

## 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 Services

**Subject:** Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual – Deferred Matters File No. 2

**Date:** July 27, 2021

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services, the following action be taken with respect to Special Event Policies – Deferred Matter File No. 2:

- a) That Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to limit amplified concerts on weekdays after Labour Day between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. for 2021, to limit the disruption caused by special events on a school and/or workday.

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present City Council with an option to consider that may limit the disruptions caused by Special Events on City of London properties, and more specifically, amplified concerts, on a school and/or workday after the Labour Day weekend for 2021. This is an interim solution for the fall of 2021 as Civic Administration enters a more fulsome review on all Special Event Policies for a future report back to Committee and Council in the Spring of 2022.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Special Events, including amplified concerts, permitted by the City of London are aligned with two strategic areas of focus, as presented in the City of London Strategic Plan 2019-2023:

- Strengthening our Community under the outcome, Londoners are engaged and have a sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods and community.
- Growing our Economy under the outcome, London is a leader in Ontario for attracting new jobs and investment.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Discussion and Considerations

#### 1.1 Background and Purpose

As noted in the Special Event Policy and Procedure Manual, the City of London recognizes Special Events as an important part of London's quality of life and as providers of affordable entertainment to its residents. It is also recognized that Special Events enhance tourism, culture, recreation, and education as well as providing an economic benefit to businesses in the City of London.

In September 2019, a Special Event permit was issued for an event (amplified concert) at Harris Park that covered the following dates, Thursday, September 5 through Sunday, September 8 (4 days); and, Thursday, September 12 through Saturday, September 14 (3 days). It should be noted that the same event was permitted in 2016, 2017, and 2018 but 2019 was the first year that Thursday evenings and consecutive weekends were included as part of the event request and approval.

The 2019 event was approved as it complied with the existing policies for the use of Harris Park. Policy clause 4.29 states that Harris Park “will be limited to 5 major special events (4 consecutive days in length) totaling no more than 12 days combined of amplified concerts per year.”

During the 2019 event, complaints were received by both Civic Administration and members of Council about the disruption this event caused the public. Complaints were largely about how the Thursday, September 5, 2019 portion of the event was aligned with the first day of school, being September 6, 2019.

Following the completion of the event, City Council resolved the following:

- a) That the communication dated September 6, 2019 from Councillor A. Kayabaga, with respect to the Special Events Policies and Procedure Manual, BE RECEIVED
- b) The Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to review the City’s Special Events Policies and Procedures Manual and report back on possible amendments to the Manual to address the following matters:
  - i) The disruption caused by special events being held in the evenings prior to a work and/or school day;
  - ii) The application of the same rules/restrictions that are in place for Victoria Park to Harris Park; and,
  - iii) Increased fines and penalties for special events that contravene the manual.

Civic Administration recognizes that the recommendation included in this report does not respond to all the above items and is mainly focused on an interim potential solution for i) above for 2021. This interim option for Council to consider would be included in a more in-depth review for Council’s consideration in 2022.

This 2019 permitted Special Event (amplified concert) was the last one permitted by the City of London prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced event organizers to cancel events for 2020 and many for 2021. Due to the pandemic, it became increasingly difficult to engage with stakeholders on this topic and to complete an overarching review knowing that it would be some time before Special Events would be permitted again in the community.

## **Conclusion**

The City of London recognizes Special Events as an important part of London’s quality of life, enhancing tourism, culture, recreation, and education, providing economic benefit to businesses in London.

The interim option recommended in this report for the fall of 2021, provides a balance between supporting Special Events and limiting the disruptions caused by Special Events on a school and/or workday after labour day.

A more fulsome policy review will take place in the Spring of 2022 that will address the outstanding Council resolutions and provide longer term solutions for City Council to consider.

**Prepared by:** Jon-Paul McGonigle, Director, Recreation and Sport  
**Submitted by:** Kristen Pawelec, Director, Community Development and Grants  
**Recommended by:** Cheryl Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services