

## Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Community and Protective Services Committee

**From:** Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Service

**Subject:** 2024 Rock the Park One-Time Policy Exemption Request

**Date:** March 18, 2024

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager of Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, the following actions BE TAKEN:

- a) the report dated March 18, 2024 with respect to the 2024 Rock the Park One-Time Policy Exemption Request **BE RECEIVED**; and
- b) the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to bring forward a by-law to amend CPOL.-142-394 being “Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual” to the April 2, 2024 meeting of Municipal Council should approval be given for a one-time policy exemption for the use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days, (Tuesday July 9 through Saturday July 13, 2024) for the Rock the Park event.

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to outline a one-time policy exemption request in 2024, to the Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual made by the Rock the Park event organizer to extend the number of consecutive days the event can operate in Harris Park from four to five. This report provides background information on previous policy exemption requests approved by Council as well as a draft by-law for consideration should Members of Council wish to approve this request.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Special events are aligned with the following strategic area of focus in the City of London Strategic Plan 2023-2027:

- Economic Growth, Culture, and Prosperity under the outcomes:
  - London is a destination of choice;
  - London’s Core Area (Downtown, Midtown, Old East Village) is a vibrant neighbourhood and attractive destination; and,
  - London encourages the growth of local artistic and musical talent.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- [2022 Rock the Park One-Time Policy Exemption Request \(March 29, 2022\)](#)
- [Extension of Hours for Sound From Outdoor Stage During 2019 Juno Week \(January 22, 2019\)](#)
- [2017 Rock the Park One-Time Exemption Request \(March 20, 2017\)](#)
- [2015 CPSC Public Submission – Rock the Park<sup>12</sup> – July 2015 – Amendment \(April 21, 2015\)](#)

## 2.0 Discussion and Considerations

### 2.1 Background and Purpose

Rock the Park Music Festival has taken place in Harris Park for 19 years, and 2024 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the festival. The event raises funds for charities and/or not-for-profit organizations. This year the festival will benefit four local charities: Children's Health Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area, Make-A-Wish Southwestern Ontario and Anita May Music and Mental Health Fund.

The Rock the Park event organizer has requested a one-time exemption to the Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual to extend the number of consecutive days for the event from four days to five days in Harris Park (Tuesday, July 9 through Saturday, July 13, 2024).

The purpose of this report is to outline the request made by the Rock the Park event organizer and to provide background information on previous policy exemption requests approved by Council.

#### One-Time Exemption Request

The following is an excerpt of the request from Jones Entertaining Group (JEG) received on March 8, 2024, and included on the March 18, 2024 CPSC Agenda:

"We are respectfully seeking your approval to add an additional concert date to the 20th edition of Rock the Park. JEG has an incredible opportunity to host one of the best music festivals ever held in London, especially now that London has been deemed "The Music City". However, to make this possible we need to operate Rock the Park (RTP) from Tues. July 9th through Sat. July 13th, 2024 (5 consecutive days). We have an opportunity to present some country artists on Tuesday July 9th for 10,000 fans coming into downtown London. The economic impact for the local economy and London will increase in regards to additional tourism dollars through hotel reservations, dining, shopping, and more. To move forward with our planning we are seeking relief from Section 10.3 of the Special Events Policies & Procedures Manual restricting the use of Harris Park to only 4 consecutive days."

#### Previous Council Decisions

Council approved similar requests from the Rock the Park event organizer in 2015, 2017 and 2022:

- On April 28, 2015, Council resolved, that a by-law be introduced to amend the City of London's 2015 Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual to provide "Rock the Park 12 - July 2015" event use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days.
- On April 4, 2017, Council resolved that a by-law be introduced to amend the City of London's 2017 Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual to provide for "Rock the Park 14 - July 2017" event use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days.
- On March 29, 2022, Council resolved that a by-law be introduced to amend the City of London's 2022 Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual to provide for "Rock the Park - July 2022" event use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days.

#### Harris Park

Harris Park has been developed to support events and is limited to five major events with a total of 12 days of amplified sound per year. The exemption request will still allow the total number of events and the annual total number of days to remain within the policy guidelines for 2024.

### **3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations**

There are no financial impacts or considerations associated with this report.

### **4.0 Key Issues and Considerations**

#### **4.1. Next Steps**

Should Members of Council wish to approve a one-time policy exemption for the use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days, (Tuesday, July 9 through Saturday, July 13, 2024) for the Rock the Park event, a draft by-law to amend the Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual is attached as Appendix A for consideration.

### **Conclusion**

Special Events are an important part of London's quality of life, enhancing tourism, culture, recreation, and education; and providing economic benefits to businesses in the downtown core. In addition to the many social and economic benefits special events bring to the city, London was designated an UNESCO City of Music in 2021. Special events provide rich opportunities to bring music, culture and entertainment to Londoners while supporting the City of Music designation.

**Submitted by:** Kristen Pawelec, Director, Community Development and Grants

**Recommended by:** Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services

## Appendix A:

Bill No.  
2024

B-law No. CPOL

A by-law to amend By-law No. CPOL.-142-394 being “Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual”, to provide for the “*Rock the Park 20 – July 2024*” event use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days.

WHEREAS section 5(3) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, C.25, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

AND WHEREAS section 9 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, C.25, as amended, provides a municipality with the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person for the purpose of exercising its authority;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London wishes to amend By-law No. CPOL.-142-394, as amended, being “Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual”, to provide for the “*Rock the Park 20 – July 2024*” event use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. The Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual is hereby amended as follows:

i) section 4.29 is amended by deleting paragraph (d) and replacing it with the following new part (d):

“(d) Notwithstanding part (a) above, the “*Rock the Park 20- July 2024*” event is permitted the use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days July 9 through July 13, 2024.”

ii) section 4.36 is amended by adding the following new part (d):

“(d) Notwithstanding part (a) above, the “*Rock the Park 20- July 2024*” event is permitted the use of Harris Park for 5 consecutive days July 9 to July 13, 2024.”

2. This by-law shall come into force and effect on the day it is passed subject to the provisions of PART VI.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

PASSED in Open Council on , 2024 subject to the provisions of PART VI.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

Josh Morgan  
Mayor

Michael Schulthess  
City Clerk

First Reading –  
Second Reading –  
Third Reading –