

## **Application to Remove a City Tree – 411 Brock Avenue**

**Date:** December 18, 2025

**To:** Toronto and East York Community Council

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

**Wards:** Davenport - 9

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report requests that the Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 411 Brock Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is because: its roots are lifting patio stones and cracking a concrete walkway, creating safety hazards; the tree has limited soil volume due to proximity to the house and a retaining wall, reducing stability; and as it grows taller, exposure to wind and inadequate anchorage increases concerns of potential uprooting.

The Colorado blue spruce tree (*Picea pungens*) 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. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 411 Brock 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 City-owned tree located on the City-owned right-of-way fronting 411 Brock Avenue. The Colorado blue spruce tree (*Picea pungens*) in question measures 45 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is because: its roots are lifting patio stones and cracking a concrete walkway, creating safety hazards; the tree has limited soil volume due to proximity to the house and a retaining wall, reducing stability; and as it grows taller, exposure to wind and inadequate anchorage increases concerns of potential uprooting.

The arborist's report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that the top of the tree is dead possibly due to white pine weevil; there is a lean in the trunk that has corrected itself; and the trunk of the tree has been girdled by old Christmas lights. The report also noted that the tree has limited soil volume due to proximity to the house and a retaining wall, which may limit root growth and reduce stability.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable, with good form, and a healthy canopy and root flare. Staff noted that the tree is in overall fair to good health with no significant structural concerns. Staff did not observe any girdling damage from Christmas lights and observed the top of this tree as healthy with no indication of damage by pests, including weevils. The tree's lower branches were pruned to allow space underneath, which is common for this species in urban settings. Staff observed some minor inner deadwood and some minor discolouration in the canopy, but overall, there was little to no dieback. Staff noted that the roots likely extend under the paver stones, still providing ample space for growth and minimizing concerns about the tree's structural stability.

The City of Toronto maintains trees located on the City-owned right-of-way. Should this tree require maintenance in the future, the applicant may submit a service request through 311 Toronto to have the tree inspected.

Hard landscape features such as interlocking unit pavers and asphalt surfaces can be prone to damage by tree roots, particularly when they 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.

The damage described in the arborist report 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. The 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.

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 Colorado blue spruce tree at 411 Brock 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 Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 411 Brock Avenue. Should Toronto and East 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) Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 411 Brock Avenue, conditional upon the applicant:
  - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$3,353.00) to be removed;
  - agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense;
  - providing 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, and;
  - providing a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of planting and warranty for a period of two years for all trees to be planted on City property.

## **CONTACT**

---

Melanie Dubroy, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-392-7363, Email: [Melanie.Dubroy@toronto.ca](mailto:Melanie.Dubroy@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph showing the entire Colorado blue spruce tree at 411 Brock Avenue; August 14, 2025

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the base of the Colorado blue spruce tree at 411 Brock Avenue; August 14, 2025

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph showing the entire Colorado blue spruce tree at 411 Brock Avenue; August 14, 2025



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the base of the Colorado blue spruce tree at 411 Brock Avenue; August 14, 2025

