

## Report to Corporate Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Corporate Services Committee  
**From:** Michael Schulthess, City Clerk  
**Subject:** Freedom of the City – HMCS Prevost  
**Meeting on:** July 17, 2023

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk, and in response to the request of the HMCS Prevost, the HMCS Prevost **BE AUTHORIZED** to exercise its previously granted Freedom of the City of London on Saturday, September 23, 2023, to mark the Centennial of the Naval Reserves.

## Executive Summary

“Freedom of the City” is a ceremonial privilege bestowed upon individual units of the Canadian Armed Forces and is typically exercised in conjunction with a significant commemoration or anniversary. London’s Municipal Council last authorized HMCS Prevost to exercise Freedom of the City of London on Saturday, October 31, 1998. HMCS Prevost has requested authorization to exercise Freedom of the City on September 23, 2023, to mark the Centennial of the Naval Reserves in conjunction with sailors and officers in 24 cities across Canada. Given that the Freedom of the City is a traditional means for a municipality to honour a unit of the Canadian Armed Forces and the prior granting of this honour upon HMCS Prevost, the Civic Administration recommends this authorization to observe the 100-year anniversary.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Municipal Council decisions related to this matter

- February 21, 2000 – Council adopts clause 5 of the 4<sup>th</sup> Report of the Board of Control: That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, The Royal Canadian Regiment 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion BE PERMITTED to exercise its previously granted “Freedom of the City of London” on Saturday, May 13, 2000.
- October 5, 1998 – Council adopts clause 8 of the 26<sup>th</sup> Report of the Board of Control: That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk, HMCS Prevost BE AUTHORIZED to exercise the Freedom of the City of London on Saturday, October 31, 1998.
- August 8, 1990 – Council adopts clause 3 of the 19<sup>th</sup> Report of the Board of Control: That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk, the attached Proclamation be made, reaffirming the Granting of the Freedom of the City of London to the 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars in 1967, in recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps.
- May 22, 1990 – Council adopts clause 7 of the 28<sup>th</sup> Report of the Board of Control: That, on the recommendation of the City Clerk, and in response to the request of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment (Wolseley Barracks), the Battalion BE AUTHORIZED to exercise its Freedom of the City of London on Tuesday, June 25, 1991 by parading through the streets of the City with “bayonets fixed and banners waving”.

#### 1.2 Freedom of the City – Historical Context

Freedom of the City is a tradition maintained through the centuries as one of the most important honours bestowed upon a trusted, local military or paramilitary group by the Mayor acting on behalf of Council. It is accompanied by a ritual ceremony that includes

a parade of the group and a formal request and granting by the Mayor at the entrance to City Hall.

An old British tradition, Freedom of the City dates from the War of the Roses, when military units would formally petition a city for access. In return for room and board, the army provided protection to the city's residents:

“The ceremony of granting the freedom of the city harkens back to an even earlier time when cities had walls and gates and were barred to friend and foe alike—to the foe for obvious reasons, to the friend until the city authorities were assured of the troops best behaviour and the purpose of the regiment seeking entry.” (E.C. Russell, *Customs and Traditions of the Canadian Armed Forces*. Ottawa: Deneau & Greenberg Publishers Ltd./Department of National Defence, 1980, pp.92-93.)

The concept and practice of Freedom of the City is rooted in historic guarding of the peace within a city and tradition against the assembly of large bodies of troops within the walls of the municipality—hence the custom of requesting permission from the “chief magistrate” or Mayor. The customary honour of Freedom of the City is “granted to a unit which has enjoyed a long and happy relationship with a city.” (Russell, p.91)

### **1.3 Freedom of the City – Granting History & Frequency**

The City of London has granted the privilege four times since 1990 to three local military units—HMCS Prevost, 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars, and the local Battalions of the Royal Canadian Regiment. There are also prior grants reflected in the municipal record, such as a granting of the Freedom of the City of London to the 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars in 1967, in recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps.

The HMCS Prevost was last granted permission to exercise the Freedom of the City of London on October 31, 1998, to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Naval Reserves and to recognize 20 years of continuous Naval Reserve presence in London.

The honour is granted sparingly, which reflects the significance of the honour. For instance, the City of Toronto has granted Freedom of the City to 13 military units a total of just 19 times since 1962, according to the list of occasions and honoured units on their municipal [website](#).

A few examples of recent media coverage of Freedom of the City in Canada include:

- The City of Moose Jaw held an honour parade [June 11, 2016](#), in which 15 Wing Freedom celebrated their “Freedom of the City”;
- Over 100 members of the Canadian Armed Forces were honoured at a Freedom of the City ceremony in Regina on [September 12, 2015](#); and
- The Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry exercised its Freedom of the City in Edmonton on [May 23, 2014](#).

## **2.0 Discussion and Considerations**

### **2.1 Request from HMCS Prevost**

On behalf of HMCS Prevost, Commander Mike Butler has submitted the [attached](#) correspondence, requesting that Municipal Council authorize HMCS Prevost to exercise Freedom of the City of London on Saturday, September 23, 2023, to mark the Centennial of the Naval Reserves.

### **2.2 Naval Reserve Centennial – NAVRES 100**

In a [recent media release](#), the Royal Canadian Navy describes plans for the centennial celebration. Authorized on January 31, 1923, the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve is celebrating a major milestone in 2023, marking 100 years of service to Canada. Each of its 24 Naval Reserve Divisions, located in major cities across Canada,

are holding their own special events to mark the occasion. On September 23, 2023, all 4,100 sailors in the Reserve will be on parade in 24 cities across Canada.

For 100 years, the Naval Reserve has played a critical role in Canada's safety and security. They have deployed on operations at sea and on land around the world, from counter-narcotics missions in Caribbean and Pacific Oceans to sovereignty patrols in the Arctic. Their mission is to supply trained sailors for Canadian Armed Forces operations in Canada and abroad, and to support the Navy's efforts to connect with Canadians through positive interactions in the community.

## **2.2 Naval Reserve**

Naval Reservists are members of the Royal Canadian Navy who typically serve on a part-time basis while also holding a civilian job – including students, teachers, lawyers, firefighters, or civil servants of the communities they live in and ultimately serve. Reservists can deploy at home and abroad with their regular-force counterparts. More information is available on the Government of Canada Naval Reserve [website](#).

## **2.3 Other Considerations**

Authorization will be subject to HMCS Prevost acquiring the needed parade permits, emergency services approval, and Mayor's proclamation, as well as connecting with the City of London staff charged with special event planning, meter bagging, street closures, and related operational details.

The City Clerk's Office has confirmed that there are no events scheduled in Victoria Park on Saturday, September 23, 2023, which might conflict with the parade of HMCS Prevost.

## **3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations**

### **3.1 No financial impact or consideration**

City of London has no financial obligations in authorizing Freedom of the City.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

The Civic Administration recommends that Municipal Council authorize HMCS Prevost to exercise its previously granted Freedom of the City of London on Saturday, September 23, 2023, to mark the Centennial of the Naval Reserves.

**Prepared and Recommended by: Michael Schulthess, City Clerk**

**From:** [Mike.Butler@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Mike.Butler@forces.gc.ca)  
**To:** [CityClerk](#)  
**Cc:** [Bush, Anastasia](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Request to Exercise Freedom of the City 23 Sep 23 -Agenda Item for City Council Meeting July 2023  
**Date:** Thursday, June 29, 2023 2:32:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [Permit all signatures.pdf](#)

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Good Day,

His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) PREVOST is requesting to exercise Freedom of the City in celebration of the Centennial of the Naval Reserve at City Hall on 23 September 2023. The significance of the date for the event is that each of the 24 Naval Reserve Divisions across Canada are requesting this of their host city such that we will have approximately 4,000 sailors and officers on parade on the same day.

### **Freedom of the City**

-  
The Freedom of the City will involve an armed marching contingent of approximately 50 sailors and officers. We will plan to bus from HMCS PREVOST to Victoria Park, dismount, and form into a marching contingent at the park. In an effort to provide a visual of the plan, I have included an image with the general info like dismount/mount area for the bus, the forming area for the marching contingent, and the route identified in blue. The yellow marks the area in the driveway of city hall as the place where will form the guard for the official visit to city hall. Depending on how long it takes to march the park, we might conduct two laps of the park before heading to City Hall.

### **Engagement with London PD for Special Permit**

Aside from use of Victoria Park, I can foresee the need for traffic control at Dufferin and Wellington as we leave the park for City Hall (and return), and Dufferin in front of City Hall as we approach, remain, and depart from the official visit. Our permit has been provided by the City, and it is attached for reference.

### **Key details**

Personnel: approximately 50 sailors and officers carrying rifles (magazines and bayonets fixed – no ammunition repeat no ammunition) and swords.

Vehicles: At least one 40 pax motorcoach and one 8 pax van and potentially a couple of passenger vehicles

Key times

Dismount: 1315

Form Marching Contingent: 1330

March Route:

Arrive City Hall: 1400

Mayor's Proclamation: 1405

Depart City Hall: 1415

Return to Victoria Park along same route

Mount buses to return to HMCS PREVOST: 1430

Open House at HMCS PREVOST: On completion of Freedom of the City – Open to city officials and

the public

Yours Aye,  
Mike

*Commander / Capitaine de frégate Michael Butler MBA, MDS, CCLP*

**Executive Officer**

*HMCS PREVOST*

*Canadian Armed Forces*

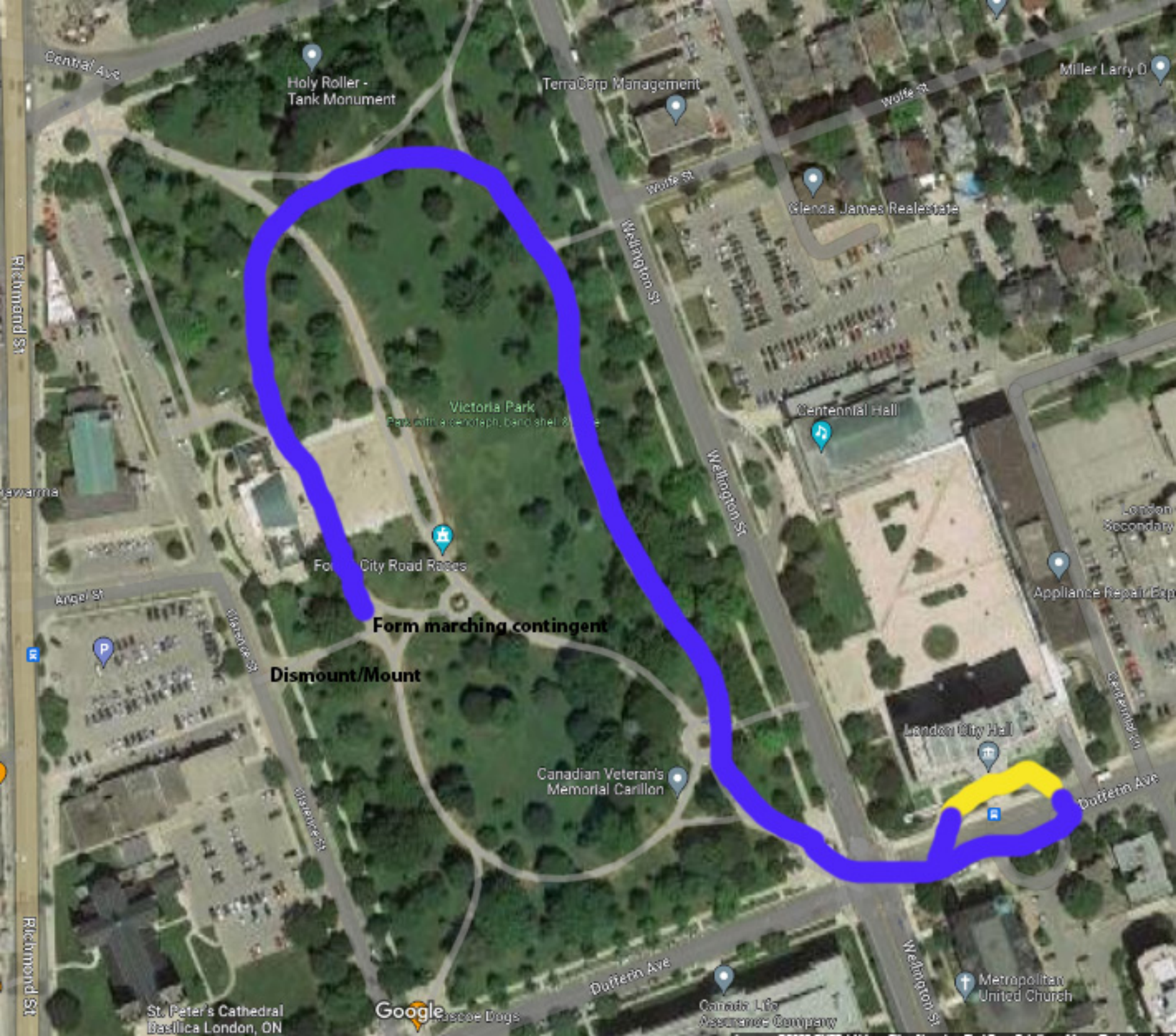
[mike.butler@forces.gc.ca](mailto:mike.butler@forces.gc.ca) Tel: (226)376-6721

**Commandant en second**

*NCSM PREVOST*

*Forces armées canadiennes*

[mike.butler@forces.gc.ca](mailto:mike.butler@forces.gc.ca) / Tel: (226)376-6721



Holy Roller - Tank Monument

TerraCorp Management

Miller Larry D

Central Ave

Wylie St

Wylie St

Glenda James Realestate

Wellington St

Centennial Hall

Victoria Park

Park with a cenotaph, band shell &

Four City Road Roses

Form marching contingent

Dismount/Mount

London City Hall

Canadian Veteran's Memorial Carillon

Dufferin Ave

St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica London, ON

Google

Canada Life Assurance Company

Metropolitan United Church

Richmond St

Lawarma

Angel St

Clarence St

Clarence St

Richmond St

Wellington St

Clarence St



## LONDON POLICE SERVICE APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT

|  |  |   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
|--|--|---|------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Applicants Name:</b><br>Mike Butler   |  | <b>Email address:</b><br><a href="mailto:Mike.Butler@forces.gc.ca">Mike.Butler@forces.gc.ca</a> |            | <b>Postal Code:</b>  |  | <b>Telephone:</b><br>226-376-6721 |  |
| <b>Organization:</b><br>HMCS PREVOST   |  | <b>Address:</b>   |            | <b>Postal Code:</b>  |  | <b>Telephone:</b><br>226-376-6721 |  |
| <b>Type of Special Event:</b><br>Freedom of the City March   |  |   |            | <b>Purpose of Special Event:</b><br>Ceremonial March   |  |                                   |  |
| <b>Date of Event:</b><br>Sept. 23, 2023  |  | <b>Start Time:</b><br>1330hrs   |            | <b>Assembly Point:</b><br>Victoria Park  |  | <b>Assembly Time:</b><br>1315hrs  |  |
| <b>Location of Reviewing Stand:</b><br>Victoria Park   |  |   |            | <b>Dismissal Point:</b><br>Victoria Park   |  | <b>Dismissal Time:</b><br>1430hrs |  |
| <b>PROPOSED ROUTE:</b> (Include return if applicable)<br><br>Through Victoria Park.<br>Eastbound across Wellington St at Dufferin Ave intersection.<br>To City Hall for official visit.<br>Westbound Dufferin Ave across Wellington St and back into Park. |  |   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
| <b>Description of Banners, Placards, Flags or Insignia to be used:</b><br>HMCS PREVOST   |  |   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
| <b>#People 50</b>  |  | <b>#Bands</b>   |            | <b>#Floats</b>   |  | <b>#Vehicles 2</b>                |  |
| <b>#Horses</b>   |  | <b>Others</b>   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
| <b>Insurance Certificate Received</b>  |  | <b>YES:</b>   | <b>NO:</b> | <b>DATE:</b>   |  | <b>SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:</b>    |  |
| <b>Hold Harmless Agreement Received</b>  |  | <b>YES:</b>   | <b>NO:</b> | <b>DATE:</b>   |  | <b>SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:</b>    |  |
| <b>Off Duty Officers/Vehicles required</b>   |  | <b>YES:</b>   | <b>NO:</b> | <b># Officers</b><br><b># Vehicles</b>   |  | <b>SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:</b>    |  |
| <b>Hire Contract Provided</b>  |  | <b>YES:</b>   | <b>NO:</b> |  |  |                                   |  |
| <b>FOR POLICE USE ONLY – DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE</b>  |  |   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
| The London Police <input type="checkbox"/> will x will not be requesting that the ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT provide assistance for this event.   |  |   |            | <b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT UNIT</b><br>519 661-4799<br><b>AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:</b><br><br>Sgt. Ozzie Nethersole                                    |  | <b>DATE:</b>                      |  |
| The proposed Special Event should not conflict with any planned Maintenance or construction projects.<br><br>APPROVED - No concerns.   |  |   |            | <b>ENVIRONMENTAL &amp; COMPLIANCE SERVICES</b><br>(7 <sup>th</sup> Floor) City Hall, 519-661-2489<br>x5208<br><b>AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:</b><br> |  | <b>DATE:</b><br>2023-05-18        |  |
| The applicant has filed proof of liability coverage/Hold Harmless Agreement for this event.<br><br>Hold Harmless agreement provided  |  |   |            | <b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b><br>10 <sup>th</sup> Floor 519 661-2489x4644<br>Unit #1 – 520 Wellington St.<br><b>AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:</b><br>         |  | <b>DATE:</b><br>2023-05-16        |  |
| <b>*WHEN COMPLETED, RETURN THIS APPLICATION TO LONDON POLICE, TRAFFIC UNIT, 601 DUNDAS STREET*</b>   |  |   |            |  |  |                                   |  |
| In accordance with the City of London By-Laws, permission is GRANTED to the applicant and/or the sponsoring organization to use the streets listed above for the special event described:  |  |   |            | <br>Stephen Williams, M.O.M.<br>Chief of Police  |  | <b>DATE:</b>                      |  |