



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

267 Airdrie Road – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	June 14, 2016
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 26 – Eglinton-Lawrence
Reference Number:	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\NY15-061416-AFS#22948

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 267 Airdrie Road. The application indicates the reasons for removal are due to the tree's proximity to a proposed two storey addition and deck, and that it is in conflict with an existing fence and parking pad.

The subject tree is an eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) measuring 43 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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 267 Airdrie Road.

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 in the rear yard of 267 Airdrie Road. The subject tree is an eastern white cedar measuring 43 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made due to its proximity to a proposed two storey addition and deck, being too close to an existing fence and parking pad, and damaging a fence located along the northern property line.

The arborist report submitted with the application describes the tree as being in fair condition. The rationale for removal provided by the arborist was that the tree would be too close to a proposed addition and too close to the existing fence and parking pad. The property owner also indicated that the tree is causing damage to the shared fence located along the northern property line.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy both botanically and structurally. No evidence has been provided by the applicant or their arborist, nor was any defect observed during inspection by Urban Forestry staff, to suggest the tree is unsafe, either due to existing condition or past activity on the site.

The tree is situated approximately 5.3 m from a proposed two storey addition and approximately 3.0 m from a proposed deck and staircase. Construction would take place entirely outside of the tree's minimum required 3.0 m tree protection zone per the City's Tree Protection Policy and Specifications for Construction Near Trees, and can be adequately protected during construction. The proposed two storey addition, deck, and walkway are designed such that the tree can be retained and integrated into the design of the rear yard and can survive well in its current location for many years.

The tree is situated 0.3 m south and 0.5 m west of the existing north and east fence lines, respectively. The space between the fence and trunk allows for a future increase in trunk diameter. Lower branches have been pruned well to accommodate the fence. Damage to the fence located along the northern property line was not observed during Urban Forestry's site inspection.

The base of the tree's trunk is situated approximately 0.8 m from the existing concrete parking pad, at its closest point. The concrete parking pad covers approximately 15% of the tree protection zone and will be retained as part of construction.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a Notice of application to destroy the tree 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 by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing this 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 provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is preliminary proposing to plant one or two new trees near the proposed addition; however, a replanting plan was not submitted with the application. In this instance, it would be appropriate for the owner to provide five (5) replacement trees, which can be achieved in a combination of planting on site and cash-in-lieu of planting.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They help to 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 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 mitigate the cooling effects of wind in winter. 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 tree canopy to 40 percent. The loss of trees in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, compounded with additional tree loss due to the presence of the Asian longhorned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The eastern white cedar tree located at 267 Airdrie Road is a valuable part of the urban forest. 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

Tara Bobie, Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-395-6134, Fax: 416-395-6714, Email: tbobie@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of eastern white cedar tree, measuring 43 cm in diameter, located in the rear yard of 267 Airdrie Road

