

Supplementary Report: Interim Approach to Address a Privately-Owned Female Ginkgo Tree - 40 Myrtle Avenue

Date: June 19, 2026

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Toronto-Danforth - 14

SUMMARY

Environment, Climate and Forestry received an application to remove one privately-owned female ginkgo tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) at 40 Myrtle Avenue due to concerns that the tree drops fruit with a foul odour. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. An appeal was submitted to Toronto and East York Community Council on April 30, 2026 and has been deferred to the July 8 and 9, 2026 meeting.

On May 20 and 21, 2026, City Council directed the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry to provide recommendations on the impacts of City-owned female ginkgo trees with a focus on community health and safety, as part of the ongoing Tree By-Law Review and to report back in 2027.

Following recent City Council direction, this supplementary report proposes an interim approach for the management of female ginkgo trees and requests that Toronto and East York Community Council approve a permit to remove one privately-owned female ginkgo tree located at 40 Myrtle Avenue on condition that a tree of alternate species be planted as a replacement.

City staff will report back to Council in early 2027 with recommendations on an approach to the impacts of female ginkgo trees with a focus on community health and safety, as part of the ongoing Tree By-Law Review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately-owned tree located at 40 Myrtle Avenue as part of an interim approach to addressing female ginkgo trees in the city of Toronto, and require the applicant to plant a new replacement tree at 40 Myrtle Avenue to the satisfaction of the Executive Director, Environment, Climate, and Forestry.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on May 20 and 21, 2026, City Council directed the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry to provide recommendations on the impacts of City-owned female ginkgo trees with a focus on community health and safety, as part of the ongoing Tree By-Law Review and to report back in 2027.

[Agenda Item History - 2026.MM41.31](#)

At its meeting on March 25 and 26, 2026, City Council adopted the report entitled Tree By-law Review Report. This report recommended that staff would review operational practices to ensure invasive species management and nuisance tree concerns are addressed in a way that balances customer expectations with biodiversity and urban forest protection goals.

[Agenda Item History - 2026.IE27.8](#)

At its meeting on February 27, 2017, the Parks and Environment Committee adopted the report outlining the implications if the City decided to exempt black walnut trees from protection under the City's Tree Bylaws.

[Agenda Item History - 2017.PE17.2](#)

COMMENTS

The City of Toronto received an application for a permit to remove one privately-owned tree located in the rear yard at 40 Myrtle Avenue. The female ginkgo tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) in question measures 33 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal is that the tree drops fruit with a foul odour.

Ginkgo trees are an excellent urban tree with great attributes such as beautiful fall colour, striking form, large size at maturity, and hardiness. They also contribute to the diversity of the urban forest and are highly disease resistant. Male ginkgo trees are commonly planted for these positive attributes. Unknowingly, when the female version is planted, ginkgo trees produce fruit, which are known to have a noxious odour and can be toxic when handled with bare skin (similar to poison ivy); negative attributes that make these trees unique. City staff are reviewing planting programs and the operational practices of considering tree removal applications for female ginkgo trees as per Council direction. A report back to Council is expected in early 2027 with

recommendations on an approach to the impacts of female ginkgo trees with a focus on community health and safety, as part of the ongoing Tree By-Law Review.

In the interim, City staff have determined that on a case-by-case basis it is reasonable to remove a privately-owned female ginkgo tree on condition that a tree of alternate species be planted as a replacement.

As such, the Director of Urban Forestry, Environment, Climate and Forestry recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately-owned tree located at 40 Myrtle Avenue as part of an interim approach to addressing female ginkgo trees in the city of Toronto, and require the applicant to plant a new replacement tree at 40 Myrtle Avenue to the satisfaction of the Executive Director, Environment, Climate, and Forestry.

City staff will report back to Council in early 2027 with recommendations on an approach to the impacts of female ginkgo trees with a focus on community health and safety, as part of the ongoing Tree By-Law Review.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Arborist photograph of the ginkgo tree at 40 Myrtle Avenue; November 24, 2025.

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