

Sunday, August 13, 2023

Re: Meeting of Community and Protective Services Committee, August 15, 2023, Agenda Item
3.1 Fireworks By-law Options

Dear Mayor Josh Morgan and Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee:

I am a London resident and taxpayer requesting that you select Option B of the proposed changes to the Fireworks By-law. Consumer (backyard) fireworks endanger the environment, our health, our companion pets, and vital biodiversity. Option B is the only choice that supports the Council's Strategic Plan to prioritize climate action, and wellbeing and safety.

Fireworks...

- release greenhouse gases contributing to climate change,
- pollute the air, land and water with particulate matter and litter,
- threaten the lives of companion pets and wildlife, and
- traumatize Londoners with autism and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Why would Council choose to allow this harm and destruction to continue?

Fireworks do not adhere to the City of London Strategic Plan. The Council's commitment to "protecting our waterways and wetlands" is jeopardized each time fireworks contaminate streams, ponds and the Thames River. Disregarding the anguish fireworks cause to some residents does not prioritize the "safety and quality of life for all Londoners". Condoning the harm backyard fireworks cause to dogs who have fled in terror does not "promote animal welfare including companion pets and wild animals".

Fireworks kill birds. Our feathered friends fly into windows or abandon their vulnerable nestlings in their frantic attempts to escape the loud noises, bright lights and smoky skies. As a Bird Friendly City, the City of London has publicly announced their commitment to protecting avian populations and recently benefited from hosting an international meeting of bird researchers. Option B would uphold London's dedication to saving birds.

Law Enforcement Officers cannot fine all Londoners who break the municipal laws, but changing the Fireworks By-law to prevent backyard fireworks will act as a deterrent. Any decrease in fireworks will be beneficial to both the environment and Londoners' health.

Option B demonstrates the Council's commitment to a sustainable city and compassion for the vulnerable. Banning backyard fireworks is climate action. It is the only option for a Bird Friendly City. Once again, I ask that you select Option B and ban consumer (backyard) fireworks. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,
Rebecca St. Pierre
2295 Kains Road
London, ON