

DIRKA U. PROUT

London, ON

August 28, 2023

Mayor Josh Morgan and other members of council

Via email to councilagenda@london.ca

**Re: Proposed Fireworks By-Law PW11
Council Meeting of August 28, 2023**

Dear Council,

In 2022, the average PM_{2.5} concentration in Canada 1.5 times the WHO annual air quality guideline value. The Thames Region Ecological Society reports that pollution in addition to climate change are major threats to biodiversity in the London area. The City of London has made commitments to its citizens and the environment through the London Plan and the London Climate Plan. I request that the Mayor and Council vote for Option B of the proposed Fireworks By-Law PW11 to ban the sale of use of consumer fireworks.

Fine particulate matter, also known as PM_{2.5} are particles with a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers that typically consist of a mix of things like smoke, soot, liquid or solid particles in aerosol, or biological matter like mould, bacteria, pollen and animal dander. When inhaled PM_{2.5} particles can travel deeply into your lungs. Studies have shown that PM 2.5 particles from fireworks displays linger in the air for days and produce increased discomfort for asthma sufferers and epileptic individuals. These particles also accumulate in our waterways and lands. Continuing with fireworks is not consistent with Item 1308_1 of the London Plan which states:

“Achieve health terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the city’s subwatersheds.”

Similar and complementary language can be found in the City’s Climate action communications and plans.

In our August 2021 Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, 62% of Londoners cites that good mental health was a priority. The idea of good mental health should be comprehensive enough to include not exposing newcomers from war torn countries and others suffering from PTSD or sensory disorders to excessive fireworks displays. Remember that while the times and locations of public and permitted fireworks are well publicized, thus allowing persons to take precautions, backyard fireworks will often be unexpected and unpredictable. Further I refer to other effects on the mental state of animals, particularly in their reproductive season as documented in the article found at this link:

<https://www.newswise.com/articles/short-term-bang-of-fireworks-has-long-term-impact-on-wildlife-study#:~:text=%E2%80%9CFireworks%20create%20short-term%20noise%20and%20light%20disturbances%20that,a%20much%20larger%20scale%2C%E2%80%9D%20Associate%20Professor%20Bateman%20said.>

While I acknowledge the merits of the arguments from the Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Newar Buddhist community, I encourage council to take a long and holistic view for the entire community, future generations and the environment as a whole and adopt Option B. The City may extend an olive branch to the community by partnering with them to host public Diwali celebrations.

Sincerely,

Dirka U. Prout

<https://www.iqair.com/ca/canada>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/infographic-fine-particulate-matter.html>

<https://www.trea.ca/resources/green-directory/biodiversity/>