

# SMOKING BYLAW IN CALGARY

APRIL 2001

***Calgarians Seek “Middle-Ground” in Any New Smoking Bylaw – Banning Smoking in All Public Places is Not a Popular Option (42% Approve), Nor is Unfettered Public Smoking (11% Approve)***

***Calgarians Offer “Situational” Support/Opposition to Public Smoking – Smoking Ban for Bars, Lounges, Pubs and Restaurants is Not Supported***



**Ipsos Reid**

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(**Calgary, AB**) – Calgary’s current public smoking by-law came into force in 1993, and in the interim, major Canadian cities such as Vancouver, Toronto and Ottawa have implemented considerably more restrictive bylaws for public establishments in their jurisdictions. As Calgary’s City Fathers consider revising the ordinance in the city, a recent Ipsos-Reid survey finds that Calgarians are seeking a middle-ground in any new public smoking by-law. Only one-in-ten (11%) Calgarians believe that there should be absolutely no limitations placed on smoking in public places, while a larger minority (42%) advocate a complete ban on smoking in public areas.

Survey respondents provide some additional insights in seeking a compromise between these two opposing positions on the issue. A sizeable majority of Calgarians (64%) feel that public smoking is tolerable provided there is a separate section for smokers, although a larger majority (80%) agree that smoking should be allowed in public places if there is a separate, well-ventilated room set aside for smokers. Smoking in public places where minors and those under the age of 18 is clearly an important consideration for many Calgarians. Fully

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77 percent of those interviewed agreed that smoking should not be allowed in public places with children.

Bars, lounges, pubs and restaurants are areas in need of special exceptions, according to most Calgarians. Nearly one-quarter (73%) of those interviewed agree that “regardless of the restrictions on other public places, smoking should be allowed in bars, lounges and pubs”. A slightly smaller majority (60%) agree with the same exception for restaurants, “if they have a special section” for smokers.

*These are the findings of a survey conducted under the auspices of the Alberta Angus Reid Report, a quarterly examination of business, economics and politics in the province. The telephone survey was conducted between February 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2001, with a random and representative sample of 400 adult Calgarians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within +/- 4.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Calgary been polled. The margin of error will be larger within smaller sub-groupings of the total sample such as gender, age, etc. These data have been weighted to ensure the sample's gender/age composition reflects that of the actual citywide population according to Statistics Canada Census data.*

A detailed summary of results can be found on the pages that follow.



## ***Calgarians Seek Middle-Ground as Changes Contemplated for the City By-law***

Only one-in-ten (11%) Calgarians currently support the idea that there should be “no restrictions on smoking in public places”, with 6 percent strongly agreeing with this view and 5 percent moderately – meanwhile, 88 percent of the city disagree with unfettered smoking in public places, with two-thirds (69%) strongly opposed. A majority of Calgarians do not support the other extreme on this issue either. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) Calgarians disagree with the view that “smoking should be allowed in any public place” (31% strongly disagree), while a large minority (42%) back this approach (29% strongly).

Survey respondents provide some additional insights in seeking compromise between these two opposing positions on the issue. A sizable majority of Calgarians (64%) feel that public smoking is tolerable provided there is a separate section for smokers, over one-third (35%) strongly agree with this statement. Meanwhile, one-third (36%) disagree with a “separate section” option, with over one-quarter (26%) strongly opposed. A larger majority (80%) of city residents say that smoking in public places “should be allowed provided there is a separate, well-ventilated room set aside for smokers”, with nearly one-half (47%) of the sample strongly in favour of this arrangement.

Smoking near minors, that is those under the age of 18, is a strong consideration as far as many Calgarians are concerned. Fully 77 percent agree with the statement that “smoking should not be allowed in any public places where there are children under the age of 18”, with 58 percent strongly in favour of this view.



- Support for restricting smoking is higher among non-smokers than it is among smokers, however even smokers recognize the need for some limitations – only 16% of smokers agree with the idea of placing “no restrictions” on public smoking.
- Support for restrictions on public smoking tend to be higher among those with a university education when compared to other survey participants.

### ***Smoking Ban for Bars, Lounges, Pubs and Restaurants is not Supported***

Bars, lounges, pubs and, to a lesser extent, restaurants are seen as public places that should receive special consideration by the city. Six-in-ten (60%) Calgarians agree with the statement that “regardless of restrictions on other public places, smoking should be allowed in restaurants *if they have a special section*”, with one-third (32%) strongly endorsing this view. Meanwhile, four-in-ten (40%) Calgarians take the opposite view on this suggestion, with the lion’s share (30%) offering strong disapproval.

As far as three-quarters (73%) of Calgarians are concerned, bars, lounges and pubs are not areas where the city should ban smoking, with 38 percent strongly agreeing with the statement “regardless of restrictions on other public places, smoking should be allowed in bars, lounges and pubs”.

- Again, support for these statements was higher among smokers than non-smokers. Only a bare majority (51%) of non-smokers agree with allowing smoking in restaurants with a special section, although 66% respond similarly for bars, lounges and pubs.
- Education level is clearly a driver of support on these items, with the proportion of the population who is tolerant of smoking in these locations declining with education levels.



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