



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### 768 Windermere Avenue - Application to Remove a Private Tree

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| <b>Date:</b>             | February 1, 2016  |
| <b>To:</b>               | Etobicoke York Community Council                                      |
| <b>From:</b>             | Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation |
| <b>Wards:</b>            | Ward 13 - Parkdale-High Park  |
| <b>Reference Number:</b> | P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\EY12-022316-AFS#22386                           |

#### SUMMARY

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This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 768 Windermere Avenue. The application indicates the reasons for removal is that the tree is growing fast, over-shading the yard, and thereby preventing the planting of small perennial plants.

The subject tree is a Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) measuring 44 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support removal of this tree as it is currently in good condition, both structurally and botanically.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 768 Windermere Avenue.

#### Financial Impact

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

#### COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 768 Windermere Avenue. The subject tree is a Norway maple measuring 44 cm in diameter, located in the rear yard of the property. The applicant is requesting tree removal due to concerns over the

tree's fast growth, and that it is over-shading the area where the owner would like to be able to plant small perennial plants. The arborist report that accompanied the application states that the tree is shading the yard and part of the neighbours' yards, but is in good health except for some damaged surface roots from previous construction.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is in good condition, both structurally and botanically. The crown is full and although it has some deadwood, pruning of this tree would allow more light to penetrate into the yard. This recommendation is identified in the Arborist Report provided with the application. Choosing perennial plant species that are tolerant of shade would also assist in addressing issues regarding the amount of shade provided by the tree.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a Notice of application sign was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14-day period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. No comments were received in response to the posting.

A permit to remove the tree was denied. The applicant is appealing the decision.

Should City Council approve this request for tree removal, in accordance with *Section 813-20 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, permit approval must be conditional upon the owner providing satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant has proposed the planting of small-growing trees and shrubs, such as serviceberries (*Amelanchier* sp.) in addition to paying cash-in-lieu of planting. However, in this instance, it is appropriate for the owner to provide five (5) large-growing replacement trees, which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of 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 rain water 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 mitigate the cooling effects of winter wind.

It is the goal of the City of Toronto to increase the city's tree canopy to 40 percent. The loss of the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, the Asian

longhorned beetle, and the emerald ash borer, make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The Norway maple tree at 768 Windermere Avenue is a valuable part of the forest community that exists within this area. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the property owner and 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**

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Jason Doyle  
Director of Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Norway maple tree measuring 44 cm in diameter at the rear of 768 Windermere Avenue

Attachment 2 – Arborist Report included with permit application



## Arborist Report for 768 Windermere Ave 🍁

Removal: Norway Maple, *Acer platanoides*

I, Robert Cole, ISA # ON-1881A, and Consulting Arborist with Heritage Tree Care, am submitting this report on behalf of [REDACTED] who has requested permission to remove a 44.5cm DBH Norway Maple from his property because it is growing wide and quick, over-shading the yard, where he wishes to plant small perennials.

### **Species:**

Tree of Concern: *Acer platanoides*; Norway Maple  
Size: DBH: 44.5 cm, Height x Spread: 9m x 9m  
Nature of work: Removal  
Category: 1

**Location:** The tree is located in the centre of the west-facing backyard with soil space to the south east of its trunk and a brick walkway around its west and north sides (See photograph 1). Its canopy covers most of the yard and reaches over the north and south neighbouring fences. Its longest branches are growing east, over a deck, into and over the roofline of the client's house (See photograph 2 and 3).

**Condition:** This tree has a dense canopy with about 20 % deadwood. (See photograph 4 and 5) The branches spread wide in all directions but feature no included bark in the unions and seem to be strong as none had reportedly failed during the ice storm of 2013/14 (See photograph 6). The tree is healthy and dominant over the light, soil and water of the yard, but likely has had surface root damage on the north and west sides as a brick walkway has been recently added at grade and the soil nearest the trunk is compacted. (See Photograph 7)

**Arborist Recommendation:** I believe this tree to be in good health, except for some damaged surface roots, with a mostly-full canopy, sound structure and adequate growing space. I believe the tree could be hard pruned and thinned over a couple of years to let in more light and clear branches from surrounding structures, but that this would be a compromise to the client's wishes. Due to the quick growth rate and wide, shady dominance of the tree, the client would like it removed so that he may plant small perennials in lieu of a replacement tree.

**Tree Replacement Information:** As mentioned above, the client wishes to abstain from replanting a large canopy tree and instead would like to replant his yard with small perennials, such as the recently planted Serviceberries, as well as to pay the by-law fee in lieu of replanting if required or allowed.

Thank you for your assistance,

Robert Cole  
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