



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0504R, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION TO THE US FOREST SERVICE GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE FOREST INSECT AND DISEASE MITIGATION PROGRAM TO PROVIDE FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT UP TO \$200,000 TO REMOVE AND REPLACE DISEASED BOULEVARD ASH TREES.

CITY PROPOSAL:

WHEREAS, the city of Duluth authorized an Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) management plan in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the US Forest Service desires implementation of activities to mitigate the impact of EAB tree loss in the city of Duluth; and

WHEREAS, the city of Duluth has the financial, technical, and managerial capacity to ensure proper planning and maintenance of the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the city of Duluth hereby supports the submission of an application to the US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Forest Insect and Disease Mitigation Program for up to \$200,000 to remove and replace hazardous boulevard ash trees impacted by EAB, in accordance with the city of Duluth's EAB management plan.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the city of Duluth agrees to accept the grant award if awarded, and the proper city officials are authorized to enter into a grant agreement.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution authorizes the submission of an application to the US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Forest Insect and Disease Mitigation Program for up to \$200,000 to remove and replace hazardous boulevard ash trees impacted by EAB, in accordance with the city of Duluth's EAB management plan. EAB was confirmed in Duluth in October 2015 and an EAB Management Plan was adopted in December 2016. The plan treats trees differently according to size, overall health, and EAB infection status. Ash trees that are subject to removal include all infected ash trees regardless of size, all small ash trees (<12-inch diameter), and those larger ash trees that have not been infected but are otherwise in generally poor health. Ash trees that are subject to retention and treatment by periodic injection are those large ash trees that have not been infected and are in generally good health. All trees are to be replaced on a one-to-one basis with a mix of tree species selected by the City Forester. Prior to implementation of the management plan, the City had approximately 3000 boulevard ash trees. By the end of this year, 1300 boulevard ash trees will have been removed and replaced.

If awarded, this grant would fund removal and replacement of an additional 200 trees, beginning in 2021. The cost per tree is unusually high because this grant will be used to contract for the removal of the largest and most hazardous boulevard ash trees that are not suitable for treatment. City staff will plant most of the replacement trees and, in so doing, avoid the necessity for the City to provide a cash match.

Declining ash on boulevards in residential neighborhoods are public health hazards due to the speed and suddenness with which they die and collapse following infection.