City of St. Francis

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Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan
City of St. Francis, MN

Purpose:

By implementing the provisions of the Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan, the City is attempting to minimize the disruption to its forest canopy due to the current infestation of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Based on the current evidence within our city, a proactive approach should eradicate the EAB by removing ash trees and replanting other disease-free species to protect our forest canopy.

Applicability:

This management plan is applicable to all public and private properties within the City, including but not limited to right-of-way, boulevards, parks and open spaces.

Introduction:

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive insect that has killed millions of ash trees throughout the eastern half of the U.S. and southeastern Canada. Native to eastern Russia, northern China, Japan and Korea, emerald ash borer infests and kills both weak and healthy ash trees. All ash species native to North America are vulnerable to attack. With 1 billion ash trees in Minnesota, the spread of emerald ash borer will have a serious impact on our forests and communities.

As of the adoption date of this management plan, EAB has been confirmed in 45 counties in Minnesota, including Anoka County. EAB attacks all species of ash trees found in Minnesota, which are green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica), white ash (Fraxinus Americana) and black ash (Fraxinus nigra).

It is not the adult beetles that are detrimental to ash trees, but rather the larvae of EAB (immature stage), which feed on the inner bark of trees, disrupting a tree's ability to transport water and nutrients up the canopy. As the number of larvae in a tree increases, less and less water and nutrients reach the canopy, resulting in dieback in the upper portions of a tree. By the time visible symptoms are obvious, the population of EAB has grown and likely spread to other trees in the area.

Signs/symptoms of EAB that can help detect an infestation include:

- Increased woodpecker activity/damage
- Bark splitting (vertical slits)
- D-shaped exit holes created by adult insects as they emerge from the tree

- Epicormic branching/shoots near base of tree
- Canopy dieback
- Serpentine (s-shaped) larval galleries that are packed with frass

The City does have a full inventory (DNR 2010 Community Tree Survey) of existing boulevard and/or park trees and therefore, it is clear what the true impacts of EAB will be upon public land within the community. The City will implement the following steps to try and allocate the costs of managing the tree loss and replacement over multiple budget cycles.

Ash Management Plan:

1. **Inventory.** City has an updated inventory of all ash trees on city property including right-of-way, boulevards, and parks (well-maintained & green/open spaces).
    a. The ash tree population makes up 9 percent of our tree canopy, which will help clarify the impact EAB will have on the forest canopy as a whole.
    b. Provide an accurate budget estimation for maintenance (trimming, removing, planting)
    c. Replanting efforts will provide a greater tree canopy.
2. **Education.** The City will continue to educate the residents and elected officials concerning EAB. Tools that can and will be utilized include newsletter articles, the city website and city events. Education will emphasize the importance of monitoring management strategies including removal and disposal of infested wood and appropriate times of year to complete such work to avoid inadvertently spreading EAB.
    a. The most appropriate time to cut and/or remove Ash trees – The EAB low activity period typically begins on October 1st. Prune and remove ash trees as needed. Take bark or wood that is at least one inch thick to the nearest ash tree waste disposal site where it will be taken care of before May 1st. Retrieved from: https://extension.umn.edu/tree-and-shrub-insects/emerald-ash-borers#replacing-ash-trees-1472163
    b. For Ash Tree Disposal sites in our area, go to MDA's website at: https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/ash-tree-waste-disposal-sites
    c. For more information on EAB life cycles, tips on treatments and pesticides, and information on removal of tree/diseased firewood, visit the MN U of M website at: https://extension.umn.edu/tree-and-shrub-insects/emerald-ash-borers
    d. For replanting information, the MN U of M Extension Service has a Recommended Tree List (also recommended by MDA & DNR): Woody Plants Catalog: Coniferous Trees, Deciduous Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines, at https://trees.umn.edu/woody-plants-catalog
3. **Boulevard Trees:**
    a. Per City Code 8-2-8 Shade Tree Pest Control, properties are prohibited on the inclusion of planting any ash species (Fraxinus spp.) on public/private property and boulevards or as part of any proposed development, whether commercial, residential or industrial.
    b. Ash trees that are removed will be replaced with another DNR recommended species, budget permitting. Replanting will be done with a keen focus on species diversity and utilizing native trees to the St. Francis area.

4. **Park Trees:**
    a. The number of ash trees in City Parks, including maintained and wooded areas, is likely beyond a hundred trees. Ash trees will be identified and targeted for removal and replacement.
    b. The City will continue to work with the MN Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to ensure we have species diversity and a sustainable community tree canopy.
    c. Ash trees from maintained areas of parks will be replaced, budget permitting, again with a focus on species diversity and a sustainable community tree canopy.
    d. Ash trees in wooded areas found to be infested may be removed and replaced, budget permitting.
5. **Trees on Private Property:**
    a. Through educational efforts, property owners are required to diligently monitor ash trees for signs of EAB. They can contact the City's Public Works Department (763-233-5200) or the MDA Arrest the Pest hotline (1-888-545-6684) for more information or request a site inspection with a certified tree inspector.
    b. The City encourages all private property owners to diversify the species on their property to buffer against future insect/disease outbreaks and will follow the protocols to ensure we have a sustainable community forest canopy.
    c. For private property owners, see City Code 8-2-8 Shade Tree Pest Control, for more information on planting requirements and restrictions.
    d. For property owners that are unsure of what to plant, go to the University of Minnesota Woody Plants Catalog: Coniferous trees, Deciduous trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines Catalog. Choices include plantings native to MN that will have a better chance of surviving MN weather conditions. https://trees.umn.edu/woody-plants-catalog

Summary:

It is clear that EAB poses a serious threat to City of St. Francis' community tree canopy. The City will implement this EAB Management Plan to the extent feasible and as budgets permit to mitigate EAB. The management plan is subject to revision(s) as new information about EAB becomes available. Furthermore, this plan is also subject to revision should state and/or federal policies necessitate plan updates. Revisions to the EAB Management Plan would be subject to City Council Approval.