



Legislation Text

File #: 2615-2019, **Version:** 1

Background: The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an exotic boring insect from Southeast Asia, first identified in Michigan in 2002, that infest 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 in its 16th 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, approximately 28,000 ash trees have been removed city wide. That is approximately 93% of the estimated public ash tree population. 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, cellular service contracts and supplies, office supplies, uniforms, computer supplies, EAB related forestry supplies, and safety equipment. 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 is requesting the authorization of \$450,000.00 in voted bond funds and the authorization for the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into various contracts relating to the EAB management process. This ordinance will establish Auditor's Certificates and authorize the expenditures for EAB management, park improvements, and the purchase of needed equipment and supplies. 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: In order to continue the EAB removal and replacement program uninterrupted, it is necessary to authorize this expenditure to have the funding and approval complete when bidding on EAB contracts has been finalized. Emergency legislation is requested in order to continue addressing the EAB crisis as efficiently as possible.

Benefits to the Public: Hazardous trees and stumps will be removed, addressing safety concerns in public parks and right 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: The entire City of Columbus is affected by the Emerald Ash Borer crisis.

Master Plan Relation: This project will support the mission of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan by helping to meet the tree canopy goals established by the City and helping to ensure that parks remain safe.

Fiscal Impact: \$450,000.00 is budgeted and available in the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702 to meet the

financial obligations of these various expenditures. Funds are contingent upon the deposit of proceeds from the 2019 Bond Sale.

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 2019 Capital Improvements Budget; to authorize the transfer of \$432,345.80 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; to establish Auditor's Certificates in the amount of \$450,000.00; to authorize the expenditure of \$450,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$450,000.00)

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

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the 2019 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 1326-2019; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the transfer of \$432,345.80 within the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund 7702; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to authorize the expenditure of \$450,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; 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 said contracts in order to have the funding and approval complete for when bidding on EAB contracts have been finalized, thereby preserving the public health, peace, property and safety; **NOW, THEREFORE**

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of Recreation and Parks is hereby authorized to enter into 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 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 3. 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 4. 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 5. That the transfer of \$432,345.80 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 6. That the 2019 Capital Improvements Budget Ordinance 1326-2019 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; P510039-100001; Street Trees (Voted Carryover) / \$250,942 / (\$17,655) / \$233,287 (to match cash)

Fund 7702; P510039-100002; Emerald Ash Borer (Voted Carryover) / \$0 / \$17,655 / \$17,655 (to match cash)

Fund 7702; P511000-100000; Renovation - Misc. (SIT Supported) / \$2,720,900 / (\$432,346) / \$2,288,554

Fund 7702; P510039-100002; Emerald Ash Borer (SIT Supported) / \$0 / \$432,346 / \$432,346

SECTION 7. 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. All contracts will be entered into in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Columbus City Code, Chapter 329.

SECTION 9. For the purpose stated in Section 1, the expenditure of \$450,000.00 or so much thereof as may be necessary to pay the cost thereof, be and is hereby authorized from the Voted Bond Fund 7702 in object class 06 Capital Outlay per the accounting codes in the attachments to this ordinance.

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.