

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 5 Vonda Avenue

Date: May 5, 2026

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Willowdale - 18

SUMMARY

This report requests that the North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately-owned tree located at 5 Vonda Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting the removal of the tree is a concern for potential future failure.

The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharinum*) measures 90 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. The Community Council has delegated authority from the 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 5 Vonda 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 at 5 Vonda Avenue. The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharinum*) in question measures 90 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting the removal of the tree is a concern for potential future failure.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in poor condition. This report noted that trunk decay is impacting the structural integrity of the tree, including a cavity in the lower part of the stem. The report noted that decay at branch unions, previous storm damage, repeated pruning interventions, and weak canopy growth have contributed to the poor health of the tree.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Urban Forestry staff noted concrete and/or metal in the tree cavity, possibly indicating prior attempts to cover or reinforce the area. Staff assessed the small cavity and other concerns identified by the arborist and noted these concerns do not present a significant risk to the tree at this time.

Regular inspections and maintenance by a qualified arborist will help to reduce the risk of future branch or tree failure. If the condition of the tree worsens, the applicant can reapply for a permit to remove the tree, subject to the submission of a complete application and the securing of appropriate compensation.

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.

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 silver maple tree at 5 Vonda 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 5 Vonda 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 1 privately-owned tree located at 5 Vonda Avenue 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

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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 5 Vonda Avenue; August 18, 2025.

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Excerpt of photo from arborist report showing the cavity in the lower trunk of the silver maple tree at 5 Vonda Avenue; August 2025.

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 5 Vonda Avenue; August 18, 2025.



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Excerpt of photo from arborist report showing the cavity in the lower trunk of the silver maple tree at 5 Vonda Avenue; August 2025.

