



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council **Item No.** _____

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of Approval of Opposition Letter to the Los Angeles County Indoor Mask Mandate Beyond State of California Mandates

MEETING DATE: February 22, 2022

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council consider approving a letter of opposition to Los Angeles County regarding its decision to continue to uphold its mask mandate beyond the State's repeal of same on February 15, 2022.

BACKGROUND:

The State of California has ended the indoor masking requirement for vaccinated people on February 15, 2022, given that the State continues to see declining COVID-19 case rates and hospitalization numbers. Los Angeles County residents, however, are required to continue to use masks indoors — regardless of vaccination status. Given that the City of Commerce has one of the highest vaccination rates, positivity rates are declining, and all other cities are relaxing the mandate, City staff recommends opposing the Los Angeles County Health Department indoor mask mandate.

The City proposes to submit a letter of opposition to Los Angeles County consistent with the views of Los Angeles County Board Supervisors Janice Hahn and Kathryn Barger, which are aligned with the recommended action related to the Los Angeles County mask mandate. Both Supervisors believe the County should align with the State and also lift its indoor mask mandate. Having stricter local rules will create confusion and frustration amongst residents. According to the Los Angeles Times, at a recent board meeting Supervisor Hahn stated that *“I believe that our health orders are only effective if people believe in them, if they think they are fair and if they follow them. And keeping mandates in place that aren’t followed just erodes the credibility the public has in us as policy makers to make good sound decisions. And I think the longer we drag our feet on lifting the indoor mask mandate, the more out of step we get from the state and more trust that we’re losing from the public.”*

Based on the statistics within our jurisdiction, the City is moving toward transitioning to returning to some normalcy while continuing a reasonable exercise of safety protocols.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve staff recommendation
2. Reject staff recommendation
3. Provide further direction to staff

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with approving the resolution.

Respectfully submitted: Edgar P. Cisneros, City Manager

Approved as to form: Noel Tapia, City Attorney

Prepared by: Lena Shumway, Director of Administrative Services and City Clerk