

Application to Remove a City-Owned Tree – 572 Annette Street

Date: May 5, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Parkdale-High Park - 4

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 572 Annette Street. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to allow for the construction of a rental unit on the property. The proposed work would involve excavation that would sever all anchor roots within 2 metres from the base of the west side of the tree, including major structural roots essential to the structural stability and long-term survivability of the tree.

The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) measures 119 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 572 Annette Street.

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 adjacent to 572 Annette Street. The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) in question measures 119 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to allow for the construction of a rental unit on the property. The proposed work would involve excavation that would sever all anchor roots within 2 metres from the base of the west side of the tree, including major structural roots essential to the structural stability and long-term survivability of the tree.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted codominant stems, tip dieback and a root flare that overlaps the sidewalk.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff observed a full canopy and good structure with no critical defects.

The original application submitted was for a tree injury, however, given the scope of the excavation, the extent of anticipated root damage would be significant enough to compromise the tree's health and structural stability, thereby requiring an application for tree removal. City staff have advised the applicant on design modifications as well as construction methodology that could be implemented to reduce the impact to the tree. Modifications include moving one of the basement walls eastward, using helical piles with fully above-grade beams for part of the proposed rear addition, and maintaining softscape within the Tree Protection Zone as opposed to the proposed paved walkway. The applicant has not submitted any revised plans to date.

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.

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 honey locust tree at 572 Annette Street 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 572 Annette Street. 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 1 City-owned tree located at 572 Annette Street, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$25,892.00) to be removed;
 - agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense;
 - providing 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, 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

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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 572 Annette Street; May 6, 2025.

Attachment 2 – Figure 1: Excerpt of development plan indicating location of tree in relation to proposed construction; Tree #1 (in red below).

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 572 Annette Street; May 6, 2025.



