




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 19, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan (PW21023) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Caleb Gibbons (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2566
SUBMITTED BY:	Craig Murdoch Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

The City of Hamilton's (City) Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan Recommendation Report PW10088(a) directed staff to provide an annual update on the implementation of the Plan.

INFORMATION

Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire) (EAB) is a destructive non-native forest pest which affect Ash (*Fraxinus* spp.) trees. EAB has significantly impacted the Ash tree population across North America and is estimated to have cost Ontario municipalities hundreds of millions of dollars in control measures since the initial incursion in the mid 2000's. EAB was first discovered in Hamilton in February of 2009 on the Central Mountain.

Removal of infested Ash trees began in 2013. In 2014, it was observed that the infestation and the subsequent decline in health of Ash trees was accelerating faster than originally anticipated. This required the removal of more than the targeted 2,300 trees per year in the first 6 years of the program due to the risk these trees posed to public safety. As a result, tree replacement was reduced and/or delayed.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Forestry staff inspect Ash trees by Ward annually and prioritize necessary removals which are performed by contracted service providers. Priority is given to dead and poor condition Ash trees that pose a health and safety risk. To date, the urban and suburban areas of the City has been inventoried and most Ash trees have been removed, except for some that are still in fair to good condition and those that are part of the injection program. All rural areas are to be completed in the next two years.

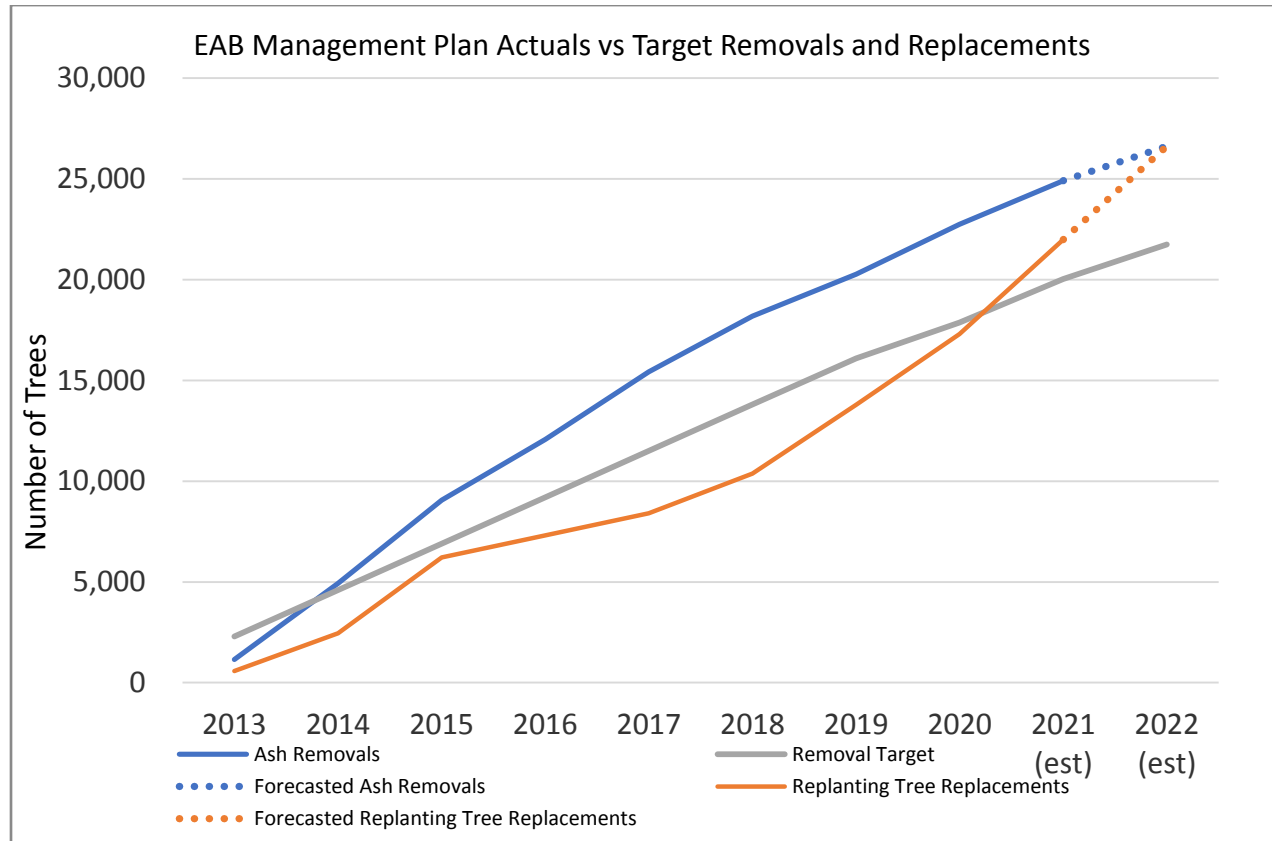
Treatment has also been implemented for trees prominent in the landscape and in good condition. These trees are treated with an injectable pesticide that can slow the spread of EAB if treatment starts before the insects cause significant damage. The treatment product is recommended to be used yearly, or every other year, depending on the condition of the tree and the level of infestation. Approximately 125 trees meet the condition threshold each year and therefore continue to warrant follow up treatment.

In 2021, year 9 of the 10-year EAB Management Plan, there will be a decrease in the number of removals as most have already been addressed and subsequently staff plan an increase in tree planting to achieve a 1:1 removal to replacement ratio. To date, a total of 22,616 Ash trees have been removed and 17,171 replacement trees have been planted. In 2021, it is planned that 2,162 Ash trees will be removed, and 5,445 replacement trees are to be planted.

Report PW10088(a) estimated 23,000 Ash trees required removal based on 2012 inventory data in the urban area, with a 10-year funding strategy of \$26.2M (\$2.6M approved annually through the capital budget process). Notwithstanding the 2012 estimate of 23,000 Ash trees, staff now estimate that approximately 3,800 dead or declining Ash trees remain City Wide in addition to the 22,616 already removed. The removal of these additional trees would bring the project's total removals and replacements to approximately 26,416. The removal of the additional Ash trees will not require additional funding over and above the 10-year funding strategy of \$26.2M due to favourable contract prices.

The following graph summarizes the Ash tree removals and replacements to date along with projected numbers for 2021 and 2022.

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The following table details yearly removals and replacements since the beginning of the program:

Year	Ash Tree Removals	Tree Replacements
2013	1,153	586
2014	3,783	1,860
2015	4,128	3,777
2016	3,013	1,096
2017	3,347	1,087
2018	2,765	1,978
2019	2,075	3,409
2020	2,352	3,378
2021 (estimate)	2,162	5,445
2022 (estimate)	1,638	3,800
Totals	26,416	26,416

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A