susceptibility to cigarette smoking among middle and high school e-cigarette users in Canada. *Preventative Medicine* 103, 2017, 14-19.

6. Alesci, N. L., Forster, J. L., & Blaine, T. (2003). Smoking visibility, perceived acceptability, and frequency in various locations among youth and adults. *Preventative Medicine*, 36, 272-281.

7. Saebo, Gunnar, and Scheffels, Janne. Assessing notions of denormalization and renormalization of smoking in light of e-cigarette regulation. *International Journal of Drug Policy*: 44 (2017): 58-64.

8. Azagba, S, Baskerville, N.B., Foley, K. Susceptibility to cigarette smoking among middle and high school e-cigarette users in Canada. *Preventative Medicine* 103, 2017, 14-19.

### Action on Smoking & Health

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Smoke-free public spaces help to denormalize smoking since smoking is less visible and it reduces social desirability.<sup>9</sup> This reduction in public smoking can reduce tobacco use among children and youth as they are more likely to follow social norms.<sup>10</sup> Healthy modeling is an essential element of childhood development and kids must be protected from exposure to any form of smoking or vaping in public places, particularly where they congregate.<sup>11</sup>

Youth vaping in Alberta tripled between 2015 and 2017.<sup>12</sup> Alberta's youth vaping rate is the third highest in the country (behind Ontario and Quebec) with more than 35,000 kids reporting the use of vaping products in the past 30 days in 2017.<sup>13,14</sup> In fact, the rates of vaping among youth has surpassed the rate of smoking among youth.<sup>15</sup>

Eleven Alberta municipalities including Strathmore and Okotoks have aligned tobacco, vaping and cannabis outdoor public smoking restrictions at parks, playgrounds and public events.

This alignment will also simplify enforcement since there is no need to distinguish between who is smoking or vaping cannabis, tobacco or another substance. Vaping does not produce any discernable smell other than the flavour additive itself such as mint or cherry. Therefore it is almost impossible to detect who is vaping cannabis in public even though this is a clear violation of the Cannabis Consumption Bylaw.

Based on these concerns, we urge the Community and Protective Services committee to request a re-draft of proposed amendments to Bylaw 23M2018 that will align restrictions on the smoking and vaping of any substance within the City of Calgary.

Sincerely,

Les Hagen  
Executive Director



<sup>9</sup> Saebo, Gunnar., and Scheffels, Janne. Assessing notions of denormalization and renormalization of smoking in light of e-cigarette regulation. *International Journal of Drug Policy*: 44 (2017): 58-64

<sup>10</sup> Saebo, Gunnar., and Scheffels, Janne. Assessing notions of denormalization and renormalization of smoking in light of e-cigarette regulation. *International Journal of Drug Policy*: 44 (2017): 58-64

<sup>11</sup> Saebo, Gunnar., and Scheffels, Janne. Assessing notions of denormalization and renormalization of smoking in light of e-cigarette regulation. *International Journal of Drug Policy*: 44 (2017): 58-64

<sup>12</sup> Health Canada, Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey, 2016-2017, June 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canadian-student-tobacco-alcohol-drugs-survey.html>

<sup>13</sup> Health Canada, Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey, 2016-2017, June 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canadian-student-tobacco-alcohol-drugs-survey.html>

<sup>14</sup> Hammond D, Reid JL, Rynard VL, et al. Prevalence of vaping and smoking among adolescents in Canada, England, and the United States: repeat national cross sectional surveys. *BMJ (Clinical Research Ed)*. 2019;365:l2219. doi:10.1136/bmj.l2219.

<sup>15</sup> Health Canada, Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey, 2016-2017, June 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canadian-student-tobacco-alcohol-drugs-survey.html>

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