

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 14 Prestbury Street

Date: April 8, 2026

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Don Valley East - 16

SUMMARY

This report requests that the North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Prestbury Street. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is concern that the tree is situated too close to the house creating the potential for future damage to the roof, walkway and foundation.

The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos f. inermis*) measures 63 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 recommend that:

1. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Prestbury Street.

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 front yard at 14 Prestbury Street. The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos f. inermis*) in question measures 63 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is concern that the tree is situated too close to the house creating the potential for future damage to the roof, walkway and foundation.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report provided no further description of the tree.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The tree is located 1.5 - 2 metres from the house and slightly further away from the foundation.

The pruning of branches in accordance with good arboricultural practices can remove any tree limbs that are impacting the roof and reduce the likelihood of future limb failure on the house. Large growing trees require regular maintenance such as removal of fallen leaves, flowers, fruit, twigs and small branches. This tree maintenance is considered part of regular property maintenance and is the responsibility of all property owners within the City of Toronto.

It is extremely rare for trees or their roots to cause damage to a well-constructed foundation from such a distance. Over many decades, foundations may develop cracks or leaks due to material deterioration and/or environmental factors like water freezing and thawing. These conditions can create tiny gaps that fine roots of nearby trees can grow into, potentially accelerating the rate of deterioration. However, such age-related deterioration could also occur in the absence of trees and their roots. Therefore, it is unlikely trees are solely responsible for any observed damage. Waterproofing of the foundation, if not already done, would prevent roots from accessing any existing cracks or other openings in the foundation.

Walkways constructed of hard landscape surfaces such as interlocking unit pavers or asphalt can be prone to damage by tree roots, particularly when the walkways have not been properly installed or maintained. When pavers and walkways are built to accommodate future root growth and expansion, and with proper maintenance over time, any conflict with trees or their roots is more likely to be manageable and can typically be resolved without removing the tree.

Damage to foundations and walkways can typically be repaired without requiring tree removal. If an injury to the tree is required to complete 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 removal or 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 honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street 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 recommend North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Prestbury Street. 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 14 Prestbury Street and require the applicant to provide 5 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 honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.

Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree and at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.



Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 14 Prestbury Street; September 29, 2025.

