Toronto City Hall

100 Queen Street West

Toronto, ON M5H 2N2PHC

Attention: Nancy Martins

January 19, 2026

PH27.1 Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and Enhancing the Tree Canopy While Supporting Infill Housing and Addressing Concerns with Iceberg Homes - Recommendation Report

Dear Chair Gord Perks, and Members of Planning and Housing Committee,

It is interesting that year after year, the same arguments are put forward. Illegal tree removals are simply the cost of doing business, with developers shrugging off the $800 fine. Rarely does the City of Toronto use it's limited resources to hire a prosecutor and apply the full fine of $100,000 for an illegal tree removal. The City bylaws were effective when the fine for illegally removing a mature tree was $25,000.- or more. When are we going to reinstate something that discourages illegal tree removal?

Since 2011, there have been 130 offences for which a fine of greater than $2,500 per tree was assessed. No fine has reached the maximum of $100,000 per tree.

Of the 130 offences greater than $2,500, here is the breakdown;:

- $2,500 to $5,000 = 60
- $5,000 to $10,000 = 41
- $10,000 to $20,000 = 23
- $20,000 to $30,000 = 3
- $30,000 and up? = 3

As the Contravention Inspection Fee is $287.03 per tree or $861.16 per tree, yes, the amount can exceed $850, depending on the circumstances. Perhaps it is time to change the approach from a punitive one, for contravening bylaws, to more of a reward based system if people preserve trees?

Using tools like Neighbourwoods, a University of Toronto Department of Forestry program that maps out the current inventory of trees on private and public lands is a good place to start. Teaching residents about the value of their trees, helping them identify sick or at risk trees, ensuring replacement trees are facilitated will go a long way to reaching our urban forestry goals of reaching a 40% urban canopy in Toronto by 2050.

The biggest constraint that I see is something that Councillor Nunziata has been brigning up for a few years at our meetings. The approval process for building permits needs to be streamlined to include early commenting by Urban Forestry.

November 30th, 2023, PH 8.6 Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and Enhancing the Tree Canopy While Supporting Infill Housing (Ward All)

Councillor Nunziata Ward 5 says;

So a question when an application goes to the committee of adjustment and the committee of adjustment and we get a lot of that approves it on the condition that they can remove the tree; the applicant appeals it and then it comes to Community Council because they have the permission from Committee of adjustment but they need permission to remove the tree. Which makes it very complicated because then they'll come in and say well I can't build this unless the Council supports the removal of the trees. So we get a lot of that. So shouldn't I know it's a condition from forestry on a committee of adjustment application? But what committee of adjustment does is send it back to Community Council to get permission to remove that tree and we get a lot of that

May 8th, 2025 PH21.6 - Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and Enhancing the Tree Canopy While Supporting Infill Housing and Addressing Concerns with Iceberg Homes - Proposals Report, Planning and Housing Committee Meeting

Councillor Nunziata Ward 5 says;

Yeah just to staff. So we get a lot of them when applications come in and they go to the committee of adjustment and the application is approved but on condition that you have to remove the tree and then it comes to Community Council to request the tree removal. Right So then it's kind of backwards because if you don't remove if you don't approve the tree removal then the applicant goes back to the committee of adjustment. So it's kind of like very very confusing at times because then there's a huge debate. So just for staff on that process like should the tree;

the application for the tree removal; should not be - should be before they go to the committee of adjustment and get approval to build a garden suite or a house?

This issue has NOT been resolved and lies at the heart of what is going on with Urban Forestry's inability to prevent tree removal during builds which have been issued a building permit. The Development Review Division of the City of Toronto does NOT include Urban Forestry in its commenting section when trying to fast track a build.

Since this has been an obvious issue, well documented for some time, can somebody with authority and agency please address this issue? It will solve a lot of problems.

The average tree diameter in Toronto is 16.3 cm. Only 14% of Toronto's trees are greater than 30.6 cm in diameter. Of the total tree population, 6% are City street trees, 34% are trees in City parks and natural areas and 60% grow on private property. A 75cm (30″) tree in Toronto intercepts ten times more air pollution, can store up to 90 times more carbon and contributes up to 100 times more leaf area to the City's tree canopy than a 15cm (6″) tree.

It is obvious from all the submissions on this agenda item, that residents of Toronto are expressing their concern regarding trees not being adequately protected. Let's try to connect the dots between understanding anticipated trends in global warming, how they will concretely impact Toronto and what can no longer be up for discussion when it comes to simply cutting down our trees. Other solutions will need to be found when attempting to increase the housing supply without compromising the urgent need to mitigate the climate crisis that affects us all.

Sincerely

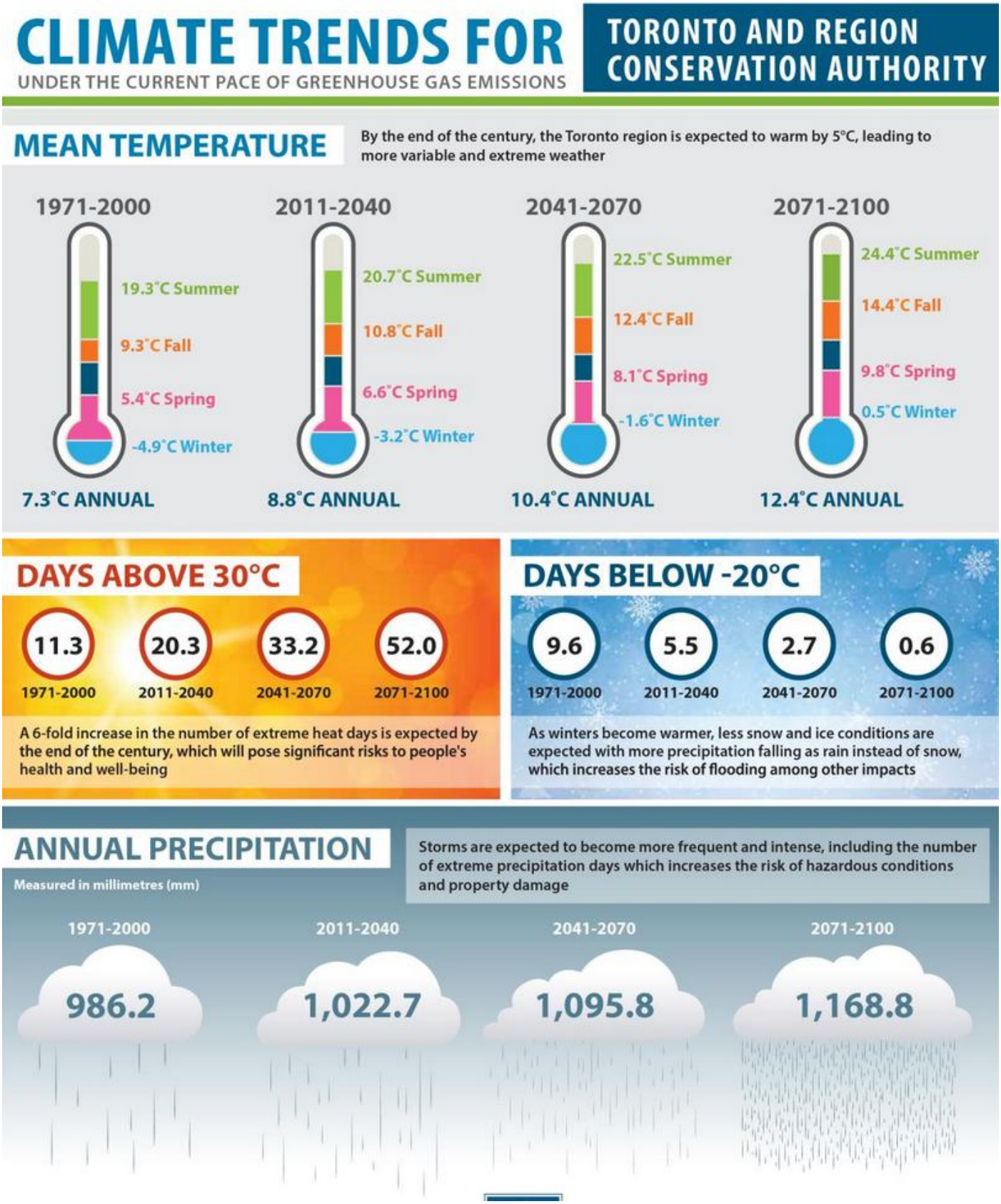
Claudia Aenishanslin

Member of Craven Road Residents Association

Extreme Heat

If carbon emissions continue as they are, maximum average annual temperatures in the Toronto region are expected to reach:

- 12–14°C by 2040;
- 14–16°C by 2041–2070; and
- 16–18°C by 2071–2100.


CLIMATE TRENDS FOR
UNDER THE CURRENT PACE OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS
TORONTO AND REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MEAN TEMPERATURE
By the end of the century, the Toronto region is expected to warm by 5°C, leading to more variable and extreme weather
1971-2000
19.3°C Summer
9.3°C Fall
5.4°C Spring
-4.9°C Winter
7.3°C ANNUAL
2011-2040
20.7°C Summer
10.8°C Fall
6.6°C Spring
-3.2°C Winter
8.8°C ANNUAL
2041-2070
22.5°C Summer
12.4°C Fall
8.1°C Spring
-1.6°C Winter
10.4°C ANNUAL
2071-2100
24.4°C Summer
14.4°C Fall
9.8°C Spring
0.5°C Winter
12.4°C ANNUAL
DAYS ABOVE 30°C
11.3
1971-2000
20.3
2011-2040
33.2
2041-2070
52.0
2071-2100
A 6-fold increase in the number of extreme heat days is expected by the end of the century, which will pose significant risks to people's health and well-being
DAYS BELOW -20°C
9.6
1971-2000
5.5
2011-2040
2.7
2041-2070
0.6
2071-2100
As winters become warmer, less snow and ice conditions are expected with more precipitation falling as rain instead of snow, which increases the risk of flooding among other impacts
ANNUAL PRECIPITATION
Measured in millimetres (mm)
Storms are expected to become more frequent and intense, including the number of extreme precipitation days which increases the risk of hazardous conditions and property damage
1971-2000
986.2
2011-2040
1,022.7
2041-2070
1,095.8
2071-2100
1,168.8

Thank you

TOP 10 BENEFITS TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

40% TREE CANOPY IS OUR GOAL

1. TREES KEEP US COOLER
A big shade tree can reduce the surrounding temperature by 10 to 15 degrees. Trees can reduce the "heat island effect" caused by heat stored in paving and masonry buildings.

2. TREES HELP HANDLE STORM WATER
Trees collect rain on their leaves and channel heavy rainfall to the soil. Together, a community's trees reduce the water that flows into storm sewers.

3. TREES INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES
Property values are increased by 7% - 21% plus in neighbourhoods with mature trees and well landscaped yards.

4. TREES MAKE COMMUNITIES HEALTHIER
Trees improves physical health, mental health and well-being of urban residents. Equitable, frequent, nearby access is especially important for children.

5. TREES MITIGATE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
The total amount of carbon currently stored in Toronto's urban forest is estimated at 1.1 million tonnes. This is equivalent to the amount of carbon emitted by 700,000 cars each year.

6. TREES SHELTER AND FEED WILDLIFE
Birds and other wildlife live and find food in trees. Trees' flowers provide pollen and nectar to feed bees and other insects we depend upon to pollinate

7. TREES PAY US BACK
The 11.5 million trees in Toronto's urban forest is valued at over $7 billion. Each year, these trees provide at least $55 million worth of services to our environment and our communities.

TREES NEED OUR CARE
Every one of our trees make up a vast, green urban forest. Collectively, they multiply the value of each tree. The urban forest is as important a part of our communities' infrastructure as streets and sewers.

8. TREES CLEAN THE AIR WE BREATHE
Toronto's trees remove about 972 tonnes of pollution from our air each year. This includes small particulate matter which has serious implications to human health. Areas with fewer trees and/or only small trees may receive less pollution mitigation benefits than areas with larger trees and more urban forest cover.

9. TREES REDUCE NOISE POLLUTION
A properly designed buffer of trees and shrubs can reduce noise by 50%.

10. BIG TREES ARE WORTH MORE
Large, mature trees provide the greatest benefits. It takes many years for a newly planted tree to provide as many services as a big tree. Policies and planning that preserve large trees are a long-term investment in community well-being and prosperity.

www.longbranchtreefest.ca

Ref: 2018 Toronto Tree Canopy Study
Green City: Why Nature Matters to Health
TD Economics Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in the City of Toronto