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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAVING WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE’S OLDEST TREE IS A TEAM EFFORT
THE TOWN AND PROVINCE WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT “LANDMARK TREE”

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE, ON– The Office of the Mayor announced today that the fight continues to save the oldest and possibly largest tree in Whitchurch-Stouffville – an American Elm Tree which according to arborists is a rare survivor of Dutch Elm Disease and could survive another 200 years. The tree has been registered with the University of Guelph's Elm Recovery Program (ERP).

Located on the south-west corner of Bethesda Road and Tenth Line the tree has been put at risk by planned improvements to the Lincolnville GO Station by Metrolinx. The tree was initially identified through the applicant’s required Tree Inventory and was suggested to be retained but not emphasized or required. Town Arborist, Mark Carroll, identified the tree through his review of the site plan documents and raised the issue internally.

Municipal planning staff received a request to designate the tree under the Ontario Heritage Act as it contains cultural heritage value as a 19th century farm hedgerow tree believed to be 170-200 years of age. The Town’s Heritage Advisory Committee has moved to nominate the tree as a "landmark tree" with Forest Ontario's Heritage Tree Program and to request provincial review of the property by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport under Ontario Regulation 10/06 and Part III of the Ontario Heritage Act.

“I am grateful to our staff, the Heritage Advisory Committee and our community for their efforts to protect this significant resource,” said Mayor Iain Lovatt. “MPP Paul Calandra has signed on to fight alongside us and we believe that we can work with Metrolinx to ensure the retention of this landmark so that it can continue to support the local environment and be experienced by future generations.”

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