

Orange County: Smoke-Free Public Places

Public Survey Response Summary

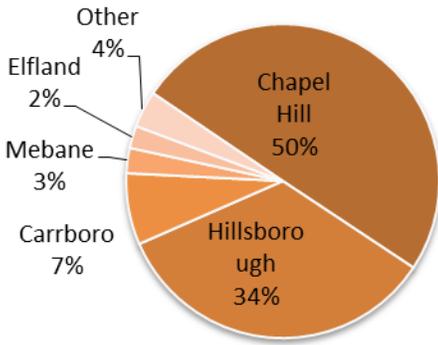
As part of the Board of Health process of consideration of the Smoke-Free Public Places Rule, public input was sought during the time period beginning on September 27, 2012 and concluding on October 24, 2012 with a public hearing. Community members were given five (5) ways to provide input on the proposed rule, all with English and Spanish options: online survey, e-mail, voicemail, US mail, and public hearing. Response prior to the October 24, 2012 public hearing included: 735 completed online surveys, 11 e-mail responses, five voicemail messages, and one letter via US mail. Survey responses were largely supportive. When combining responses of *Yes* and *No Opinion*, all but Government Grounds (79.1%) and Sidewalks (71.2%) received 80% support or greater. Comments received by email, voicemail, US mail also showed more support than opposition to the proposed ban.

Survey respondents' demographics were comparable to the County over all, with two notable exceptions: The survey over-sampled to include more high school student opinions and opinions of citizens with less education than County averages. The race breakdown is roughly comparable to County census data. Income data was difficult to compare given the question format and with a substantial number leaving that question blank

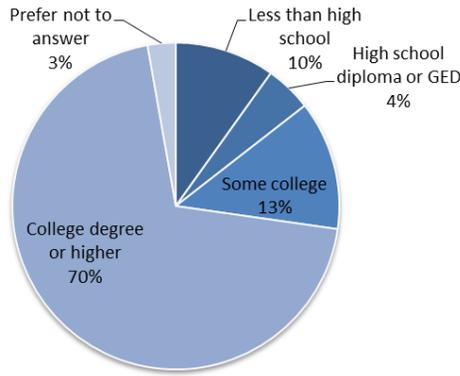
This report is an overview of the public input we received.

Survey Demographics

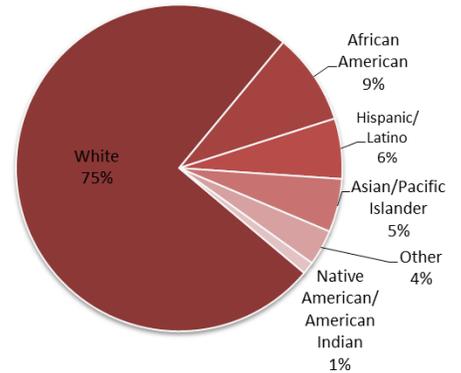
Location



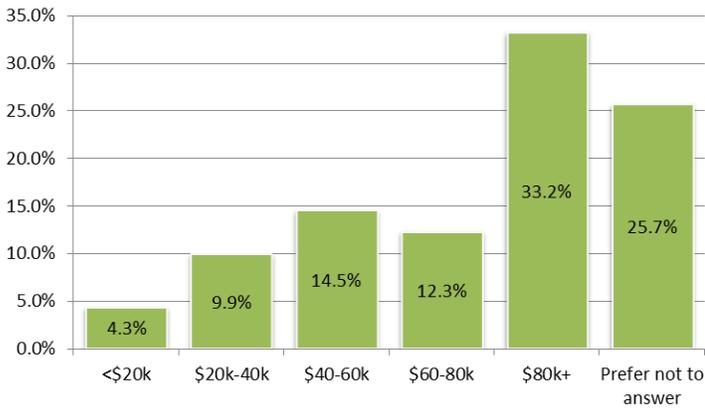
Education



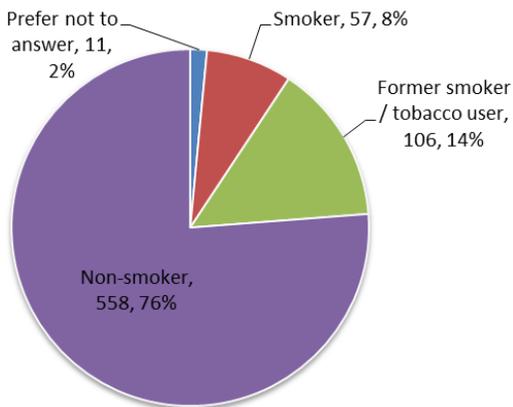
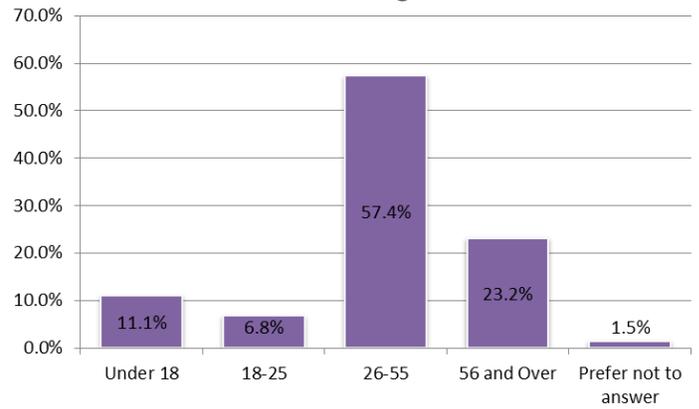
Race



Income



Age

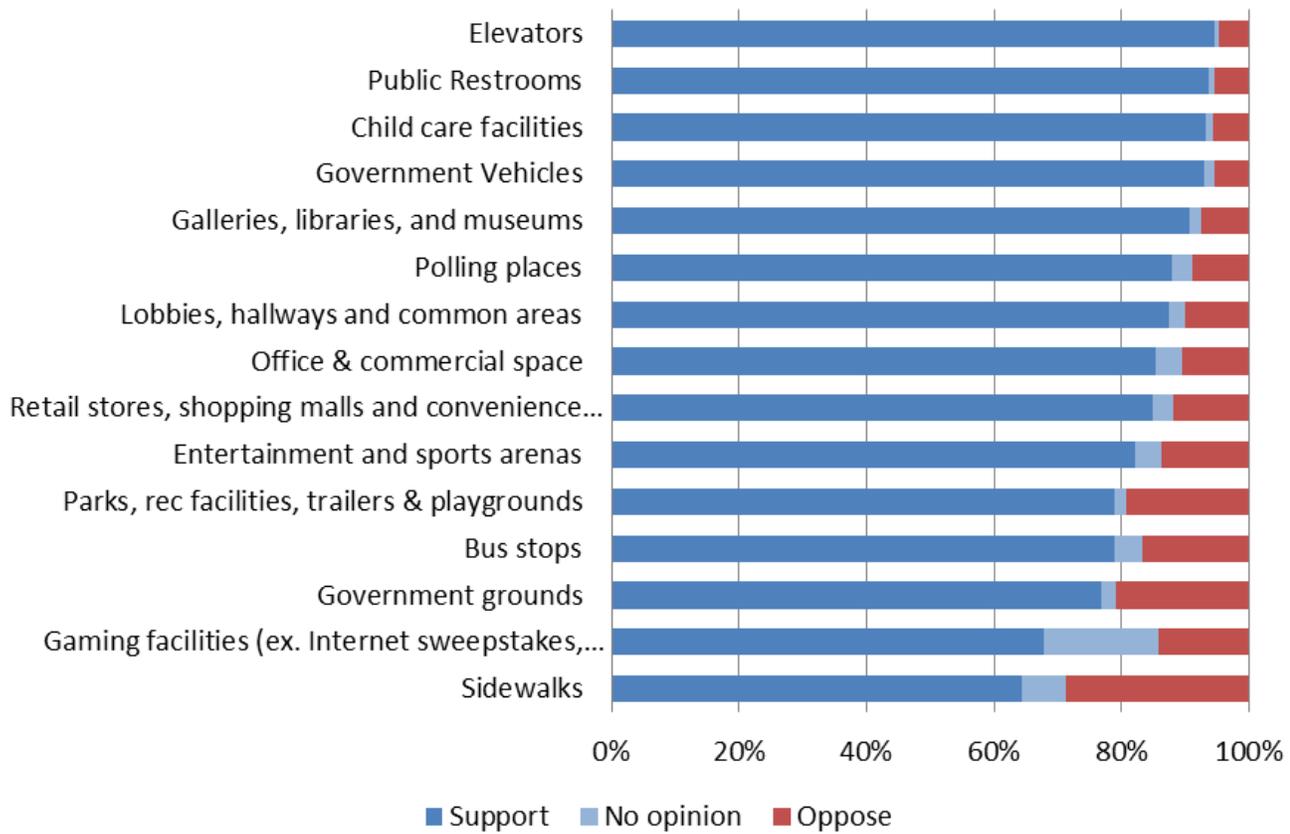


Smoking Habits

- Non-smokers supported 87.8% of the 15 locations listed.
- Former smokers supported 79.0% of the locations listed.
- Smokers & “Prefer not to answer” supported 54.3% and 53.3% of the listed locations respectively.

Public Support By Smoking Location

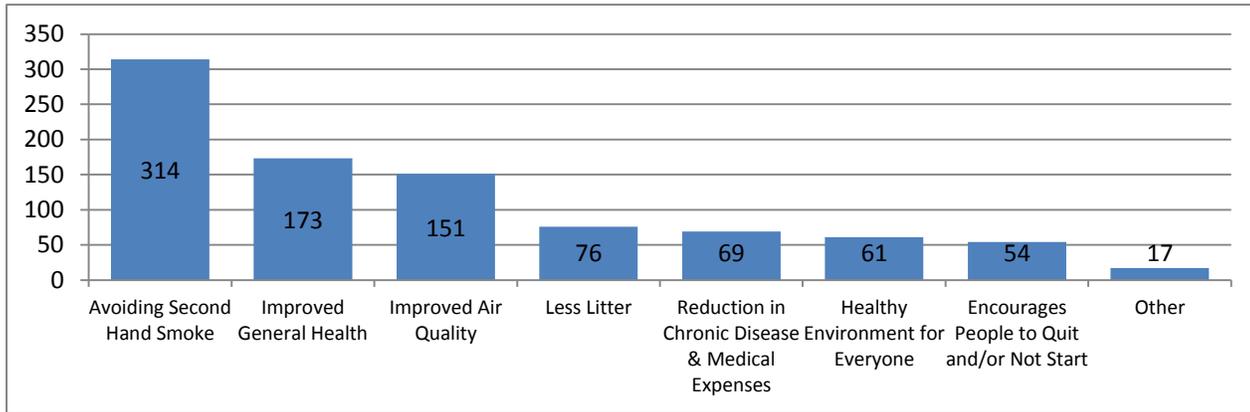
Overall, all locations received clear support significantly beyond a majority. All but government grounds and sidewalks received 80% support or greater, with many receiving 90% support.



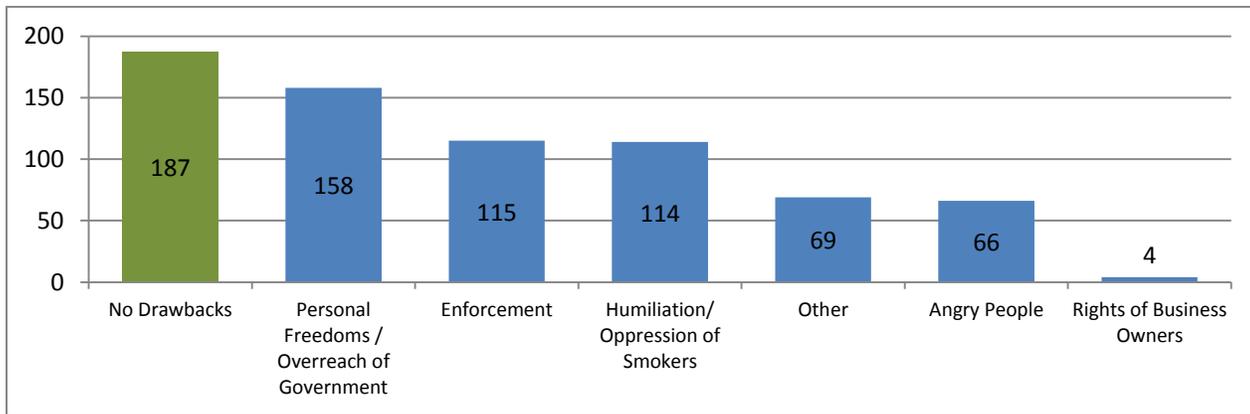
	Yes	No	No opinion
Elevators	94.7%	4.7%	0.7%
Public Restrooms	93.6%	5.5%	1.0%
Child care facilities	93.2%	5.6%	1.2%
Government Vehicles	92.9%	5.5%	1.6%
Galleries, libraries, and museums	90.6%	7.4%	1.9%
Polling places	87.8%	8.7%	3.4%
Lobbies, hallways and common areas	87.4%	9.9%	2.6%
Office & commercial space	85.3%	10.5%	4.3%
Retail stores, shopping malls and convenience stores	84.9%	11.8%	3.3%
Entertainment and sports arenas	82.1%	13.6%	4.3%
Bus stops	79.0%	16.8%	4.3%
Parks, rec facilities, trailers & playgrounds	78.9%	19.2%	1.9%
Government grounds	76.9%	20.9%	2.2%
Gaming facilities (ex. Internet sweepstakes, video poker)	67.9%	14.2%	17.9%
Sidewalks	64.4%	28.8%	6.8%

Open Ended Summary Question Analysis

Q: What do you believe are the most significant benefits of a smoke-free public places rule?

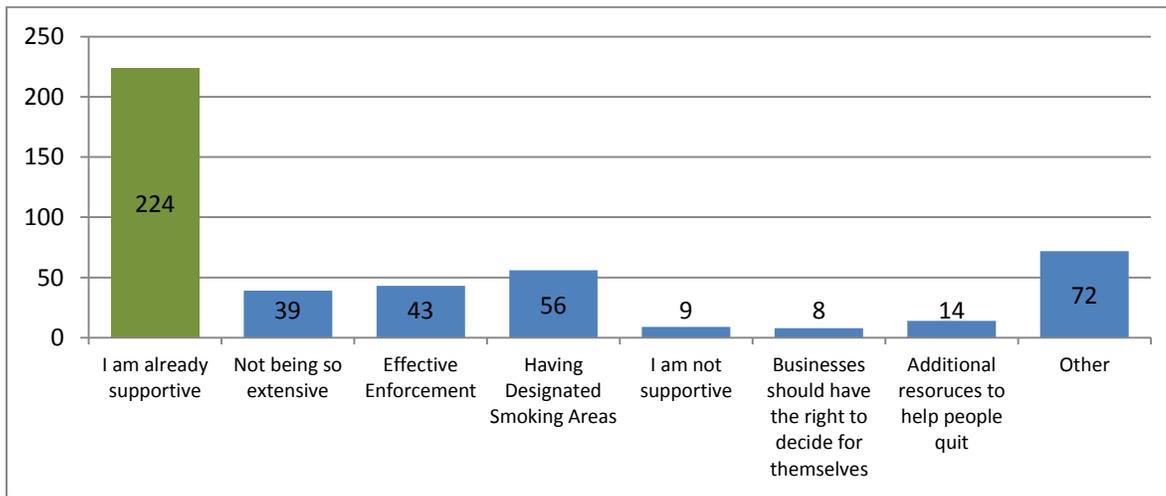


Q: What do you believe are the biggest drawbacks of a smoke-free public places rule?



Large Other Write-in: *Almost half of other represented concerns with the economic impact on businesses with fewer visitors to these places and smokers feeling less welcome.*

Q: What would make you more supportive of a smoke-free public places rule in Orange County and its towns?



Large Other Write-in: *The bulk of the "other" category included requesting adequate advertisements and signage of new regulations and increased information/education on the risks of 2nd hand smoke and studies of the ban's impact.*

Summary of “Why No Support?” Open Ended Comments by Location

Sorted by lowest % of approval.

NOTE: This section is a summary of the oppositional minority, not the average response. Average response was positive even for locations with the “least” amount of support.

Sidewalks (64.4% Support, 28.8% Against, 6.8% No opinion): The majority of responses against banning smoking on sidewalks made references to the fact that sidewalks are outside, in open air and not in enclosed spaces, and transient spaces—people are usually passing by and not exposed to smoke for long. Sidewalks are described as too broad of an area and therefore difficult to enforce. Other big concerns are 1) general government intrusion on personal liberties/rights/freedoms and 2) smokers not having anywhere else to go if smoking is banned on sidewalks. To a smaller degree, the potential effect on businesses with outdoor dining spaces was mentioned as well.

Gaming Facilities (67.9% Support, 14.2% Against, 17.9% No opinion): The vast majority of responses against banning smoking at gaming facilities said that the decision to allow smoking should be left up to the private business owner. Others said there should be a designated area for smoking within the facility. Some said that smoking was part of the atmosphere. Some comments reinforced the idea of government intrusion and infringement of personal liberties. A number of comments were dismissive of the health of gamblers and therefore also the smokers that frequent this type of establishment.

Government Grounds (76.9% Support, 20.9% Against): Most respondents spoke to open air/space not being a problem for smoke that would ‘dissipate’. As in the other questions, government intrusion, civil rights, freedom of choice, personal rights and rights of tax payers to engage in a legal activity was discussed. Many respondents stated parking lots and designated smoking areas away from building entrances should allow for smoking by employees as well as residents using county/municipal building/facilities. Without designated areas employees and clients would be forced to walk away from their service sites or smoke in visible areas (street out front) . A few comments addressed the complexity of smoking behavior-addiction, stress relief, and the ability to quit. One mentioned the “Tyranny of the majority” suggesting it was easy for non-smokers to move away from smokers.

Parks, rec facilities, trailers & playgrounds (78.9% Support, 19.2% Against): Most respondents agreed no smoking around children, playgrounds, shelters, and indoor rec facilities made sense. Banning smoking in outdoor/open air areas like trails and more open spaces did not. Comments about open air/outdoor spaces were similar to other questions. Government intrusion, civil rights, personal choice and freedom, taxpayer rights and over-regulation were stated as reasons not to ban smoking in Parks, rec facilities, trails and playgrounds. Many respondents felt designated areas away from children and gathering places (shelters, playground, etc.) should be provided to allow for smoking. Smokers reminded surveyors that “they paid taxes too.” Several comments mentioned litter and enforcing those regulations as a way to address smoking.

Bus Stops (79.0% Support, 16.8% Against): A majority of respondents stated that people should be allowed to smoke outdoors, second hand smoke was only deemed problematic if the bus stops were enclosed/shelter or there was not adequate distance or space between smokers or non-smokers. Several respondents spoke to the need of designated areas for smoking and demonstrating common sense and courtesy to those that do and do not smoke—do not smoke if it bothers others, move away from smokers if you are bothered. Generally, second hand smoke in an outdoor environment was not considered a problem under any circumstances for those against the ban. As reflected elsewhere, respondents spoke to government intrusion, civil rights, public taxpayer places, and the freedom of choice.

Entertainment & Sports Arenas (82.1% Support, 13.6% Against): Of those opposed to regulating a Smoke-Free Public Places Rule in Entertainment and Sports Arenas, the majority state that if the venue is an outdoor facility, it shouldn’t be regulated. The general theme seems to reflect the belief that smoking outdoors is not dangerous to those around. However, there was also significant support to provide designated smoking areas that are outside and removed from nonsmoking patrons. The other overarching theme was that business owners should be able to dictate whether or not their facility allows smoking.