

**CITY OF BROOKLYN PARK
EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) PREPAREDNESS AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a non-native insect that was introduced to North America from Asia. It was first discovered in the Detroit, Michigan/Windsor Ontario area in 2002, arriving likely in wood crating for packaged freight that was transported here via ship or airplane. Despite eradication and suppression efforts, EAB has killed over 20 million Ash trees throughout the U.S. and Canada. In May of 2009, EAB was identified for the first time in Minnesota and in August of 2017, EAB was found for the first time in Brooklyn Park.

EAB is a beetle that is smaller than a dime. The adult does very little damage; however, this is not the case with the larvae (immature stage) that feed on the inner bark of ash trees. Over a couple of years of feeding off of the tree the larvae will completely disrupt the feeding of nutrients to the tree and eventually kill the tree. All species of ash trees are susceptible and it is hard to detect presence of EAB, therefore it can be present for years before an infestation is confirmed.

Currently, the City has approximately 5,000 ash trees on public property, it is estimated that there could be three times as many privately owned ash trees. An undertaking as large as the infestation of EAB will bring about many issues that are difficult to predict and articulate at this time. However, they will need attention as they come more into focus. The most notable of these issues will be the additional funding, personnel and equipment needed to deal with the infestation.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline policies and operational procedures to mitigate the disruption to the urban forest caused by the infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Taking a proactive approach, this policy provides the framework for implementation of an EAB Preparedness and Management Plan (Plan), enabling the City to address public and private needs in an efficient and effective manner.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all public and private properties in the City of Brooklyn Park where such EAB infested trees may negatively or generally threaten the health of the urban forest overall.

Definitions

Easement. Specific areas granted as public by property deeds for specific use for streets, storm water conveyance, utilities (public or private), sidewalks and trails, etc.

Right of Way (ROW). An area granted as a public easement by property deeds for general use for streets, storm water conveyance, utilities (public or private), sidewalks and trails, etc.

Tree. Any woody plant, having a single woody trunk and a potential diameter of two inches or more.

Private Trees. Trees located on privately owned property including but not limited to: residential, commercial, industrial, and other publicly owned property.

Public Trees. Trees located on City owned public property including but not limited to: Parks and open space; public building grounds; street boulevards, medians, and other public rights of way.

IV. **POLICY**

Administration of the Plan

The Park & Building Maintenance Manager and the Park Maintenance Division, through the Operations and Maintenance Department, will be responsible for implementation and follow up on the provisions of the Plan. The Operations and Maintenance Department will work closely with the Recreation and Parks Department including the Golf Course Division on the implementation of the Plan. The Plan is subject to change should county, state, or federal rules dictate.

Communications

The Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Director of Operations & Maintenance Director, and Recreation & Parks Director will receive periodic updates through normal channels. All media relations will follow the City's communications policy.

PREPAREDNESS

Ash Wood Quarantine

After the discovery of EAB in St. Paul in 2009, The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) issued quarantine on the movement of ash wood in the Counties of Hennepin, Ramsey, and Houston. This quarantine has and is being expanded as new EAB is found in other Counties in the State. Wood from ash trees in quarantined Counties may not be transported outside of the quarantine boundary.

Ordinances and Policies

The City has ordinances and policies related to forestry activities, including, City Ordinance Chapter 97: Grass, Weed, and Tree Regulations, Operations & Maintenance Department Administrative Policies #5.20: Forestry; #5.25: Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness and Management Plan; and #3.15: Public Easement Maintenance, all of which guide forestry operations within the city.

Staff Training and Licensing

The Operations & Maintenance Department currently has certified tree inspectors, licensed pesticide applicators, and certified arborists. The Golf Course Division, within the Recreation & Parks Department also has licensed pesticide applicators all of which must attend training annually or bi-annually to retain their license or certification.

MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Pesticide Treatments

Pesticides known to control EAB are commercially available. Many of these pesticides are restricted use and must be applied by a certified pesticide applicator. Pesticide treatments on a large scale basis may be cost prohibitive, due to the fact that treatments to each tree are needed annually or bi-annually for the life of the tree. While the immediate cost of chemically treating is cheaper than removal and re-planting, it is delaying the inevitable tree loss in the community.

Policy Impact: Treating a tree costs approximately \$100.00-\$150.00 per tree for a two year treatment. To treat all public trees in the city using an average one time cost of \$125.00 would be \$625,000. The treatment of individual trees, in the case of a homeowner with one special tree, or for high profile trees in the public landscape is a viable alternative to prolong the life of the tree(s) and preserve the overall tree canopy for a longer period of time. It is unknown how long treatments will extend the life of the affected trees.

Tree Removal

North American communities have not successfully eradicated EAB once it has been found. EAB typically increases in population and eventually infests and kills all varieties of ash trees. Symptoms are slow to appear and once EAB is found it is estimated that it has already been present in the tree for 3-5

years. Infected ash trees typically succumb to the disease and are subsequently removed and disposed of. Typically trees in natural areas are left to die and are not removed unless they pose a hazard.

Policy Impact: Staff currently estimates the cost to remove and dispose of an average tree including stump removal to be approximately \$800.00 per tree. At this cost it would take approximately \$3,760,800 to remove all of the ash trees on city property including boulevard trees and trees on Edinburgh golf course.

Reforestation

The future expected loss of several thousand boulevard, park and open space ash trees will require a massive reforestation effort. The benefits trees provide is broadly understood and includes cleaning our air, cooling our atmosphere, saving energy through shade and wind breaks, and making Brooklyn Park a greener, safer and more pleasant city. Therefore, developing a plan for re-planting the trees lost to EAB may be one of the most important policy decisions within this Plan.

Tree planting is currently guided by O&M Policy #5.20: Forestry; and O&M Policy #3.15: Public Easement Maintenance. Thus, with the impending loss of thousands of trees, consideration should be given to whether these guidelines should be reviewed and modified.

Policy Impact: As a pro-active measure, several years ago staff discontinued the planting of ash trees on city owned property. It is estimated that the cost to replant a new tree is between \$200.00 and \$500.00 per tree. This cost is dependent on the initial size of the tree and using an average cost of \$350.00 per tree, it would cost \$1,179,150 to replace the 3,369 publically owned boulevard street ash trees. Additionally, it would cost \$262,500 to replace the 750 Ash trees on Edinburgh USA Golf Course.

Wood Disposal and Utilization

The probable loss of thousands of ash trees creates several challenges for the City in regards to the disposal of the wood for both city trees, as well as private trees removed by commercial tree services and residents. In the early stages of an infestation, care to slow down the spread of EAB is paramount not only to Brooklyn Park, but to other surrounding communities and the State.

May 2 - September 30 is considered EAB's Active Period. This is the most critical period for removal, trimming and movement of ash trees. This is the time where adult beetles emerge from trees, begin feeding on foliage, move to other trees, and lay their eggs. During these months it is best to leave these trees standing and not chance the possible spread of EAB by not transporting infested wood to other areas.

October 1 - May 1 is considered to be EAB's Dormant Period. Ash trees can be removed, trimmed and transported so long as they are promptly chipped to the required dimensions of 1"x1"x1". Chipping to this small size will effectively kill any EAB larvae.

ATTACHMENTS

1. EAB Preparedness and Management Progress to Date
2. 2018-2019 EAB Preparedness and Management Work Plan

Cross – Referenced: City Council Resolution # 2011-158

EAB Preparedness and Management Progress to Date

Ordinances and Policies

In 2014, City Ordinance Chapter 97: Grass, Weed, and Tree Regulations, was revised to address trees impacted by EAB. Administrative Policies #5.20: Forestry (established 4/1/2000 last revised 11/1/2016); #5.25 Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness and Management Plan (established 10/18/2011, last revised 5/7/2018); and Policy #3.15: Public Easement Maintenance (established 8/1/1997 last revised 8/1/2011) all guide forestry operations within the City.

Monitoring

Monitoring the infestation is the first step to managing it. In 2010, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) placed several purple traps in ash trees located in Brooklyn Park. These traps assisted the MDA in watching for the spread of EAB. No EAB was found in the traps in 2010. Since the first find in the State in 2009, the City's Forestry Division has been monitoring trees for EAB and responding to calls from residents with questions about EAB. In August 2017, EAB was identified for the first time in the central part of Brooklyn Park, across the street from Edinburgh USA Golf Course.

Inventory collection

In 2010, Operations & Maintenance Division staff began a GPS/GIS inventory of all trees maintained by the City, by having this data, staff can more accurately estimate the future cost associated with managing EAB. The inventory continues to be an on-going project with data currently being collected on over 16,836 trees on City owned property of which 4,701 were ash trees. Staff will also be using this data to keep an inventory of critical trees identified to be proactively managed and treated, to ensure reapplication treatments are done each year and recorded for effectiveness.

Pesticide Treatments

In 2014, the City began a pro-active approach to treating higher quality ash trees located on public property. These treatments were primarily in parks and on the Government Campus. Trees that are treated need to be re-treated every two years. Trees treated by year: 2014 (5 trees), 2015 (207 trees), 2016 (142 trees), 2017 (208 trees), 2018 (502 trees of which 232 were at Edinburgh USA). In 2018 The City entered into a three- year agreement with Rainbow Tree Care for pesticide treatments on both public and private property.

Tree Removal

In 2014, the City began pro-actively removing lower quality ash trees located on public property and boulevards. Trees removed by year: 2014 (10 trees), 2015 (17 trees), 2016 (19 trees), 2017 (156 trees of which 103 were located on Edinburgh USA golf course (holes 1 -9).

Reforestation

The City's reforestation program is supported by the Annual Tree Sale. This program was started in 2007 in response to the devastating wind storm that hit the city in 2005, resulting in the loss of many public and private trees. The primary goal of this program is to provide residents the opportunity to plant trees on private property at a reasonable cost. Since 2007, over 1,720 trees have been planted on private property, with an additional 550 on public property. In 2018, 88 additional trees were planted on public property,

Policy Number: O&M 5.25-Attachment 1

Established: 10/18/2011

Last Revision: 10/2/2018

Page 2

EAB Program Funding

By City Council Resolution No. 2011-158, the Council authorized an appropriation of \$150,000 from within the Heritage Fund for fiscal year 2012 to begin funding for the EAB program. However, because of budget constraints, it was not implemented until 2016. Since then, \$150,000 has been appropriated each year in the Capital Improvement Program.

2018-19 EAB Preparedness and Management Work Plan (Plan)

1. Ordinances and Policies

- Update Chapter 97 of the City Code to comply with current recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA).

2. Monitoring

- Staff will continue to monitor for the spread of EAB and report new finds to the MDA as they are found.

3. Inventory collection

- Continue with the tree inventory of all public trees.
- Begin to inventory private trees as site visits allow.

4. Pesticide Treatments

- Continue to treat identified high profile public ash trees in parks and public building properties.
- Begin a treatment program at Edinburgh USA golf course and Brookland Golf Park.
- Keep GIS records of all pesticide applications to ensure tracking of treatments and health of ash trees.
- Determine if a treatment plan should be designed for public boulevard ash trees.
- Determine, if City should play a role in assisting with a cost share program for resident to treat a City owned boulevard tree.
- Continue to ensure staff training and licensure for application of pesticide treatments for EAB.

5. Tree Removal

- Continue to proactively remove public ash trees that are in decline on street boulevards, active parks and public building sites, the exception is wooded natural areas within park system. The trees in these areas will be left to decompose unless they pose a hazard to park users, in which case they will be felled and left.
- Consult with Golf Course Architect about proactively removing ash trees as needed on the back nine holes at Edinburgh USA golf course.

6. Reforestation

- As the budget permits, all publicly owned ash trees, that are removed, should be replaced with non-host species that will enhance the planting site, are appropriate for the planting site, and add to the diversity and general health of the urban forest. Trees will be planted in accordance with Operations & Maintenance Department best practices. New plantings will be budget based and prioritized by staff.
- Tree replacements on private property are subject to Operations & Maintenance Policy Number O&M 5.20, and are to be totally funded by the owner.

7. Funding

- Staff will continue to review the EAB Management program and make annual recommendations to the City Council through the annual budget process. Staff will also pursue grants and state funding to minimize the impact to the city.

8. Tree Contractor Licensing

- Staff will evaluate the practice of Licensing Tree Contractors to work within the City Limits. The City does not currently license Tree Contractors. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) currently requires all persons or companies who provide tree care services to register and pay an annual fee to the MDA. Thus, licensing is already being done at the State level.

9. Private Trees

- Consider entering into a contract with a private tree removal company to provide pre-bid costs for residents to use for removal and/or treatment options if they choose.