

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree – 20 Robintide Court**

**Date:** August 27, 2025

**To:** Scarborough Community Council

**From:** Director, Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry

**Wards:** Scarborough-Agincourt - 22

### **SUMMARY**

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This report requests that Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 20 Robintide Court. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is concern that the tree will fail and damage their recently renovated home.

The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharium*) measures 125 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. The permit was denied, and the applicant is appealing the decision. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision as to whether a permit may be issued when an applicant appeals the City's decision to deny a tree permit.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Director of Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry recommends that:

1. Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 20 Robintide Court.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

### **DECISION HISTORY**

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

## COMMENTS

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The City of Toronto received an application for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located in the rear yard at 20 Robintide Court. The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharium*) in question measures 125 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is concern that the tree will fail and damage their recently renovated home.

The arborist's report that accompanied the application described the structural integrity of the silver maple as questionable. The report noted the presence of included bark in the large co-dominant stem at the base of the tree results in a high potential for failure. Other plants that have started to grow in the union also suggest years of decomposition, which is likely resulting in advanced decay.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff did not observe any cavities or faults. The tree was pruned previously and branches growing towards the new house were removed.

Included (i.e. ingrown) bark grows in the union between two or more stems that are growing closely together. Bark does not have a strong supportive fiber strength like wood so the branch attachment may be weaker than a union without included bark. This can result in a branch that is not well supported. However, this tree appears to be structurally sound, recently pruned and has healthy bud onset. Any included bark noted by staff was minor and would not structurally compromise the tree.

Staff perform visual ground inspections of trees. If additional reports were provided by the applicant, such as sonic tomography, which can provide information on internal decay, staff would have reviewed this information as part of their assessment. No additional reports were provided as part of this application.

The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Environment, Climate and Forestry. The applicant is appealing this decision. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision as to whether a permit may be issued when an applicant appeals 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 to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. No comments were received in support of nor in opposition to the application to remove the tree in question.

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.

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. Toronto's urban forest provides \$55 million in ecosystem services and benefits annually. Services such as air pollution removal, reduction of storm water 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 sustainable and expanding urban forest also supports the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being of its residents. 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 silver maple tree at 20 Robintide Court 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 removed.

Environment, Climate and Forestry recommends Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 20 Robintide Court. Should Scarborough 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) Scarborough Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 20 Robintide Court and require the applicant to provide 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 Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Kim Statham  
Director, Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 20 Robintide Court; May 12, 2025

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