

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 172 McNicoll Avenue

Date: May 5, 2026

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Don Valley North - 17

SUMMARY

This report requests that the North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately-owned tree located at 172 McNicoll Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is concern for the potential future failure of the tree that is growing with a lean and in close proximity to the house.

The Austrian pine tree (*Pinus nigra*) measures 60 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 172 McNicoll 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 front yard at 172 McNicoll Avenue. The Austrian pine tree (*Pinus nigra*) in question measures 60 cm in diameter. The application indicates the reasons for requesting the removal is concern for the potential future failure of the tree that is growing with a lean and in close proximity to the house.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in poor condition citing deficiencies in canopy health, balance and structure, trunk and bark health, and root health. The report further noted a significant lean towards the house and driveway, proximity to built structures, and potential structural instability.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The tree is situated 2.2 metres from the house and there is no evidence of damage to the house or risk of root upheaval, structural decline or existing instability.

A second private tree was included in the permit application, which Urban Forestry has approved for removal due to its poor condition.

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 Austrian pine tree at 172 McNicoll 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 172 McNicoll 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 172 McNicoll 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 Austrian pine tree (identified by red arrow) at 172 McNicoll Avenue; October 22, 2025.

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Arborist photo of the Austrian pine tree at 172 McNicoll Avenue; October 2025.

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Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Arborist photo of the Austrian pine tree at 172 McNicoll Avenue; October 2025.

