



ST. CHARLES
SINCE 1834

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Presentation of Current EAB Policy and Recommendation to direct Staff regarding Funding for FY 12/13 Budget

Presenter: Peter Suhr

Please check appropriate box:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Government Operations	X	Government Services 02.27.2012
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning & Development		City Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Hearing		

Estimated Cost:	\$200,000	Budgeted:	YES	X	NO
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If NO, please explain how item will be funded:

Contingent on approval of FY12/13 Budget.

Executive Summary:

Due to recent and projected increases in EAB activity, the Public Works Department is anticipating an increased financial burden to maintain our policy related to tree removal and replacement in future fiscal years. Staff has projected escalating cost increases of \$200,000 in FY12/13, \$275,000 in FY13/14 and \$400,000 in FY14/15. Staff will facilitate discussions about current trends, future projections, costs, options, and recommendations for your consideration and guidance.

Note: As of February 17, 2012 the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) has interpreted that prevailing wage is required for tree removal services, which has historically not been required. This interpretation has the potential to increase tree removal services by 40% - 70%. Above costs do NOT include the potential increase.

Attachments: *(please list)*

1. EAB Policy & Plan
2. Presentation Memo

Recommendation / Suggested Action *(briefly explain):*

Staff requests the Committee to consider this matter and direct staff accordingly.

<i>For office use only:</i>	<i>Agenda Item Number: 6.g</i>
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Memo

Date: February 27, 2012

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Peter Suhr

RE: Current Emerald Ash Borer Policy and impact on FY 12/13 budget

The City of St. Charles Public Works staff has been collecting information and evaluating options on how best to address the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation in the City of St. Charles since it was first identified in our community on June 20, 2008. The Public Works Department maintains 5,440 public Ash trees. The EAB has been identified in every quadrant of the City and, to date (January 2012), over half of the public trees have been positively diagnosed.

Over the past three years, Public Works has been able to manage the infestation by removing over one-half of the confirmed trees and replacing all of those removed, except for a small portion in the Commercial Manufacturing District (CMD). Our success is attributed to support from City Council, effective budget projections and diligent management practices as identified in the EAB Policy & Plan. The EAB Policy & Plan is a culmination of past policies, modified to reflect current trends and recommendations. The policy resulted from careful consideration of the budget, city ordinance, Tree Commission guidance, Illinois Department of Agriculture's policies and citizens of the City of St. Charles. The Plan was designed to be systematic, therefore creating a consistent approach to how residents are notified, how EAB infested trees are to be removed (or treated) and how removed trees are replaced.

Because of recent and projected increases in EAB activity, the Public Works Department is anticipating an increased financial burden to keep up with the spread of EAB over the next few years. Information provided at recent EAB conferences, in particular a Risk Management Workshop hosted by the City of Naperville in December 2011, supports this. One case study in Ft. Wayne, Indiana suggests EAB control was fairly predictable and linear for the first few years. However, unexpectedly and exponentially the EAB devastation increased rapidly in year four. Ft. Wayne was not prepared for such a drastic increase in 2009 and therefore, admittedly, struggled to secure budgets, provide for public safety and maintain good standing public relations in their community.

Similar to Ft. Wayne, the St. Charles Public Works Department is projecting a significant increase to the spread of EAB in 2012 and continuing through 2014. To maintain our current policy including removing unsafe EAB trees and re-planting all trees that are removed, Staff is projecting an increase of

\$200,000 to the FY 12/13 Budget. Staff will have detailed information to facilitate discussions about current trends, future projections, cost, options and recommendations for your consideration and guidance.

Staff is seeking direction regarding:

- A. Shall city staff continue to follow the existing EAB Policy and increase the FY12/13 Budget by \$200,000? The implications for future fiscal years would be \$275,000 in FY13/14 and \$400,000 in FY14/15.
- B. If staff is directed to modify the existing policy there are many alternative policies to consider including the following (Staff will include detailed information about each alternative in the presentation):
 - Partial budget increase.
 - Extend the replacement timeline.
 - Extend the removal timeline.
 - 50/50 replacement policy or 100% funding from home owner.
 - 1” tree replacement in lieu of 2 ½”

2010 Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Policy & Plan

Staff has been collecting information and evaluating options on how best to address the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation in the City of St. Charles. On June 20, 2008, City crews first identified EAB in our community. The city has over 18,000 public & private ash trees of which the Public Works Department maintains 5,013 of them. The EAB has been identified in every quadrant of the City and, to date (February 2010), 1,151 public trees and about 50 private trees have been positively diagnosed. Of the 1,151 public trees diagnosed, 458 have been removed and 40 have been chemically treated. We have estimated that homeowners have treated an additional 225 private trees and have removed about 25.

The 2010 EAB Policy & Plan is a culmination of past policies, modified to reflect current trends and recommendations. This policy results from careful consideration of the current Budget, City Ordinance, Tree Commission, Illinois Department of Agriculture's Policies and Citizens of the City of St. Charles. The Plan is designed to be systematic, therefore creating a consistent approach to how residents are notified, how EAB infested trees are to be treated or removed and how removed trees are replaced as follows:

1. Notification to Residents

- Residents with ash trees on parkways will receive a letter stating the City's policy on EAB. (Attachments #1). About 2500 letters were mailed in 2008. These letters shall be mailed every other year starting in 2010.
 - Letters should denote the City's marking system. A purple dot signifies confirmation of EAB. A pink dot designates the tree will be removed.
- Residents with confirmed EAB on parkway trees will receive a letter indicating how the City will proceed (Attachments #2). Each letter sent will be copied to the Aldermen within the ward with the confirmed EAB tree.
- Residents with confirmed EAB on private property may receive a letter indicating a requirement to have the tree removed. (Attachment #3). Before sending letters, it is City staff's preference to work with and educate the homeowner of options they may have, including chemical treatments. Letters requiring tree removals will only be sent if the tree becomes an eminent public health & safety issue.
- The City may send letters to known homeowner associations regarding EAB. (Attachment #4, example "White Oak Circle). Before sending letters, it is City staff's preference to work with and educate the homeowner associations of options they may have, including chemical treatments. Letters requiring tree removals will only be sent if the tree becomes an eminent public health & safety issue.

- Letters will be sent to local landscapers and tree service companies regarding the City's policy on EAB. (Attachment #5)
 - A compliance agreement should be on file with the Illinois Department of Agriculture before any tree work is performed. Proof of said agreement should be on the jobsite as well. (Attachment #6, compliance agreement). These letters shall be mailed every four years starting in 2012.

- An EAB Hotline has been established to assist residents that receive notifications.

2. Removal of EAB Infested Trees

- Contingent upon budget constraints, confirmed EAB infested parkway trees will be removed any time after 2 weeks from notification. Any tree deemed unsafe will be removed immediately.
- Per the City Ordinance, if the EAB is discovered in a tree on private property, removal must commence before the next "flight season" (May 1 – July 30) following that discovery.
- Homeowners have the option to chemically treat trees on their property. (See #3 below)
- Removal costs vary depending on tree size, location and interference.

3. Chemical Treatments

- City staff will continue treating healthy City owned trees at the Municipal Building and Langum Park campuses with a chemical called Merit. We will continue treatment of approximately 40 trees with this injection annually.
- Homeowners may treat trees on their property and also on the City's parkway. Before trees on the parkway are treated, they must be inspected by the City's Arborist or his designee to determine if the tree is infected with EAB. Each year before treatment, the parkway tree must be re-inspected. Documentation, including the City's Inspection Form and receipt/ invoice for treatments of each tree will be maintained on file at the Public Works Facility.

4. Tree Replacements

- Any parkway trees that are removed by the City will be replaced as the budget permits.
- Replacement costs will average approximately \$400.00 per tree.
- Homeowners will have the option of upgrading to a larger tree. The standard size provided is 2.5" in diameter. Homeowners will be charged

to upgrade to a larger tree, which vary in cost depending on the species. Homeowners may visit the City's website for current price options.

- Homeowners may assist in selecting their replacement tree. A listing of different varieties available will be posted on the City's website, www.stcharlesil.gov.

5. Continued Goals

- City staff will regularly notify the General Public about EAB, City Policies and Treatment Options.
- City staff will continue to assist homeowners with all EAB issues.
- City staff will continue to monitor the progress of EAB and be prepared to alter strategy if warranted. This Policy & Plan will be reviewed every year.
- City staff will continue to monitor the EAB infestation as it relates to public health & safety.

Attachment #1

Dear St. Charles Resident,

The City of St. Charles Arborist has recently confirmed that ash trees in your area have been infected with the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). An ash tree is located in the City parkway adjacent to your residence. This letter and the enclosed bulletins will supply you with information regarding the EAB.

If the parkway ash tree becomes infested, the City of St. Charles will mark your tree with a purple dot. When the tree declines to a point where it becomes beyond treatment, a pink dot will be added. The City will then remove the tree as soon as scheduling and budget allow, after you receive your letter of notification.

The ash tree will be replaced in the following spring or fall planting season with a different species. Planting will be dependent on budget concerns, the severity of the infestation, and the number of trees removed during the prior year. The City will be replanting trees that are removed with trees that are 2.5" in diameter and about 10' to 12' tall. Upgrades in size are available at additional cost. Please reference the City website at www.stcharlesil.org for current cost information. This option along with the removal process and time frame will be addressed in the notification on removal referred above.

The parkway ash tree may be treated with chemicals to help protect and minimize the threat of EAB infestation. The homeowner would be responsible, including the cost, for this treatment. It is important to understand that this treatment may continue for a number of years. Listed below are two chemicals that are currently being used for treating ash trees.

The first chemical is Merit (imidacloprid), which can be applied as a soil drench. See enclosed bulletin. The homeowner can apply this application. Merit can also be injected into the trunk of the tree. A certified arborist must do this application.

The second chemical is Tree-Age; this chemical must be injected into the trunk of the tree. A certified arborist must do this application.

Pricing will vary between companies based on the chemicals used, and the diameter of the tree being treated. Each of these chemicals has shown promising results in combating the EAB. Should you decide to chemically treat your parkway tree, you **must** contact the City's Arborist to inspect the tree. The City's Arborist will determine if the tree is appropriate for chemical application. For any parkway tree that a resident may chose to chemically treat, the City Arborist must be consulted regarding the treatment process and documentation required. With all applications, nutrients and water are also very important in maintaining the health of the tree.

If you have any questions regarding the Emerald Ash Borer you can visit the City's website at www.stcharlesil.org. If you should have any other concerns or want to schedule an inspection, please call the EAB hotline at 630-584-5353. You can also visit the Illinois Department of Agriculture's website at www.agr.state.il.us and go to Emerald Ash Borer to get updates on chemical options available to homeowners.

***NOTE:** The City of St. Charles will not be responsible for damage to private irrigation systems, private walks and/or any unauthorized vegetation located in the public right-of-way. Residents will be responsible for locating and notifying the City of irrigation lines and heads prior to tree planting and tree removal.

Sincerely,

Ben Deutsch
St. Charles City Arborist

Attachment #2

Dear St. Charles Resident,

The Ash tree located in the City parkway adjacent to your residence has been confirmed with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation. The infested tree is marked with a pink dot. Due to the declining health of the tree the City of St. Charles arborist has determined this tree to be unsafe. It is vital to remove hazardous and diseased trees as soon as possible to ensure public safety.

The City of St. Charles will remove the tree about two weeks from the date of this letter notification. Please contact the City's arborist within seven days from the date of this letter to discuss any procedures or concerns you may have. The remaining tree stump will be removed below ground within 30 days of the tree removal.

The City will be planting trees that are removed with trees that are 2.5" in diameter and about 8' to 12' tall. Planting will take place during our spring or fall planting season. Planting will be dependent on budget concerns, the severity of the infestation, and the number of trees removed during the prior year. You have the option to upgrade this tree — for an additional cost. Please reference the City website at www.stcharlesil.org for current cost information. This price will cover the cost of the larger tree and the planting of the tree you have requested. Should you choose to upgrade the size of your parkway tree, please fill out the order form on the back of this letter and mail it to the City of St. Charles along with a check or money order for the amount of the upgrade you are requesting.

***NOTE:** The City of St. Charles will not be responsible for damage to private irrigation systems, private walks and/or any unauthorized vegetation located in the public right-of-way. Residents will be responsible for locating and notifying the City of irrigation lines and heads prior to tree planting and tree removal.

Sincerely,

Ben Deutsch
St. Charles City Arborist
630 377-4459

Parkway Tree Program

The City's tree consultant will plant, mulch and provide a gator bag to assist with watering needs of the tree. Residents who receive a tree will receive a letter informing them how to care for they're new tree. Each tree is covered by a one-year warranty (call 630.762.6938 if the tree dies or looks unhealthy).

Even Trees Get Thirsty!

Trees grow best when soils are moist to a depth of six inches. As a rule of thumb, it takes one inch of water to wet six inches of soil. Most of our soils have a lot of clay so they are very slow to absorb water (0.1 to 0.25 inches per hour). Contrary to popular belief, running the sprinkler system on your lawn won't give your trees the water they need. It's best to take a drip or soaker hose and coil it under the drip line of the tree. Turn the hose on in the morning and let it run for 5-6 hours.

List of Trees *

Maple, Autumn Blaze
Maple, Marmo
Maple, Emerald Queen
Maple, Red Sunset
Hackberry
Linden, Greenspire
Linden, Homestead
Elm, Accolade
Pear, Aristocrat
Crabapple, Floribunda
Crabapple, Golden Raindrops
Crabapple, Prairiefire
Oak, Chinkapin
Oak, Red
Oak, Swamp White

Please detach and mail

Orders may be mailed or delivered using this order form, along with a check or money order payable to the City of St. Charles, sent to the Utility Billing Office, 2 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL 60174. Orders should be sent in within 2 weeks of receiving this letter. Please contact Public Works @ 630-762-6938 with questions.

Date _____
Name _____
Address _____

List Type of Trees (from the above list)

Total Oversized Order Amount (Please visit City Website at www.stcharlesil.org for current cost information) \$\$ _____

*** If trees are not available oversized then the City will notify resident**

Attachment #3

Dear St. Charles Resident:

As you are likely aware, the Emerald Ash Borer, (EAB) was confirmed in the City of St. Charles on June 20, 2008. The Borer presents a significant threat to the entire ash tree population of St. Charles.

The City recently determined that the ash tree(s) on your private property (marked with a small, purple dot) is infested with the EAB. In order to prevent the spread of this insect pest in our community and attain compliance with City Code 12.20.070 Paragraph 3, the City requests that the ash tree be removed from your property before the next flight season which begins April 30.

City Code 12.20.070 Public Nuisance – Trimming or Removal Required
“Any tree, shrub, other plant or portion thereof, whether located on city-owned property or right-of-way, or on private property, which affects or may affect City-owned property or right-of-way, which by reason of location or condition constitutes an imminent danger to the health, safety or welfare of the general public. In the event that the nuisance is the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) the resident shall have until the end of the current or next flight season, as the case may be, to remove infested trees. Flight season runs from May 1 through July 31.”

Trees infested with EAB typically display dieback in the canopy of the tree, woodpecker damage, D-shaped exit holes, and sucker sprouts at the base of the trunk and on branches. During the summer months it is also possible to see the adult beetle flying around infested trees. The beetle is approximately ½ inch long, shaped like a bullet, and is a shiny, metallic green color.

Signs and Symptoms in your tree include:

- ___ Canopy Dieback
- ___ Woodpecker Damage
- ___ Epicormic Branching (sucker sprouts)
- ___ D-shaped exit holes
- ___ Adult beetle present (summer months only)

In order to be compliant with the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA), residents must hire a private contractor who has signed the State's EAB Compliance Agreement. Please reference www.agr.state.il.us for a list of IDA compliant contractors in our area.

The City is hopeful that removal of infested trees will slow the spread of EAB. Management of the Emerald Ash Borer will be a difficult and lengthy process.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please feel free to contact me at our EAB Hotline: 630-584-5353 or with questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,

Ben Deutsch
St. Charles City Arborist

Attachment #4

Dear _____,

As you may be aware, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was confirmed in the City of St. Charles on June 20, 2008. Since that time, the City has confirmed EAB in all four quadrants of the City. The Borer presents a significant threat to the entire ash tree population of St. Charles. As a result, the City will continue to evaluate and inspect its 5000 plus ash tree population for further infestation of EAB.

Per the City's policy, if your tree is confirmed with EAB, a purple dot will be painted on the trunk of that tree. Approximately two to four weeks before it is removed, a pink dot will be painted on the tree and another letter will be mailed to you explaining our removal process. If the tree is deemed unsafe, it will be removed immediately. Please pass this information along to homeowners within your association.

Any City trees that are removed will be replaced provided there is enough space on the parkway and within the budgeted allowance. If affected residents would like to expedite the planting process, there is an option to participate in the City's 50/50 Tree Planting Program. Applications can be downloaded off of the City's website, www.stcharlesil.gov.

If you have questions, concerns or suspect your parkway tree may be infested with EAB, please call our **EAB Hotline: 630-584-5353**.

Sincerely,

Ben Deutsch
City of St. Charles Arborist

Attachment #5

RE: Important Information about the Emerald Ash Borer

On June 20, 2008, the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) confirmed infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in the City of St. Charles. The Borer was first confirmed in Illinois on June 9, 2006 in Kane County. We are writing to inform you of these events, alert you to the ramifications and to enlist your support in mitigating the potential devastating impact of the EAB on not only the City of St. Charles ash tree population but also the 120 million ash trees found throughout the State of Illinois.

By the way of background, the EAB is a destructive, small, metallic-green beetle native to Asia that only attacks ash trees. While the EAB does not pose any public health risk, it does severely threaten the ash tree population.

We ask you to do the following to help combat the spread of the tree-killing Emerald Ash Borer:

- **Read the enclosed brochure and share it with your employees.** Remember, EAB only attacks ash trees, so become familiar with how to identify an ash tree and the EAB, and the symptoms of an EAB infestation.
- You **must** have a compliance agreement on file with the IDOA.
- **Be vigilant in looking for symptoms of EAB.** If you suspect that a St. Charles resident may have EAB in their ash trees inform them of the possible infestation and report it to St. Charles by calling our EAB Hotline: 630-584-5353. If you suspect that ash trees outside of St. Charles may have an EAB infestation, contact the Illinois Department of Agriculture toll-free hotline at 800-641-3934.
- **Do not move firewood** between states or even within Illinois. EAB can easily be transported in wood.
- All ash trees that are trimmed or removed must be destroyed by chipping to the size of 1 inch or less on two sides or by tub grinding.

There will be ongoing information on the approach to stop the spread of EAB. In the meantime, please follow the above requests to control the spread of EAB and consult www.emeraldashborer.info for additional information. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Ben Deutsch
City of St. Charles Arborist