

July 2, 2025

Greetings Northfield City Council Members,

At our June meeting, the Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (N-ASAP) reviewed a proposed update to the City of Northfield's tobacco ordinance. This ordinance update has been discussed by the members of N-ASAP for over six months and with the help of city staff and the city attorneys, a draft for this update was created. It is our understanding from City Administrator Martig that a first reading of an ordinance is scheduled for August 4<sup>th</sup>. We are assisting with background information for that meeting's materials, and we also plan to present information at that time.

Members of N-ASAP are committed to and work diligently to prevent youth substance misuse. Throughout their efforts the topic of increased use of nicotine, particularly vaping products, among youth has risen to the forefront. On December 31st, 2024, several members of the N-ASAP attended the Rice County Board of Commissioners meeting where they approved our request to ban the sale of all flavored and menthol commercial tobacco products, raise the minimum clerk selling age from 18 to 21, and ban coupons and promotions of commercial tobacco products. This was a critical first step in protecting our youth in Rice County from the harms of early nicotine use, but ultimately the Rice County ordinance update only impacted retailers in unincorporated Rice County, of which there are only five. To truly make an impact we believe the ban on flavor and menthol nicotine products needs to be expanded, and while we are hopeful that the state legislature will eventually create a statewide ban, until that happens we are asking you, our local leaders, to lead the way.

We know that this will be viewed as a controversial topic by some, but as the Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention one of our primary goals is to limit access to harmful substances that negatively impact our youth. We need your help in protecting our youth from the intense targeting practices of big tobacco companies. We are proposing the following ordinances be updated:

- 1) End the sale of all flavored and menthol commercial tobacco products
- 2) Restrict coupons and promotions for commercial tobacco products
- 3) Restrict the delivery sale of commercial tobacco products
- 4) Raise the minimum clerk selling age from 18 to 21 years old

We are looking forward to the opportunity to present to you all on the 4th of August to share with you why this is so important.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Meleah Follen and Ashley Gardner, N-ASAP staff support  
On behalf of the entire N-ASAP commission