

Dear Members of the York Regional Council:

It is our understanding that on July 9, 2020, the members of the York Regional Council will be voting on the proposal to make the wearing of masks in public indoor settings mandatory throughout the cities that make up York Region.

As residents of York Region, specifically Markham, we are strongly opposed to the mandating of masks in public indoor settings. The information in the paragraphs below outline the primary reasons for our opposition. We are kindly asking that you read through the information from a position of intellectual honesty.

- Mask wearing leads to hypoxia (low blood oxygen levels). Some of the symptoms of hypoxia include: shortness of breath, fast heart rate, slower breathing, coughing, etc. Refer to this [link](#) for a detailed list.
- Hypoxia causes the body to go into stress mode, which causes the release of the hormone Cortisol. When Cortisol is released, it leads to the suppression of the immune system. A weakened immune system then causes a person to be susceptible to illnesses.
- Many people do not wear their masks properly (e.g. frequently adjusting, mask is situated beneath their chin), nor store them properly (e.g. stuffed into pockets, or hanging off of rearview mirrors).
 - The World Health Organization (W.H.O.) has developed a protocol for safe mask wearing.

How should I wear and care for a fabric mask?

Using a fabric mask:

- Clean your hands before putting on the mask.
- Inspect the mask for tears or holes, do not use a mask that is damaged.
- Adjust the mask to cover your mouth, nose, and chin, leaving no gaps on the sides.
- Avoid touching the mask while wearing it.
- Change your mask if it gets dirty or wet.
- Clean your hands before taking off the mask.
- Take off the mask by removing it from the ear loops, without touching the front of the mask.
- Clean your hands after removing the mask.

Caring for a fabric mask:

- If your fabric mask is not dirty or wet and you plan to reuse it, put it in a clean plastic, resealable bag. If you need to use it again, hold the mask at the elastic loops when removing it from the bag.
- Wash fabric masks in soap or detergent and preferably hot water (at least 60 degrees) at least once a day.
- If hot water is not available, wash the mask in soap/detergent and room-temperature water, followed by either boiling the mask for 1 minute OR; by soaking the mask in 0.1% chlorine for 1 minute and thoroughly rinsing the mask with room temperature water (there should not be any toxic residue of chlorine on the mask).
- Make sure you have your own mask and do not share it with others.

- You can access the W.H.O protocol at this link for [How can I wear and care for a fabric mask?](#)
- **The majority of mask wearers do not follow the protocol.**
- Incorrect mask wearing and cleaning increases the concentration of microbes on the mask, which can lead to infections of COVID-19 and other illnesses caused by microbes.
- What are the long term effects of breathing in fibres and dyes from the masks? The human respiratory system does not respond well to foreign materials. e.g. cigarette smoke, asbestos, vaping, etc. Mandatory mask wearing will increase the likelihood of widespread respiratory conditions within the next few years.
- We have family members and friends who have been wearing masks and they have described the following medical episodes, while wearing a mask: panic attacks, rash on their face, asthmatic attack, fainting, difficulty breathing. Most of these episodes align with the hypoxia symptoms.
- The summer heat and humidity will exacerbate the above mentioned conditions.
 - Also consider those who work in non-airconditioned environments, such as factories, kitchens and mechanic shops
- At the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, masks were not required. Now, there is a tremendous improvement in the number of COVID-19 cases, so why are masks necessary at this stage? The improvements came about without mandatory mask wearing.
 - Here is some of the York Region data that is posted on the York Region COVID website. The information below is current as of July 5, 2020. This data does not include persons who were living in an institution. [Link.](#)
 - Please note that when analyzing the data, **the number of hospitalizations is more important than the number of cases**, because the majority of people who contract COVID are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms, that do not require hospital care.
 - At the peak in the week of April 12 – April 18, there were 29 cases (not hospitalizations) per 100, 000 people in York Region
 - During the week of June 21 to June 27, there were 8 cases (not hospitalizations) per 100, 000 people in York Region
 - As of July 5, 2020 there were 368 active cases (that is 0.03067 % of the York Region population).
 - 30 of the 368 people were in the hospital, and 11 out of the 30 were in the ICU.
 - York Region has a population of 1.2 million people, and 30 of them were hospitalized. That is 0.0025 % of the Region's population.
 - We reiterate the question, why does public mask wearing need to be made mandatory?

- For weeks, various Public Health officials have been stressing the importance of social distancing. The general public was told that if social distancing was in place, then masks were not necessary. The W.H.O. puts far more emphasis on distancing and hand-washing than on mask wearing. In fact, they present [mask wearing by the general public as a last resort](#). Screen capture is below.

What are the key measures all people should do to protect themselves and others in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?



It is an important reminder that in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone, regardless of the use of masks, should:

- avoid groups of people and crowded spaces;
 - maintain physical distance of at least 1 meter from other people, especially from those who are sick;
 - clean your hands frequently, using an alcohol-based hand rub if hands are not visibly dirty, or soap and water;
 - cover your nose and mouth with a bent elbow or paper tissue when coughing or sneezing, dispose of the tissue and clean your hands immediately after use;
 - refrain from touching your mouth, nose, and eyes.
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- There are also social implications associated with mask wearing which include:
 - Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing will have difficulty communicating with others because they cannot read lips through a mask.
 - In general, verbal communication is hampered because it is difficult understanding the muffled voice of a mask-wearer. Verbal communication has become inefficient and challenging.
 - At this time, disposable masks have contributed towards more litter.
 - Forcing everyone to wear masks will enable thieves to hide their identity more effectively, especially if they choose to wear a hat and sunglasses along with the mask. Retailers have already been destroyed financially due to the lockdown and they cannot afford more losses.
 - On the flip side, more people will be accused of stealing while shopping, because they will be deemed "suspicious." Especially those who have historically experienced negative racial profiling, who are typically persons of African, Caribbean and South Asian descent.
 - The residents of York Region have faced many challenges during the past three to four months, under this pandemic. As the colloquialism goes, adding insult to injury, is not needed.

- Will **all** of the members of York Region Council and the individual city councils (elected officials and their staff) be modelling mask wearing **every time** that you leave home? We recently saw a clip of Mayor Scarpitti attending part of the Markham Black Lives Matter March on Global News and he was not wearing a mask at all times, even though he was conversing with the student organizer and other participants.
- We strongly believe that the responsibility of municipal, provincial and federal government leaders is to research and share **correct**, detailed and **unbiased information** with those that they govern. Both sides of the issue should be presented to the public instead of a one-sided narrative, which currently exists. Then, we the people, including individual business owners are left to determine what works best for us as individuals. What is good for one person, will not be good for all people.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and think deeply about the factual information provided.

Sincerely,

Mack, Wendy and Camille Hunte