

## councilmeeting

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**From:** Imran <imran@bremnerpool.com>  
**Sent:** January 31, 2026 12:53 PM  
**To:** Clerk  
**Cc:** PHTCC  
**Subject:** [External Sender] PH27.1 – Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and Enhancing the Tree Canopy While Supporting Infill Housing and Addressing Concerns with Iceberg Homes – Opposition to Reclassification of Pools and Hot Tubs

Dear Mayor and Members of Council:

I am writing on behalf of Bremner Pool & Spa, a Pickering, ON based swimming pool and hot tub company serving Toronto homeowners for over 40 years.

We strongly support efforts to protect Toronto's tree canopy and address oversized "iceberg homes." However, we are concerned about the proposed amendment that would reclassify outdoor swimming pools and hot tubs so they no longer qualify as soft landscaping in rear yards.

While the technical change may appear minor, the practical implications are significant:

- Excluding pool and hot tub water surfaces from soft-landscaping calculations will cause many typical backyard pool projects to fall below required percentages on paper, even when substantial planting and green space remain.
- This will significantly increase the number of applications requiring minor variances.
- It will add cost, delay, and uncertainty for homeowners.
- It will increase workload pressures on the Committee of Adjustment and City staff for matters unrelated to building mass or true hardscape expansion.

Swimming pools are not equivalent to hard paving or building mass. They are:

- Non-occupiable water bodies.
- Typically integrated into landscaped designs.
- Often accompanied by permeable surfaces and planting plans.
- Compatible with tree preservation and drainage requirements when properly designed.

A blanket exclusion fails to distinguish between structural hardscape and contained amenity water features.

Backyard pools and hot tubs also provide measurable social and health benefits:

- They serve as multi-generational gathering spaces.
- They support "staycations," reducing travel and supporting local businesses.
- They provide low-impact exercise and therapeutic benefits.
- They create safe, supervised environments for swimming and water-safety instruction.
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We respectfully request that Council:

1. Remove or amend the proposed provisions that exclude pool and hot tub water surfaces from rear-yard soft-landscaping calculations; and/or
2. Direct staff to develop a more balanced policy framework that protects tree canopy objectives while enabling reasonable backyard amenities where tree preservation and drainage standards are met.

We urge Council to avoid unintended consequences that would burden homeowners and undermine an established residential amenity with significant social and health value.

Thank you for considering our comments. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in further consultation.

Sincerely,

**Imran Patel, Partner**

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