

Hello Mayor Morgan and CSPC Committee Members,

**To:** Mayor Josh Morgan, Members of the Community and Protective Services Committee

**Re:** 12th Meeting of Community and Protective Services Committee, August 15, 2023,

Item: PPM, Fireworks By-law Review] on the Agenda

From: Elinor Schwob, London resident

Hello Mayor Morgan and CSPC Committee Members,

As a long-time Londoner, animal lover, and person who cares about the environment and her fellow Londoners I am writing to ask you to implement a ban of Fireworks in London.

The science is clear, fireworks are harmful to the environment. There are many studies that prove this, and the fact is, that we are in a climate crisis and London has declared a climate crisis: we need to ban these. With the fire hazards, environmental and health hazards it's time to be leaders and use alternatives. Every firework show puts toxins into the environment that are compounding. This means the toxins will continue to accumulate and no amount of rainfall will wash them away or cause them to dissipate. If we keep doing shows in the same places every year, we will eventually make the river shores too toxic for animals to live on.

Facts from wildlife and domestic animal experts know that the sounds and smells from fireworks traumatize animals. They also trigger trauma in people with PTSD. Think about all the military veterans in London, home to many at Parkwood Hospital and those living in London. Think about those who we as a city have welcomed from war torn countries.

Another reality and fact is that the regulation of backyard personal fireworks doesn't work – people don't follow the rules of when they can be set off. By-law enforcement doesn't happen. I personally had a neighbour set off big fireworks that landed on my roof and porch.

Damage to property, fire hazards and litter are all negative by-products of these.

London should lead and also use alternatives and not allow BIA's or the city to have firework shows. Many cities have transitioned to drone shows – not only more visually appealing and customizable, but could generate a lot of revenue for the city with sponsorship opportunities; local businesses could get a custom logo or message in the sky – huge revenue potential.

Bans can work; look at the smoking ban in restaurants and bars as well as pesticides. We need to look forward and think about the impact for our planet, mental health and environment.

Look at the town of Caledon as an example of what worked, or most recently Brampton. Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Vancouver, Thunder Bay all have rebranded their "Canada Day" celebrations with environmentally friendly event activities. London can too!

There are so many other environmentally-friendly ways to come together as a community: laser light shows, drone light shows, concerts, parades, etc. The Hype Park BIA chose a drone show for two years in a row – they had a great response.

With London hosting the 2024 Ontario Summer Games this is a fantastic time to step up and showcase the amazing ways to celebrate by using a drone show!

As the "Forest City" alone, we need to step up our leadership around environmental protection. There are so many reasons to do this now. We know better and should do better.

Thank you.