



Marilyn Toft
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St W
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

December 14, 2021

RE: IE26.14: Dwight Avenue Sidewalk Installation

The Long Branch Neighbourhood Association requests that City Council reject the current recommendation that requires the removal of 12 trees and asks staff to pursue an alternative option to construct a new sidewalk on the west side of Dwight Avenue that preserves the trees and important green infrastructure on this part of the block.

The Nov 18, 2021 report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee outlines the importance of sidewalks to support safety, accessibility, affordable transportation, physical activity, safe routes to school, aging in place and sustainable growth. It references several city strategies but fails to point out how important trees, such as those on Dwight Avenue, are for these key strategies.

Specifically:

1. The Official Plan Policy 3.1.1.16 The Public Realm is that “The preservation, long-term growth and increase in the amount of healthy trees will be a priority for all development. Development proposals will demonstrate how the protection, provision and maintenance of trees and their growing spaces above and below ground will be achieved.” This plan fails to do this.
2. Toronto’s Walking Strategy (2009) calls for “Enhanced streetscaping including trees and landscaping”
 - “Fostering a culture of walking also requires better designed streetscapes that include street trees”
3. Healthy Streets Design Features and Benefits (October 2014) outlines the importance of enhancing the experience through good street design to positively influence mental and social health. “Trees and vegetation are calming and promote better mental health.” (Pg. 3)
 - “Urban trees are known to help reduce both gaseous and particulate air pollution.” (Pg. 8)
 - In fact, Healthy Streets Design does recommend to Narrow Lane Width. Why does the speed limit along here need to be 40 kph? Wouldn’t 30 kph be a safer speed near a school?
4. Vision Zero 2.0 – Road Safety Plan Update (2019) clearly states that “Roads and sidewalks can also be re-aligned to minimize the impact on mature street trees”. That is what the Community is asking to be done in this situation.

Removing 12 mature trees is clearly not directed by any of these strategies or policies. Nor will it help Toronto achieve the stated goal of growing the tree canopy to 40%. New Toronto currently only has a tree canopy of 15%. Every tree needs to count if this Neighbourhood is going to achieve a 40% Tree Canopy target by 2050.

Table 1: According to the 2018 Tree Canopy Study conducted by the City of Toronto, the tree canopy in New Toronto is far below the goal of 40%.

2009 - 2018 Toronto Tree Canopy change by Etobicoke-York Ward*

Ward	Neighbourhood	Number	2018	2009	Change	% change
3	Long Branch	19	15.00	26.50	-11.50	-43.4
3	New Toronto	18	15.25	8.70	6.55	75.3
3	Mimico	17	16.49	13.40	3.09	23.1
3	Alderwood	20	26.83	24.70	2.13	8.6
3	Stonegate-Queensway	16	43.40	32.20	11.20	34.8
3	Islington-CityCenter West	14	15.73	15.40	0.33	2.1
3	Kingsway South	15	42.55	46.90	-4.35	-9.3
Total Ward 3			25.04	23.97	1.06	4.4

* Source: City of Toronto 2018 Tree Canopy Study ; KBM Resources Group Lallemand inc./BioForest Dillon Consulting Ltd; Duinker, P and Steenberg, J. Dalhousie University Appendix 1: Canopy Change by Neighbourhood 2009-2018: 253

To achieve the goal of 40%, which we strongly support, it is critically important to increase the protection of existing trees in addition to planting new. The effect of the loss of these trees on Dwight Avenue and their environmental benefits would be felt and seen immediately and it would take years for newly planted saplings to grow enough to add to the tree canopy and public realm.

Please do not approve the needless destruction of these trees when other options exist. Thank-you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Judy Gibson
 Vice Chair, Long Branch Neighbourhood Association
 Chair, Tree Canopy Preservation and Enhancement Committee