



Legislation Text

File #: 0934-2021, **Version:** 1

Background: In 2011, city leaders, in coordination with the Forestry Section of the Recreation and Parks Department, committed to an organized project approach to address the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) crisis. To date, more than 30,000 ash trees have been lost and removed city wide. As the EAB project focuses on its last primary objective of reforestation, new related objectives have been created as part of the new Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP). These objectives now include preservation of existing canopy and social equity. As a result, the EAB project is now transitioning into the newly emerging Urban Forestry Master Plan. This ordinance will allow immediate funding for administration, staffing, services, supplies, tree replacements, and to remove hazardous trees. The staffing, 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, cellular service contracts, office supplies, uniforms, computer supplies, forestry supplies, and safety equipment. All supply, service, and equipment needs related to the EAB response have been established as one overall capital improvement approved project. Each direct purchase order, or universal term contract will be written separately based on all City of Columbus Codes that apply.

This ordinance is requesting the authorization of \$508,985.62 in voted bond funds and the authorization for the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into various contracts relating to the Emerald Ash Borer and Urban Forestry Master Plan management process. This ordinance will establish auditor's certificates and authorize expenditures in conjunction with the management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation and Urban Forestry Master Plan. Contracts will be entered in compliance with the relevant provisions of Columbus City Code Chapter 329, however this legislation will set up all of the funding required to enter into contracts with vendors on an as-needed basis. All purchases will be through competitive bidding, through any current universal term contract, or through any current State of Ohio purchasing contract pre-approved by the City of Columbus Purchasing Office, per Ordinance No. 0582-87.

Emergency Justification: Emergency action is requested in order to continue the Emerald Ash Borer remediation program uninterrupted, continuing to address the EAB crisis as efficiently as possible. It is necessary to authorize this expenditure to have the funding and approval complete when bidding on EAB contracts has been finalized.

Benefits to the Public: Hazardous trees and stumps will be removed, addressing safety concerns in public parks and rights of way. Replacement trees will be planted, adding back to the tree canopy that has been lost to the EAB crisis citywide.

Community Input/Issues: Communities and neighborhoods hit the hardest by the Emerald Ash Borer crisis have expressed their desire for the dangerous trees to be removed and replacement trees planted to restore the tree canopy lost as a result of the infestation.

Area(s) Affected: Citywide (99)

Master Plan Relation: This project supports the department's Master Plan helping to meet the tree canopy goals established by the city and helping to ensure that parks remain safe.

Fiscal Impact: \$508,985.62 is budgeted and available from within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702 to meet the financial obligations of these various expenditures.

To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into various contracts for management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation; to authorize the amendment of the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget; to authorize the transfer of \$450,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; to authorize and direct the City Auditor to establish auditor's certificates in the amount of \$508,985.62 for various expenditures in conjunction with the management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation; to authorize the expenditure of \$508,985.62 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$508,985.62)

WHEREAS, it is necessary authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into various contracts for the management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the transfer of \$450,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the amendment of the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 2521-2020 in order to provide sufficient budget authority for this and future projects; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the City Auditor establish auditor's certificates in the amount of \$508,985.62 for various expenditures in conjunction with the management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the expenditure of \$508,985.62 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of the Recreation and Parks Department in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to enter into various contracts for the management the Emerald Ash Borer remediation program uninterrupted, continuing to address the EAB crisis as efficiently as possible, all for the preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare and, **NOW, THEREFORE**

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks be and is hereby authorized to enter into various contracts for the purchase of services, equipment, supplies, and replacement trees as necessary for existing operations, future removal, and replacement of damaged trees as described within this legislation regarding the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) project on behalf of the Recreation and Parks Department.

SECTION 2. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to establish auditor's certificates in the amount of \$508,985.62 for various expenditures in conjunction with the management of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation.

SECTION 3. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 4. 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 ordinance.

SECTION 5. 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.

SECTION 6. That the transfer of \$450,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized between projects within the Recreation and Parks Bond Fund 7702 per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 7. That the 2020 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 2521-2020 is hereby amended as follows in order to provide sufficient budget authority for this ordinance and future projects.

Fund / Project / Project Name / Current / Change / Amended

Fund 7702; P510039-100002; Emerald Ash Borer (Voted Carryover) / \$0 / \$58,986 / \$58,986 (to match cash)

Fund 7702; P511000-100000; Renovation - Misc. (SIT Supported) / \$1,321,914 / (\$450,000) / \$871,914

Fund 7702; P510039-100002; Emerald Ash Borer (SIT Supported) / \$0 / \$450,000 / \$450,000

SECTION 8. For the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$508,985.62 or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the cost thereof, be and is hereby authorized from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702 in object class 06 Capital Outlay per the accounting codes in the attachments to this ordinance.

SECTION 9. 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.

SECTION 10. 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 ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.