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April 30, 2026

Minneapolis City Council  
350 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Room 370  
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Dear Council President Payne, Council Vice President Osman and Council Members:

I have vetoed Ordinance No. 2026-006. Drug paraphernalia enforcement is a critical component of our City's overall safety and quality of life strategy. Currently, possession of drug paraphernalia in a public place is a misdemeanor offense pursuant to Minneapolis City Ordinance (MCO) 223.235. That ordinance provides officers with reasonable suspicion to stop an individual and investigate further. Removing the ability for officers to make these stops significantly limits their ability to investigate drug offenses.

In 2025, the City Attorney's Office successfully used the drug paraphernalia ordinance to divert 10 violators of the law into a restorative justice process that focuses on the needs of the harmed parties, those who caused harm, and the involved communities. Moreover, in 2025, Metro Transit Police used the drug paraphernalia ordinance 459 times in Minneapolis to clean up conditions on our transit system, further encouraging residents to use transit safely.

Right now, we are seeing the visceral reality of open drug use. Every resident deserves to navigate our sidewalks without the fear of stepping on a needle. Every student should be able to take the train to school without witnessing open injection. Keeping someone alive should go hand in hand with helping them live. Continued open drug use on our streets is devastating — for residents, for families, and for small businesses trying to survive.

I remain a firm believer in harm reduction, but we need every tool available to combat addiction and related quality of life issues. My administration has championed a "both-and" approach that meets people where they are in their journey to recovery. We have the data to show this is working. The Medical Mobile Unit has connected with 2,300 people and distributed nearly 500 Narcan kits since December 2025. Our Narcan Vending Machines have distributed 1,886 boxes of Narcan. A pilot to provide long-term medication to support those going through opioid recovery (Brixadi) is providing life-saving support to over 100 individuals.

These programs prove that we can lead with compassion while maintaining the high standards of public conduct that Minneapolis expects. Compassion means meeting people where they are-- not that anything goes. And this work — getting that balance right — is exactly

what strong leadership looks like. We should be focusing on scaling these proven solutions rather than removing the tools that allow us to intervene.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JF', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mayor Jacob Frey  
City of Minneapolis