



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### 34 Oakridge Drive – Application to Remove a Private Tree

<b>Date:</b>	April 18, 2016
<b>To:</b>	Scarborough Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Ward:</b>	Ward 36 – Scarborough Southwest
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\SC14-051016-AFS#22796

#### 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 34 Oakridge Drive. The application indicates the reason for removal is that the tree is too close to the driveway, leading to tree resin falling onto the owner's vehicles and causing damage to the paint.

The subject tree is a Norway spruce tree (*Picea abies*), measuring 35 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

#### 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 34 Oakridge Drive.

#### Financial Impact

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

#### COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application from an agent of the property owner of 34 Oakridge Drive for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at the front of the property at 34 Oakridge Drive. The subject tree is a Norway spruce tree measuring

35 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns that tree is located too close to the driveway, resulting in falling tree resin causing damage to the paint on the owner's vehicles.

The arborist report that accompanied the application states that the tree is in fair condition and that due to the tree's proximity to the driveway, the resin falling from the tree is causing damage to the paint on the homeowners' cars. The arborist report states that pruning of the subject tree to prevent this damage is not possible.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and structurally sound. The tree was found to be a medium sized specimen in good health, with a generally balanced crown and moderately-full canopy. No significant defects were observed.

Pruning the tree to address the owner's concerns would destroy the natural form of the tree. In this particular case, one complete side of the tree would have to be pruned off to ensure that resin does not fall onto the driveway. Moreover, the pruning of a spruce tree often stimulates resin production.

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 this 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 property owner has proposed to plant one (1) large growing shade tree. However, 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 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 mitigate the cooling effects of the 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 the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, as well as the presence of the Asian long-horned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The Norway spruce tree at 34 Oakridge Drive is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the property owners 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, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the Norway spruce tree, measuring 35 cm in diameter

