

Application to Remove Three Private Trees – 76 Covewood Street

Date: March 9, 2023

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Don Valley North - 17

SUMMARY

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove three privately owned trees located at 76 Covewood Street. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the trees is due to a lack of long-term viability.

There are two Colorado blue spruce trees, *Picea pungens*, in question, measuring 36 cm and 44 cm in diameter and one Austrian pine tree, *Pinus nigra*, measuring 54 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of these trees as they are healthy and maintainable. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to decide whether a permit may be issued when an applicant wishes to appeal the City's decision to deny a tree permit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove three privately owned trees located at 76 Covewood Street.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

There is no decision history related to this tree removal permit application.

COMMENTS

Parks, Forestry and Recreation received an application for a permit to remove three privately owned trees located in the rear yard at 76 Covewood Street. The Colorado blue spruce trees in question measures 36 cm and 44 cm in diameter, and the Austrian pine tree in question measures 54 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the trees is due to a lack of long-term viability.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the three trees to be in fair overall condition, and having fair structure and vigour.

City staff inspected the trees and, at the time of inspection, determined that they are healthy and maintainable. It is common for aging coniferous trees to display thin foliage (needles) in the inner and lower parts of their crowns. In addition, lower foliage frequently becomes infected with one or more fungal pathogens, which reduces needle retention and increases the death/dieback of the lower crowns. Light competition and/or self-shading may increase the impact and effect of these issues. The three subject trees can be maintained in a healthy condition with regular maintenance, such as pruning to remove dead or dying branches in accordance with good arboricultural practices.

Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision as to whether a permit may be issued when an applicant wishes to appeal the City's decision to deny a tree permit.

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 support nor in opposition of the application to remove the trees in question.

Protecting the urban forest is critical in building climate resilience as urban centres continue to face increasing development, impacts due to climate change in the form of extreme weather events, and other natural threats such as invasive pests. The City has reaffirmed its canopy target of 40 per cent by 2050. One approach to support achieving this target is to protect healthy trees from injury and removal whenever possible. A sustainable and expanding urban forest also supports the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being of its residents.

Toronto's urban forest provides \$55 million in ecosystem services and benefits annually. Services such as the removal of air pollution, storm water runoff, and carbon sequestration contribute to climate resilience. Protecting and expanding tree cover

helps to mitigate exposure to extreme heat events through shade and transpiration. A higher density of trees in a neighbourhood has been shown to significantly improve physical and mental well-being by reducing blood pressure, decreasing stress levels and promoting physical activity. Economic benefits include enhancements to property values, increased tourism and consumer spending.

In keeping with the City's Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan, Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, and the Tree Protection By-laws, the two Colorado blue spruce trees and the one Austrian pine tree at 76 Covewood Street are a valuable part of the urban forest, providing numerous aesthetic, social and economic benefits to the property owner and the local community and therefore should not be removed.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove three privately owned trees located at 76 Covewood Street. Should North York Community Council grant this request for tree removal, the following recommendation may be adopted, in accordance with the City's Tree By-law permit requirements:

1) North York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove three privately owned trees located at 76 Covewood Street, and require the applicant to provide fifteen replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Kim Statham
Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 36 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; July 21, 2022

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 44 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; January 17, 2023

Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph of the Austrian pine, measuring 54 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; January 17, 2023

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 36 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; July 21, 2022



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 44 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; January 17, 2023



Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph of the Austrian pine, measuring 54 cm in diameter, at 76 Covewood Street; January 17, 2023

