

Application to Injure a City Tree – 104 Scarborough Beach Boulevard

Date: March 17, 2023

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Beaches-East York - 19

SUMMARY

This report requests that Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to injure one City-owned tree located at 104 Scarborough Beach Boulevard. The applicant indicates the reason they are requesting to injure the tree is to facilitate transplanting it to an alternative location in order to construct a new parking pad.

The red maple tree, *Acer rubrum*, in question measures 7 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the injury 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to injure a City-owned tree located at 104 Scarborough Beach Boulevard.

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 injury permit application.

COMMENTS

Parks, Forestry and Recreation received an application for a permit to injure through transplant, one City-owned tree located on the City-owned right-of-way fronting 104 Scarboro Beach Boulevard. The red maple tree in question measures 7 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason they are requesting to injure the tree is to facilitate transplanting it to an alternative location in order to construct a new parking pad.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in good condition. This report noted that the subject tree is in healthy condition with good form and structure.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The subject tree was planted by the City in April 2012. Having been in its current location for over 10 years, it is reasonable to expect that the tree is well established. Transplanting the tree will likely cause a level of injury that the tree could not survive. Urban Forestry prioritizes the retention of young, established trees in their existing location over transplanting. If the tree is transplanted, a parking pad would substantially reduce the tree's available growing space and usable soil.

City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 918, Parking on Residential Front Yards and Boulevards does not permit injury to a tree where the health of a tree or trees in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 813 cannot be guaranteed to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation. The City's Tree By-laws also do not support tree injury for the purpose of constructing a front yard parking pad.

Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to injure the tree was denied by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the injury 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 injure the tree 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 the 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 air pollution removal, reduction of stormwater runoff, and carbon sequestration all 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 by 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 red maple tree at 104 Scarboro Beach Boulevard is 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 injured.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to injure through transplant one City-owned tree located at 104 Scarboro Beach Boulevard. Should Toronto and East York Community Council grant this request for tree injury, the following recommendation may be adopted, in accordance with the City's Tree By-law permit requirements:

- 1) Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to injure through transplant a City-owned tree located at 104 Scarboro Beach Boulevard, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$583.00);
 - agreeing to have the tree transplanted at their expense;
 - providing five 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, and;
 - providing a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of planting and warranty for a period of two years for all trees to be planted on City property.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Kim Statham
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the red maple tree at 104 Scarboro Beach Boulevard; December 29, 2022

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