



## MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

To / Destinataire Mayor Sutcliffe and Members of Council Date : 06 Feb 2023

From / Expéditeur Kim Ayotte  
General Manager,  
Emergency and Protective Services

Subject / Objet Response to Council Motion  
No. 2022-84-10,  
Fireworks By-law and Diwali

The purpose of this memo is to provide a response to the following motion passed by City Council on November 9, 2022, relating to the Fireworks By-law (2003-2370, as amended):

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services consider including a review of the Fireworks By-law on the 2023-2026 By-law Review Work Plan to allow the discharge of consumer fireworks without a permit in celebration of Diwali, and report findings as soon as feasible.

Emergency and Protective Services (EPS) does not recommend that a review of the Fireworks By-law be included on the proposed 2023-2026 By-law Review Work Plan, for the reasons noted below.

The [Fireworks By-law \(No. 2003-237\)](#) regulates the sale and use of both consumer and display fireworks within the City of Ottawa, including when they can be discharged. The motion in question specifically addresses the discharge of **consumer fireworks**, which are recreational outdoor fireworks that can be purchased by the general public at retail locations. They do not require a permit but can only be discharged on six designated days: Victoria Day, Canada Day and the day immediately preceding and following those days. In contrast, there are no restrictions on the dates that **display fireworks** can be discharged but they require a permit and a site inspection by a Fire Prevention Officer for their use.

An assessment of this issue indicates that staff do not currently have the capacity to support the addition of this by-law review to the proposed 2023-2026 By-law Review Work Plan, a draft of which was recently circulated to members of Council. Additionally, there is no data or information to indicate that there is a broader community demand to include Diwali into the Fireworks By-law, making this a lower priority issue compared to the other by-law reviews and projects noted on the proposed By-law Review Work Plan.

Preliminary research suggests that there are noise and environmental concerns with the discharge of fireworks overall, as well as potential effects on humans, pets, and wildlife. To fully

assess the impacts of any regulatory changes to the Fireworks By-law, and to provide local context, consultation with subject matter experts in public health, environmental science and animal welfare would be strongly recommended. But considering the number of by-laws that already have a higher priority for review on the proposed work plan and the resources required to undertake a comprehensive review of the Fireworks By-law, there is currently no EPS staff capacity for this work.

Lastly, there appear to be conflicting regulatory approaches to the discharge of consumer fireworks among Ontario municipalities. There are some recent examples of cities adding designated dates for the discharge of consumer fireworks while other municipalities are prohibiting the use and sale of consumer fireworks completely. At least four other Ontario municipalities are currently reviewing their fireworks by-laws. Their results (which are anticipated in 2023) could help inform Ottawa's future review of this area.

EPS commits to continuing to monitor the Fireworks By-law this Term of Council for community requests for additional designated dates (Diwali or other) for the discharge of consumer fireworks and reassess the issue if necessary.

Sincerely,

Kim Ayotte

cc:

Paul Hutt, Fire Chief

Roger Chapman, Director of By-law and Regulatory Services

Valérie Bietlot, Manager, Public Policy and Development Branch