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City Hall: No Approval Needed for 'Big White Circle' Opposition Event

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Deputy mayor Alexander Gorbenko said Friday that opposition demonstrators do not need City Hall approval to hold their “Big White Circle” event on the Garden Ring Road, as long as attendees do not block car or pedestrian traffic.

The opposition announced plans Thursday to gather on the Garden Ring in central Moscow on Feb. 26, in the latest in a series of events calling for political change.

The plan calls for participants to join hands to form an unbroken circle around the city center. Organizers estimate that this will require at least 34,000 people.

"We stood on Bolotnaya and on Sakharova. We drove along the Garden Ring. We walked along Yakimanka. Our demands have not been fulfilled. Therefore, we will come again," organizers wrote on the Facebook page for the event, which they have called "Big White Circle."

"This is not a protest. This is not a demonstration. On this day we will gather without signs, slogans and speeches," organizers wrote.

Some commenters on the event's Facebook page questioned how attendees would keep the circle intact across roads.

The event is timed to fall one week before the March 4 presidential election.

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