

Application to Remove a City Owned Tree – 54 Gormley Avenue

Date: April 9, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Toronto-St. Paul's - 12

SUMMARY

This report requests that Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 54 Gormley Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to the nuisance fruit and a poor branch union resulting in potential health and safety concerns.

The ginkgo tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) measures 39 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. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 54 Gormley 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 54 Gormley Avenue. The ginkgo tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) in question measures 39 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to the nuisance fruit and a poor branch union resulting in potential health and safety concerns.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in poor condition. The report also noted co-dominant leaders with a weak union with the potential to make the tree a candidate for failure during future wind or storm events.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable with no significant structural concerns.

Large growing trees require regular maintenance such as removal of fallen leaves, flowers, fruit, twigs and small branches. Removal of debris such as fallen fruit is considered part of regular property maintenance and is the responsibility of all property owners within the City of Toronto. The City's Tree By-laws do not support tree removal to address the perceived nuisance resulting from a tree's natural functions.

The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. Through the tree inspection and the 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.

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 Ginkgo tree at 54 Gormley 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 recommend Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 54 Gormley 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 54 Gormley Avenue, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$4,256.00) 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;
 - providing a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of planting and warranty for a period of two years for all replacement trees to be planted on City property.

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 Ginkgo tree at 54 Gormley Avenue; January 13, 2026

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