

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

2. Mandatory Mask Policy for Vancouver Civic Facilities

Submitted by: Councillor Kirby-Yung

WHEREAS

1. The COVID-19 pandemic impact has been significant causing many residents to severely curtail their activities to adhere to physical distancing and health guidelines. This has and continues to impact people's daily lives and social and mental well-being;
2. Municipalities across Canada are adopting new policies requiring masks to be worn in all civic facilities including city halls, libraries, recreation and culture facilities. Delta Council unanimously adopted a mask policy to take effect October 1 as did Richmond at Committee with the final Council vote slated for October 13;
3. Other public serving agencies have also introduced mandatory face mask policies including TransLink, BC Transit and BC Ferries and compliance has been high to date;
4. A recent Simon Fraser University study looking at mask mandates across Ontario's 34 public health units over a two-month period this summer found the policies were associated with a 25 per cent or larger drop in weekly cases. The study has not yet been peer-reviewed;
5. While the Province has not implemented a mandatory mask policy, the Provincial Health Officer recommends wearing masks indoors where distancing may be challenging, or where people may be for extended periods of time, as a good, preventive measure;
6. With the fall upon us and winter approaching, people will naturally be spending more time indoors;
7. The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Park Board closed all civic facilities in March in response to COVID-19 and a civic declared emergency including civic theatres, libraries, community centres and recreation facilities. These have been gradually reopening as the City, Vancouver Park Board and Vancouver Public Library work towards a return of services. These services play a vital role in the mental, physical and social well-being of residents;
8. The impact of a second significant shutdown in the City (and Province) would have devastating impacts on small business and residents;
9. The City has a key role to play in leading by example with safe operations protocols as we continue through COVID-19 and work towards recovery; and

10. The City also has an obligation to support the health and safety of its frontline staff.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council endorse a mandatory mask policy and direct staff to initiate a mandatory mask policy for the duration of the COVID-19 response and recovery as soon as possible for Vancouver Civic facilities.
- B. THAT the policy include exemptions for children under five, persons with disabilities and persons with underlying medical conditions that may inhibit them from being able to wear masks.
- C. THAT staff work with non-profit partners and/or utilize senior government Covid restart funding to provide masks to support persons who may not be able to afford them.
- D. THAT the policy be widely communicated through social media, communications and on-site signage at relevant facilities to raise awareness and ask the public for compliance should they wish to utilize civic facilities.
- E. THAT subject to approval of the above, this motion be sent to the Vancouver Park Board, Vancouver Public Library Board, Vancouver Civic Theatres Board and PNE Board for their consideration and encouragement to adopt a mandatory mask policy for civic facilities under their respective jurisdictions.

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