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From the Atlanta Business Chronicle:

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Atlanta eyes smoking, vaping ban including at airport

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Atlanta could prohibit smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, if new legislation is approved.

Atlanta City Council members Matt Westmoreland and Andre Dickens plan to introduce legislation to ban smoking citywide at Monday's council meeting.

It would halt smoking indoors including at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International



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Cigar bars and hookah lounges would be allowed an exemption to the ban.

"This is about saving lives," Westmoreland said in an interview Monday. "I think everyone in Atlanta has the right to breathe smoke-free air. We are literally the last major city in the United States to not have this type of rule in place."

Every year in the U.S., secondhand smoke causes nearly 42,000 deaths, according to advocacy group Smokefree Atlanta Coalition.

"Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of Georgians – and secondhand smoke increases the risk of nonsmokers developing heart disease by 25 to 30 percent," Michael Balk, a member of the Metro Atlanta American Heart Association's advisory board, said in an announcement.

Westmoreland said he doesn't expect much opposition to the proposed ban.

"Legislation like this doesn't have a negative impact on business," he said, citing similar laws and their impact in cities including Savannah and New Orleans. "Twelve or 18 months after that legislation passed, business actually went up in places that were worried about it."

Georgia already has some laws related to smoking. In 2005, the state passed the Smokefree Air Act. But it included exemptions, such as allowing smoking at establishments that didn't employ or serve people under 18.

In 2012, Atlanta banned smoking at public parks.

A work session on the new legislation could happen in early May, with a vote expected around June.

If approved by City Council, the smoking ban would take effect Sept. 1.

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