



**DATE:** August 4, 2025

**MEMO TO:** Sara Knizhnik, Chair  
Operations Committee

**FROM:** John E. Nelson  
Chief Operations Officer

**REQUEST:** Provide policy direction regarding smoking (including vaping) on District property.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED:** Public Access and Connections

**FINANCIAL DATA:** There is no financial impact at this time. If the General Use Ordinance were amended to prohibit smoking at additional locations on District property, then there would be a cost to fabricate and install new signs accordingly.

**BACKGROUND:** At the February 3, 2025 Operations Committee meeting, a Commissioner discussed during Miscellaneous Business a concern about smoking in the preserves. The Committee discussed the issue briefly, and the Committee Chair and District President directed staff to bring the topic to the Operations Committee for policy direction.

At the May 5, 2025 Operations Committee meeting, a request for policy direction was brought to the Committee for consideration. The discussion began with an overview of the Smoke-Free Illinois Act (SFIA) that was enacted on January 1, 2008 and subsequent amendments to the District's Ordinance Governing the General Use of District Property in 2013, 2020 and 2021 pertaining to smoking. The current General Use Ordinance prohibits smoking:

- Within 20 feet of any District Building or open-air dining facility
- On or near any District playground
- Within any off-leash dog area
- Within any area that is being used for a special event or program sponsored wholly or in part by the District.

After a robust discussion by Commissioners, staff were given direction to report back at the August meeting about how the District may survey our users for their thoughts on prohibiting smoking and to gauge public opinion. Staff will present options for potential survey methods for the Committee to discuss.

**REVIEW BY OTHERS:** Executive Director, Deputy Director of Finance, Director of Public Safety, Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel.