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His Worship Mayor Ed Holder & City of London Councillors
City Hall
300 Dufferin Ave.
London, ON N6A 4L9

July 17, 2020

Dear Mayor Holder and Council,

Thank you for your strong and decisive leadership during the COVID-19 emergency, and your unwavering commitment to Londoners in response to the unprecedented challenges of the past four months.

As London enters Stage 3 of economic reopening, we are writing to urge you to pass a by-law to make non-medical masks or face coverings mandatory in the City of London. We appreciate the actions taken by Dr. Chris Mackie of the Middlesex-London Health Unit to issue Section 22 Class Orders under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* requiring masks on public transit and commercial vehicles for hire, as well as in personal care establishments. As MPPs, we have used every available communication tool to help promote Dr. Mackie's strong recommendation that masks be worn in all indoor public places. However, we continue to hear from constituents across the city who are concerned about the number of Londoners not wearing masks, and who fear that the reopening of the economy will lead to a deadly second wave, especially in light of the chaos unfolding in the United States. We also hear from parents of school-aged children, as well as experts in children's mental health, who understand the vital importance of a safe return to school in the fall, and want to do everything possible to ensure that in-class instruction is not jeopardized by a resurgence of the virus.

The Premier of Ontario has made clear that he will not implement a provincial directive on masks, and that decisions on masking should be determined on a local or regional basis. As elected representatives for the City of London, we are calling on you to consider the mounting scientific evidence showing the effectiveness of masks in limiting the transmission of COVID-19. Prominent members of the medical science community have written to Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. David Williams, federal Health Minister Patti Hajdu, and Ontario Health Minister Christine Elliot detailing the numerous papers and scientific reviews that demonstrate the efficacy of mask-wearing in lowering rates of COVID-19 transmission.

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[Their open letter](#), signed by more than 1,700 health care professionals, recommends that locations of high population density (such as the City of London) implement mandatory masking or face covering policies in "ACT":

- All indoor spaces outside the home (such as schools, shops, and businesses)
- Crowds (anywhere that is difficult to distance from others)
- Transit (public transportation)

Londoners need consistent, clear messaging at the local level to normalize community masking in all public places as a civic duty that helps reduce the risk of others contracting COVID-19 and promotes our collective health and well-being. London's economic recovery relies on consumers having confidence in the safety of retail and other commercial establishments, and workers feeling secure that their health will be protected when they return to work. Mandatory masking and a consistent approach to health and safety would help advance both goals.

In passing a municipal by-law, we recommend that exclusion criteria recognize the needs of vulnerable populations, such as those who have trouble breathing, are hearing impaired or cannot put on or remove a mask without assistance, and children under the age of two. We also encourage the City of London to minimize fines for by-law infractions and increase public education regarding the importance of masks for health and economic recovery, in addition to physical distancing, frequent hand-washing, staying home when sick, and other public health measures.

You have our full commitment to support you in your efforts to protect the health of our community.

Sincerely,

Peggy Sattler
MPP London West

Terence Kernaghan
MPP London North Centre

Teresa Armstrong
MPP London-Fanshawe

cc. Dr. Chris Mackie, Middlesex-London Medical Officer of Health