Councillor Paul W. Ainslie
City of Toronto Councillor
Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

Chair, Scarborough Community Council
Chair, Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo
Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Chair, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries
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 Councillor Paul Ainslie Scarborough-Guildwood
 Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood
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Date: August 13, 2024
To: Service Excellence Committee Members
Re: City Boulevard Tree Removal and Replacement Process

Recommendation,

1. The Executive Committee request the Interim Executive Director, Customer Experience Division, in consultation with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to report to the November 25, 2024, meeting of the Service Excellence Committee with 311 data on service requests for removal and replacement of dead trees from City boulevards, such report to include information about timing from request submitted to removal of trees.

Background

I am writing to express my concern regarding the lengthy process involved in removing a dead tree from a city boulevard and replacing it with a new one. My understanding of the current process requires six visits, as follows:

1. **Inspection:** City staff inspect the tree to determine if it requires removal.
2. **Branch Removal:** Staff remove the tree branches.
3. **Trunk Removal:** Staff remove the tree trunk.
4. **Stump Removal:** Staff remove the tree stump.
5. **Root Removal:** Staff remove the tree roots.
6. **Tree Planting:** Staff plant a new tree.

This multi-step process can take up to two years to complete. I believe this timeline is excessive and negatively impacts the aesthetic and environmental value of our neighbourhoods.

I propose streamlining this process to involve only two visits:

1. **Inspection and Assessment:** City would inspect the tree and determine if removal is necessary. If so, they would assess the overall condition of the boulevard and identify the type of tree suitable for replacement.
2. **Removal, Root Removal, and Planting:** In a single visit, staff would remove the dead tree, including its roots, and immediately plant a new tree.

By consolidating these steps, the city can significantly reduce the time required to replace dead trees and improve the overall appearance of our boulevards.

I would appreciate the committee's attention to this matter and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Ainslie
City of Toronto, Councillor
Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

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