

NOTICE OF MOTION

Increase Resources for Tree Maintenance and Arborist Staffing

Moved by: Councillor

Nick Mantas

Seconded by: Councillor

Paul Ainslie

SUMMARY:

The City of Toronto's urban forest is one of the largest municipally managed urban forests in North America and plays a critical role in improving air quality, reducing urban heat, managing stormwater, enhancing biodiversity, and improving the overall quality of life for residents. There is a commitment to increase Toronto's tree canopy to 40 percent by 2050, resulting in a growing inventory of trees that require ongoing maintenance; and

Many neighbourhoods across the City are experiencing significant delays in routine tree pruning, resulting in safety concerns, obstructed sidewalks and roadways, reduced visibility, and increased service requests from residents. Proper and timely tree pruning is essential to maintaining the health of Toronto's urban forest, protecting public safety, and reducing the risk of damage caused by dead or hazardous branches.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Environment Climate and Forestry, in consultation with the appropriate City divisions, to report back in the first quarter of 2027 with an assessment on increasing staffing levels for tree maintenance and pruning and include the budget impacts, such report to include:
 - a. the current backlog for routine tree pruning and maintenance across all districts;
 - b. the estimated number of additional arborists and forestry staff required to reduce service delays and maintain a sustainable pruning cycle;
 - c. the financial implications of increasing staffing levels; and
 - d. options to accelerate proactive tree maintenance as Toronto's tree canopy continues to expand.
2. City Council request the Mayor to consider allocating additional funding through the 2027 Budget process to support the hiring of additional arborists and forestry staff to ensure the City's growing urban forest is maintained safely, efficiently, and proactively.