TO: City Manager
FROM: Assistant City Manager
SUBJECT: RESOLUTION REQUIRING THE WEARING OF FACE COVERINGS IN BENICIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
At the May 26, 2020 City Council study session, the City Council deliberated the merits of mandating the wearing of face coverings in Benicia. Council directed staff to collect data on COVID-19 infections and prepare a resolution requiring the public to wear face coverings indoors and in enclosed public spaces in Benicia. Staff has returned to Council with the requested data and resolution.

RECOMMENDATION:
Move to adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) requiring the wearing of face coverings in indoor and enclosed public spaces in Benicia.

BUDGET INFORMATION:
There are no fiscal impacts associated with this action.

BACKGROUND:
In December 2019 and January 2020, reports began spreading worldwide of a flu-like virus first found in China, that was more deadly than the flu generally, with the virus becoming known as the Coronavirus ("COVID-19"). The virus continued to spread throughout the world from January to March 2020.

On March 3, 2020, the County of Solano ratified a proclamation of a Local Emergency due to the threat of COVID-19. On or about March 4, 2020, as part of the State of California’s response to address the global COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency to make additional resources available, formalize emergency actions already underway across multiple state agencies and departments, and help the state prepare for a broader spread of COVID-19.

Based on said events, the City Manager declared the existence of a local emergency within the City on March 15, 2020, which was ratified by the City Council on March 19, 2020.
The novel Coronavirus is highly contagious and poses a threat to the wellbeing of every person. In order to slow the spread of the virus, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that face coverings be worn in all circumstances when distancing of at least six feet is not possible; and the CDC’s recommendation regarding face coverings is based on data showing that the use of face coverings decreases the likelihood of spreading COVID-19.

Currently, Solano County Public Health does not require community members wear face coverings when in public, but strongly recommends the practice. The other 8 Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Sonoma) have issued orders requiring the wearing of face coverings in public.

At the May 26, 2020 City Council study session, the Council deliberated the merits of mandating the wearing of face coverings in Benicia. The direction of the Council was to review the infection data and return with a resolution mandating the wearing of face coverings.

The attached resolution (Attachment 1) requires each person over the age of five years old to wear a face covering, which covers both the mouth and nose, when in an any indoor or enclosed space open to members of the public. No person is required to wear a face covering when outdoors unless it is not possible to maintain six feet from every other person. If a person cannot maintain the aforesaid six feet outdoors, then that person shall be required to wear a face covering.

The attached data (Attachment 2) is through June 5, and compares all 9 Bay Area counties, and the entire state, in the areas of testing, diagnosed cases, and deaths resulting from COVID-19. Since June 5, the data shows Solano County has tested the smallest percentage of its population for the virus at a little under 3%, yet is experiencing 4.31 cases of COVID-19 per 100 tests, the second highest among Bay Area counties. While Solano County currently has the third fewest number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population among the Bay Area counties, that figure is likely to rise as testing increases.

As the economy begins to reopen and people venture outside to shop, dine and recreate, the probability of an increase in COVID-19 infections is very high. Requiring the wearing of face coverings indoors and in enclosed public spaces, as part of an overall preventative measure strategy, will help reduce the transmission of the virus.

**NEXT STEPS:**
If the resolution is adopted, staff will begin to implement mandating the wearing of face coverings in Benicia.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS:**
Do not adopt the resolution.

| General Plan | Goal 4.1 Make Community Health and Safety a High Priority for Benicia |
**Priority Based Budgeting**

The City Council and community identified six (6) key “Results” that establish the key goals for which the City of Benicia aspires to achieve with our programs and services. Agenda Items often influence multiple Results, the primary Result impacted by this Agenda Item is (please check one):

- ☒ Protect Community Health & Safety
- ☒ Maintain & Enhance A High Quality of Life
- ☐ Preserve & Enhance Infrastructure
- ☐ Strengthen Economic & Fiscal Conditions
- ☐ Protect & Enhance the Environment
- ☐ High Performing Government

**City Programs Impacted by This Agenda Item (Top 3):**

1. City Council Policy Development – City Manager’s Office
2. Legal Counsel for City Council – City Attorney
3. 

**Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) Website:**

Coming soon in Spring 2020 will be a link to the City of Benicia’s PBB website to learn more about these programs and their costs.

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**CEQA Analysis**

Pursuant to Title 14, the California Code of Regulations, Section 15378(b)(5) of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) guidelines, the proposed action is an administrative activity of the City that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution – Mandating Face Coverings
2. COVID-19 Data from Bay Area Counties

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