



DRAFT Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy 2024

Statement of Proposal

FOR CONSULTATION



Introduction

This is a proposal to review Council's Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy. We are asking the community for submissions to assess support/objections so that feedback can be considered and if necessary amendments made, before the Policy is adopted.

Council is consulting on this Policy using section 82 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). This section of the LGA sets out the principles for consultation that we must follow.

Background

Council's Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy (the Policy) was first adopted on 24 July 2019 and has been in place ever since. The purpose of the Policy is to promote the health and wellbeing of our communities by establishing smokefree areas in our district.

This Policy is not required by legislation, however its one that Council has chosen to have in place to support public health. We review this policy every five years to check in with the community if any changes are required.

What is included in the Policy?

The Policy contains smokefree public areas across the whole of the district as follows:

- All Council owned or managed Parks and Reserves
- Council owned playgrounds
- Skate parks
- All Council owned or managed sports locations
- All bus stops and shelters
- Public toilets
- The Hauraki Rail Trail
- Entrances outside all Council owned and operated buildings
- Outdoor public areas within the Central Business District (CBD) of Te Aroha, Matamata and Morrinsville as defined in Schedule 1
- All footpath outdoor dining areas within the district
- All public car parks outside CBD areas.

There are also designated smokefree areas in the CBDs of Matamata, Morrinsville and Te Aroha (please see Schedule 1 of the draft Policy).

Why do we have this Policy?

The purpose of the Policy is to promote the health and wellbeing of our communities by discouraging smoking in outdoor areas. The Policy utilises non-regulatory approaches such as smokefree areas, signage and education/awareness to achieve behavioural change. The principles of the Policy are:

- Promotion and support of the health and wellbeing of our community, including children and young people.
- Encouraging behavioural change in a manner that is acceptable and reflects our community values.
- Fostering a positive smokefree message, with an emphasis on modelling positive behaviour for children and young people.

Are we proposing any changes to the Policy?

Council are not proposing any major changes to this Policy and have only made minor amendments to assist in clarity. These changes are indicated in the draft Policy in red text with proposed deletions struck through.

We want to know from you if you think any changes are required to meet the needs of the community.

Analysis of reasonably practicable options

Most councils in New Zealand have similar policies supporting smokefree areas. The rationale for smokefree outdoor areas is primarily that decreasing the visibility of smoking helps to de-normalise it, which supports efforts towards developing smokefree communities. Council has considered the following options and would like to hear your thoughts on which option you prefer:

Option one: Revoke the Policy

This option is for Council to revoke the current Policy, meaning there will be no policy in place to support smokefree areas in the district.

Advantages	Disadvantages
The Policy would not require any future reviews.	Council would not have a policy to support and promote smokefree outdoor areas, however Council could choose to do this via other means (e.g. through the setting of a bylaw).

	Heath New Zealand Te Whatu Ora Waikato and the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society recommended that Council should have this Policy. Therefore, not having such a Policy would be inconsistent with this recommendation.
	Council would be out of step with other councils around New Zealand, as the majority of councils have smokefree policies.
	Does not align with the purpose of local government and relevant legislation (including the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990).
	Does not promote and support a healthy community.

Option 2 – Adopt the amended Smokefree Policy

This is Council's preferred option.

This option is for Council to adopt the draft Policy containing minor amendments to assist in clarity.

Advantages	Disadvantages
May provide for health benefits for the community including reducing the impacts of second hand smoke, lessening the uptake in smoking and vaping by young people and environment benefits.	The Policy may not be supported by some people e.g. smokers. There are associated costs to supporting the Policy, e.g. maintenance of signage/new signage.
May encourage people to give up smoking with the resulting health and financial benefits.	
The draft Policy aligns with the purpose of local government and relevant legislation (including the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990).	
The draft Policy is consistent with other councils smokefree approaches	
Following consultation, the Policy can be updated as a result of feedback received.	

Have your say

Whether you agree, oppose or you have suggestions on things we could change for this proposal or any other proposal, we want to hear from you.

You can make a submission between 21 March and 21 April 2024.

For more information about this proposal, and to see what else we are consulting on, go to mpdc.govt.nz/ltp

Making a submission

🖥️ Go to mpdc.govt.nz/ltp to fill out the online form

📄 Drop off form: Any Council office

📧 Mail to: PO Box 266, Te Aroha 3342

✉️ Email: info@mpdc.govt.nz

Head to mpdc.govt.nz/ltp to make a submission and have your say by 21 April 2024

Please be aware that submissions made to Council are public information. Your submission will be used and reproduced for purposes such as reports to Councillors, which are made available to the public and media.

Key Dates

Council adopt proposal for community consultation	13 March 2024
Submission period	21 March – 21 April 2024
Community present submissions to Council	8 May (9 May if needed) 2024
Proposal is adopted	26 June 2024
New Smokefree Outdoor Spaces Policy applies	1 July 2024