



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

104 Hilton Avenue – Application to Remove a City Owned Tree

Date:	March 12, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 21 – St. Paul's
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster A\PFR\TE05-041415-AFS#20917

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) City owned tree fronting 104 Hilton Avenue. The application indicates the reason for the removal is to accommodate the construction of a front yard parking pad.

The subject tree is a linden (*Tilia cordata*) measuring 39 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support the removal of this tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove a City owned linden tree fronting 104 Hilton Avenue.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

COMMENTS

An application was received from the property owner of 104 Hilton Avenue for a permit to remove a City owned linden tree measuring 39 cm in diameter, fronting the property. The application states that the reason for the requested tree removal is "to provide access to build a front pad parking".

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and confirmed the tree is healthy and appears structurally sound. The tree was found to be a medium to large specimen in good health, with a generally well balanced crown and full canopy. Part of the lower crown facing the street has been pruned for clearance from the nearby power and telecom lines. There is a second City owned street tree fronting the property, a 10 cm diameter horse-chestnut tree located at the north end of the front yard. The horse-chestnut tree is in fair condition.

It is not possible to retain the linden tree and construct a parking pad at the south end of the front yard, as proposed by the property owner. The linden tree would sustain significant root injury, potentially destabilizing the tree; therefore, requiring the tree to be removed.

Urban Forestry staff contacted Transportation Services to inquire if the property would be eligible to apply for front yard parking. Urban Forestry was advised that the owner could apply for a front yard parking pad, if all requirements of Toronto's Municipal Code could be met. However, Municipal Code Chapter 918, Parking on Residential Front Yards and Boulevards, does not permit tree removal for the purpose of front yard parking.

A permit to destroy the tree was denied. The owner is appealing the decision to deny the permit.

Should City Council approve this request for tree removal, in accordance with *Section 10.B of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article II*, approval is conditional upon payment for the appraised tree value and the costs for a replacement tree to be planted. The applicant would also be responsible for tree removal and all associated costs, as well as the submission of an Agreement for Contractors to Perform Arboricultural Services on City Owned Street Trees prior to tree removal, to the satisfaction of the General Manager. Since there would be insufficient space for replacement tree planting on site, it is appropriate for the applicant to provide cash-in-lieu of tree planting.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They are aesthetically pleasing and soften the hard lines of built form and surfaces in an urban setting. Trees contribute to the overall character and quality of neighbourhoods. Studies suggest that social benefits such as crime reduction and neighbourhood cohesion can be directly attributed to the presence of trees.

The environmental benefits of trees include cleansing of air, noise and wind reduction, and protection from ultraviolet radiation. Trees reduce rainwater runoff thereby reducing soil erosion and lowering storm water management costs. They also contribute to moderation of temperature extremes and reduction of the urban heat island effect by providing shade during the summer.

Trees provide many economic benefits, including the enhancement of property values. Homes with mature trees have higher value when compared to similar types of homes in similar locations without trees. Mature trees are associated with reduced home energy

consumption. Air conditioning costs are lower in a home shaded by trees and heating costs are reduced when trees break the winter cooling effects of wind. Trees are a community resource, which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents, thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

It is the goal of the City of Toronto to increase the city's existing tree canopy to 40 percent by 2050. The loss of the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in December 2013, the Asian longhorned beetle (*anoplophora glabripennis*), and the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now, than ever.

The City owned linden tree at 104 Hilton Avenue is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the surrounding community with benefits for many more years. Urban Forestry, therefore, does not support removal of this tree.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director of Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Photo of the trees and front yard of 104 Hilton Avenue
Attachment 2 – Photo of the crown of the 39 cm diameter City owned linden tree

104 Hilton Avenue

39 cm diameter City owned linden tree 10 cm diameter City owned horse-chestnut tree



Proposed parking pad

Crown of the 39 cm City owned linden tree fronting 104 Hilton Avenue

