



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 1343-2014, **Version:** 1

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### **Background:**

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an exotic boring insect from Southeast Asia, first identified in Michigan in 2002, that infests and eventually kills trees of the *Fraxinus* genus, more commonly known as ash trees. Once an ash tree is dead, its structural integrity diminishes quickly and it is not uncommon for large limbs to fail on both high wind and calm days without warning. First identified locally in 2003, Columbus is beginning its 10<sup>th</sup> year of the EAB infestation. It is estimated that approximately 30,000 ash trees of various sizes exist on City of Columbus property; this includes trees along streets, in parks, golf courses and on several municipal campuses.

In 2011, City leaders, in coordination with the City Forestry Division of The Recreation and Parks Department committed to an organized project approach to address the EAB crisis. To date, 12,026 ash trees have been removed city wide. That is 40% of the estimated public ash tree population. Of the 12,026 trees, 5,296 trees were removed by Forestry Staff and 6,730 trees were removed by contractors. The City has spent \$4,000,000 to date on various ash tree removal projects as a result of the Emerald Ash Borer with an estimated \$4,600,000 in future projects planned. This \$1,500,000 ordinance is part of the \$4,600,000 total figure.

This ordinance will allow immediate funding for administration, services, supplies, tree replacements, and to remove Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infested and damaged trees. The supplies, services, and equipment needs that will be paid for as part of this funding request will include but are not limited to: tree removal contracts, stump removal contracts, tree replacement contracts, Sprint cellular service contracts and supplies, office supplies, uniforms, computer supplies, EAB related forestry supplies, safety equipment, and City of Columbus Forestry employee staff time for the EAB project. All supply, service, and equipment needs related to the Emerald Ash Borer response have been established as one overall capital improvement approved project. Each direct purchase order, purchase order, or universal term contract will be written separately based on all City of Columbus Codes that apply.

This ordinance will establish an Auditor's Certificate and authorize the expenditures for EAB management, park improvements, and the purchase of needed equipment and supplies through the City of Columbus Purchasing Office. All bids will be obtained and contracts awarded using City Code 329, however this legislation will set up all the required funding to enter into contracts with the vendors on an as-needed basis. In order to continue the removal of the infested and hazardous trees immediately, we are requesting the authorization of \$1,500,000.00 in voted bond funds and the authorization for the Director of Recreation and Parks and the Director of Finance and Management to enter into various contracts relating to the EAB management process and equipment needs. All equipment, supplies, and services will be bid through the City of Columbus Purchasing System.

### **Emergency Justification:**

In order to have the tree replacements available for fall 2014 plantings, and for the continuation of current removal process, it is necessary to authorize this expenditure to have the funding and approval complete when the bidding has been finalized. Competitive bids will be solicited using City Code 329 or obtained through any current universal term contract for all Emerald Ash Borer related expenditures. Emergency legislation is required to continue with the removal of hazardous and infested trees immediately.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

\$1,500,000.00 is required and budgeted in the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 702 to meet the financial obligations of these various expenditures. This ordinance is contingent upon the 2014 bond sale.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into various contracts for tree removal and management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation; to authorize the Director of Finance and Management to enter into various contracts for the purchase of supplies for the Recreation and Parks Department; to establish an Auditor's Certificate in the amount of \$1,500,000.00; to authorize the expenditure of \$1,500,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$1,500,000.00)

**WHEREAS**, the department of Recreation and Parks will solicit competitive bids for the management and removal of infested and hazardous trees; and

**WHEREAS**, the Purchasing Office will solicit competitive bids to acquire various supplies, equipment, and tree replacements for the Recreation and Parks Department; and

**WHEREAS**, the department of Recreation and Parks will provide necessary staff to administer this project and staff costs will be reimbursed as part of this funding; and

**WHEREAS**, funding is available for these purchases from unallocated balances within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 702; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to enter into contracts for tree removal and management due to the hazardous nature thereby preserving the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the Director of Finance and Management be and is hereby authorized to enter into contracts for the EAB project needs on behalf of the Recreation and Parks Department.

**SECTION 2.** That the purchase of equipment, supplies, and replacement trees through the City of Columbus purchasing system, is necessary for existing operation, and future removal and replacement of damaged trees.

**SECTION 3.** That the Director of Recreation and Parks is hereby authorized to enter into contracts as described within this legislation on behalf of the Recreation and Parks Department.

**SECTION 4.** That reimbursement of staff time related to Emerald Ash Borer administration as part of this ordinance is necessary for the period of April 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

**SECTION 5.** That the expenditure of \$1,500,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, be and is hereby authorized from the Voted Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 702, Dept. 51-01 as follows:

<b>Project:</b>	<b>OCA:</b>	<b>OL3:</b>	<b>Amount:</b>
510039-100002	723902	6621	\$917,000.00
510039-100002	723902	6651	\$50,000.00
510039-100002	723902	6652	\$100,000.00
510039-100002	723902	6655	\$18,000.00
510039-100002	723902	6680	\$415,000.00

**SECTION 6.** That the City Auditor is hereby authorized to transfer the unencumbered balance in a project account to the unallocated balance account within the same fund upon receipt of certification by the Director of the Department administering said project that the project has been completed and the monies are no longer required for said project; except that no transfer shall be so made from a project account funded by monies from more than one source.

**SECTION 7.** That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all

contracts or contract modifications associated with this legislation

**SECTION 8.** That this Council hereby recognizes that this ordinance does not identify specific contractors or vendors for the expenditure purposes authorized herein and hereby delegates sole and final contracting decisions relative to the determination of lowest, best, most responsive and most responsible vendor(s) to the Director of Recreation and Parks and/or the Director of Finance and Management.

**SECTION 9.** That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.