

Hennepin Natural Resource Partnership EAB Meeting Summary

The Hennepin Natural Resource Partnership convened its 8th meeting to discuss county-wide planning and preparedness as it relates to emerald ash borer (EAB). Forty-eight people attended the meeting including the cities of Crystal, Golden Valley, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Mound, New Hope, Richfield, Robbinsdale, and St. Louis Park (SLP) as well as Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), and Tree Trust.

The meeting was split into two hour-long sessions. The first hour included presentations from HC, MDA, MPRB and SLP.

HC shared results from the 2010 and 2015 City Tree Program Survey that characterized the average HC city's ash tree population and forestry program. HC also provided an update on internal and external efforts to prepare for increased mortality from EAB including a brief summary of HC plan elements.

MDA shared an update on the distribution of EAB, efforts to detect and manage EAB in the state, and technology available to report new EAB finds.

MPRB described their plan to remove 40,000 public ash trees and emphasized efforts to inform citizens of their approach. They discussed utilization options and expressed a need for new disposal site(s). MPRB also touched on the inventory technologies they are using to ensure they are managing for a more diverse tree canopy.

SLP discussed their EAB plan and preparedness effort that has been ongoing since 2010. They began by removing poorer quality trees, and they are chemically treating legacy ash trees. SLP employs a cost sharing program with homeowners to do removals and replacements of ash trees.

The second hour was dedicated to small group focused discussions, the aim of which was to identify the obstacles in front of the group and the next steps needed to preserve our tree canopy in the face of this immediate threat. Here is a summary of responses to two key questions from the five small groups:

- 1) What feels critical to preserving tree benefits?** (number of responses in parentheses)
 - a) Educating all on the issues and BMPs (e.g., removal, replanting, maintenance, treatment) and convincing residents and policy makers to take timely action (5)
 - b) Replanting after removals and diversifying the canopy (5)
 - c) Preserving and maintaining existing canopy and associated benefits (4)
 - d) Creating a state (e.g., MNDNR) plan and providing technical assistance or BMPs for cities and private citizens including universal standards (3)
 - e) Coordinating collaboration and communication between cities and agencies (2)
- 2) What next steps will we take to prepare?** (number of responses in parentheses)
 - a) (HC should) Assist with locating marshalling yards for both public and private disposal (3)
 - b) (HC should) Provide funding for cities' efforts as well as legislative effort or action (3)
 - c) Educate the public, influence decision makers, and expand outreach to cities' residents (3)
 - d) (HC should) Form a Task Force and provide more networking meetings (2)*
 - e) (HC should) Develop a reforestation species list and plant diverse trees (2)

*20 out of 20 surveyed attendees representing eight cities agreed we need an EAB task force, and 19 of those representatives agreed to serve on it