



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Regional Council

FROM: Erin Mahoney, Commissioner Environmental Services

DATE: Thursday November 21, 2013

RE: **Additional information – Emerald Ash Borer Infestation Update Report**

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This memo is in response to Clause 4 of Committee of the Whole Report No. 6 which included the following direction:

*Staff determine how much money has been spent by the Region and each of the local municipalities on the Emerald Ash Borer infestation and bring forward a draft resolution to the November 21, 2013 Council Meeting.*

### **In excess of \$52M forecasted municipal program expenditures over the next 10 years to respond to the Emerald Ash Borer infestation**

Attachment 1 shows a summary of forecasted expenditures by local municipalities and Conservation Authorities. Forecasted expenditures for 2014 by York Region and local municipalities are estimated to be \$4.75 M. The combined Region and local municipal Emerald Ash Borer response over 10 years is likely to cost in excess of \$52 M. Attachment 1 provides additional context by illustrating forecasted expenditures for the Conservation Authorities and some other municipal jurisdictions.

### **York Region has made multiple requests for funding support from federal and provincial governments**

Managing the Emerald Ash Borer is a federal and provincial responsibility. York Region has repeatedly requested support to assist with managing the impact of the Emerald Ash Borer. There has been no financial support to date. The following provides a chronology of previous requests for support from the federal and provincial governments:

- June 2003 – following the initial finding of the insect in Ontario and report to Council
- June 2008 – after initial finding in York Region and report to Council
- June 2011 – following Spring Emerald Ash Borer update report to Council

- March 2012 – Regional Council support for the proclamation put forward by the Ontario Urban Forest Council that the federal and provincial authorities provide a more active role in urban forestry including response to the Emerald Ash Borer

**Request to advance expenditures to combat Emerald Ash Borer assessed**

At the November 14<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole meeting, in addition to advancing a funding request, there was discussion on the implications of further accelerating the removal and replacement of Emerald Ash Borer-infested street trees. The following information is provided on this option.

The Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan (endorsed by Council in June 2011) takes an active approach to managing the impact of the infestation. The typical 12 month schedule of assessment and action in response to the removal and replacement of street trees includes the following cycle:

Action	2013						2014					
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Assess ash street tree health												
Remove ash street trees												
Plant replacement street trees												

Key to the street tree removal and replacement cycle is that trees are assessed in the summer/fall (after leaf fall) and removed in the same year. Infested trees are removed before they are dead (*Attachment 2*) and replaced with alternate species the following spring (*Attachment 3*).

As a result of this proactive approach, trees are removed before they become a safety hazard and there have been no public concerns related to unsightly dying trees along Regional road corridors. The only calls received to date have been from the public raising questions about why we are removing living trees.

Replacement tree planting occurs the following spring and for every tree removed, a minimum of one tree is planted. Planting trees in the spring is the best time and results in optimum survival rates. Along local roads the tree removal and replacement cycle is often spread over a longer time period due to the volume of work.

Advancing the street tree removal and replacement cycle would not increase the perceived level of service and would likely precipitate further inquiries as to why the Region is removing more living trees. From an ecological perspective, advancing tree removals may further accelerate the infestation spread as insects travel further in search of ash trees (food supply).

Further, Regional street tree removal and replacement is funded solely through tax levy and any further advancement in the program would increase the tax levy burden. As such, we recommend continued implementation of the existing active management approach with annual reviews of impact and forecasted expenditures. This annual review provides an opportunity to implement any required adjustments if circumstances change in the future from the current forecast.

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive the memo from Commissioner Mahoney dated November 21, 2013 re:  
Additional Information – Emerald Ash Borer Infestation Update Report
2. Request the Regional Chair to write to the appropriate federal and provincial authorities requesting financial assistance for municipalities dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer infestation

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Erin Mahoney, M. Eng.  
Commissioner Environmental Services

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Attachments:

1. Forecast expenditures for Emerald Ash Borer management
2. EAB infested street tree removal, Don Mills Road, City of Markham
3. Street tree replanting along Regional Roads

## Emerald Ash Borer Management Costs in York Region

The table below summarizes the costs of managing Emerald Ash Borer for the Region and nine local municipalities in York Region as estimated by municipal staff.

Municipality	Cost in 2014	Estimated Cost over 10 years	Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan (Y/N)
Town of Aurora	\$0.175 M	\$1.5 M	Y
Town of East Gwillimbury	\$0 M	\$0.06 M	N
Town of Georgina	\$0.1 M	TBD	N
Township of King	\$0.085 M	\$1.0 M	Y
City of Markham	\$2 M	\$13.1 M	Y
Town of Newmarket	\$0.1 M	\$2.1 M	Y
Town of Richmond Hill	\$0.5 M	\$14.5 M	Y
City of Vaughan	\$0.5M	\$10.5 M	Y
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	\$0.01 M	TBD	N
York Region	\$1.28 M	\$10 M	Y
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4.75 M</b>	<b>\$52.76 M</b>	

The total cost of managing Emerald Ash Borer to municipalities in York Region in 2014 is approximately \$4.75 million, with a currently estimated 10-year cost in excess of \$52 million.

The table below shows the estimated costs to the two conservation authorities operating in the Region for the management of Emerald Ash Borer throughout their respective watersheds.

Conservation Authority	Cost in 2014	Estimated Cost over 10 yrs.	Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan (Y/N)
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	\$250 K	\$1 M	Y
Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	\$184 K	\$2.2 M	Y
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$434 K</b>	<b>\$3.2 M</b>	

Many other municipalities throughout southern Ontario are also experiencing Emerald Ash Borer infestations. The long-term costs for a sample of those municipalities are provided in the table below.

Municipality	Long-term Cost
City of Toronto (14 years)	\$74.5 M
Town of Oakville (10 years)	\$32.3 M
City of Mississauga (10 years)	\$28 M
City of Hamilton (10 years)	\$37 M

**Emerald Ash Borer Infested Street Tree Removal  
Don Mill Road south of Summerdale Drive, City Of Markham**

**Figure 1: Don Mills Road with ash street trees prior to removal, June 12th, 2013**



**Figure 2: Don Mills Road following ash street tree removal, November 19th, 2013**



### Street Tree Replanting Along Regional Roads



Note: Above locations not actual EAB infestation replantings