

Application to Remove a City Tree – 60 Roxborough Drive

Date: January 30, 2025

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: University-Rosedale - 11

SUMMARY

This report requests that Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 60 Roxborough Drive. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to a driveway realignment.

The Japanese maple tree (*Acer palmatum*) measures 32 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 denial of a permit of a tree protected under the By-laws.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 60 Roxborough Drive.

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

The City of Toronto received an application for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located on the City-owned right-of-way fronting 60 Roxborough Drive. The Japanese maple tree (*Acer palmatum*) in question measures 32 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to a driveway realignment.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that there are decay ports at the base and on the trunk of the tree. It also noted that the canopy interferes with overhead communications wires.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff noted that the tree has a healthy canopy, is slightly asymmetrical, and has some small deadwood.

There is no redesign of the driveway that would allow for the retention of the tree. Staff requested that the existing driveway be used in order to retain the tree.

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 Urban 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.

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 Japanese Maple tree at 60 Roxborough Drive 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 Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 60 Roxborough Drive. Should Toronto and East 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) Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 60 Roxborough Drive, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$3,875.00) to be removed;
 - agreeing to have the tree removed 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 Executive Director of Environment, Climate and Forestry, 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

Melanie Dubroy, Acting Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-392-7390, Email: Melanie.Dubroy@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Raymond Vendrig
Acting Director, Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Japanese maple tree at 60 Roxborough Drive; June 4, 2024

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