TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 10 Glencairn Avenue

Date: November 6, 2025
To: North York Community Council
From: Director, Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry
Wards: Eglinton-Lawrence - 8

SUMMARY

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located on the boundary line between the properties of 10 and 12 Glencairn Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is that the homeowner is concerned about the tree potentially failing due to defects and its proximity to a fence.

The white mulberry tree (*Morus alba*) measures 45 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

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

1. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 10 Glencairn Avenue.

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 privately owned tree located in the rear yard on the boundary line between the properties of 10 and 12 Glencairn Avenue. The white mulberry tree (*Morus alba*) in question measures 45 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is that the homeowner is concerned about the tree potentially failing due to defects and its proximity to a fence.

The arborist's report that accompanied the application described the tree as being in fair condition. This report noted that the tree has multiple "V" unions, old wounds with poor healing, and bacterial wetwood.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The defects listed in the arborist report were noted, however staff did not observe defects or issues that would unreasonably predispose the tree to failure.

"Included bark" is a condition that occurs when adjacent stems or leaders grow nearly parallel to each other. As the stem or trunk diameter increases over time, bark on the inside face of the branches just above the "V" union is captured between the adjacent stems. Bark does not have a strong, supportive fibre strength like wood, so the branch attachment may be weaker than a union without the included bark. Unions with included bark commonly develop interior decay. However, developing decay is a long-term process and the presence of this type of union is not necessarily confirmation that decay is present. In early stages of included bark, as is the case with this tree, the condition can be monitored for signs of weakness or decay over time.

The removal of deadwood through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices and the performance of routine tree maintenance will also reduce the likelihood of future limb failure. Routine tree maintenance is considered part of performing routine property maintenance and is a responsibility of all property owners within the City of Toronto.

The trunk does not exhibit any obvious signs of internal or external decay that would make the tree more prone to failure. A common indication of potential failure due to strong winds can be a heaving root plate. The root system appears structurally sound without any heaving.

Bacterial wetwood is an unsightly oozing of liquid or slime from old pruning or breakage wounds. As the name implies it is caused by a bacterial infection. Its presence does not necessarily indicate any internal structural weakness or biological decline, and healthy trees can persist with this condition for many years. Staff assessed the site of the infection to rule out serious decay or weakness and found none. This appears to be a superficial issue, that does not require treatment or mitigation.

Staff recommend repairing or modifying the fence in a manner that doesn't significantly harm the tree. If the fence is damaged it can typically be repaired without requiring tree removal. If an injury to the tree is required to complete any future the repairs, the

applicant may apply for a construction permit and submit the relevant construction plans and arborist report showing how the tree will be impacted and protected during construction.

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 stormwater 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 white mulberry tree at 10 Glencairn Avenue 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 North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 10 Glencairn Avenue. Should North 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. North York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 10 Glencairn Avenue and requires 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

David Bostock, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-395-6134, Email: David.Bostock@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the white mulberry tree at 10 Glencairn Avenue; June 25, 2025

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