



April 5, 2011.

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor & Council

**Fr: Rick Perchuk, Operations Manager
Barbara A. Manson, Parks Supervisor**

Re: Emerald Ash Borer - Federal & Provincial Role in Urban Forestry

Recommendation:

That the Council of the City of Kenora hereby supports and endorses the following resolution from the Northwestern Ontario Emerald Ash Borer Task Force Steering Committee;

Whereas over 80% of Canadians now live in urban areas and have come to rely on the environmental, ecological and economic benefits of urban forests; and

Whereas the health of Canadians is sustained by their urban forests which provide services through improving air quality, cooling city streets and buildings, acting as a windbreak, shading from harmful UV rays, and filtering storm water, as well as beautifying our communities; and

Whereas neither the federal nor provincial governments currently include urban forestry in their mandates except in a limited role with respect to exotic, invasive pests; and

Whereas the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has not been able to stop the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer throughout Ontario and Quebec; and

Whereas the Emerald Ash Borer is expected to cost Canadians over \$2 Billion dollars in treatment and replanting; and

Whereas Canadian forestry programs and research are solely focused on industrial forests and do not at present include urban tree planting, appropriate species research, and insect control and management; and

Whereas other jurisdictions such as the United States Forest Service and the European Urban Forestry Research and Information Centre include urban forestry as a program and research area; and

Whereas Canada engages municipalities in a number of substantial infrastructure programs;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Municipality of Kenora calls on the Federal and Provincial governments to take leadership roles in recognizing the need to support urban forestry, by establishing urban forestry mandates and programs which includes funding assistance to municipalities for the control and management of the Emerald Ash Borer and any future significant imported diseases and insects -as well as the creation and funding of programs designed to support the on-going sustainable management of urban forests; and

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be distributed to The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food; The Honourable Christian Paradis, Minister of Natural Resources; The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities; The Honorable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance; Honourable Linda Jeffrey, Minister of Natural Resources; Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Honourable Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance; Greg Rickford, MP (Kenora); Howard Hampton, MPP (Kenora – Rainy River); Association of Municipalities of Ontario; Federation of Canadian Municipalities; Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association.

Background:

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an insect pest that was discovered in 2002. This insect is a killer of all varieties of ash trees, except mountain ash. In Canada, alone the treatment, removal and replacement of millions of trees will cost 2 billion dollars. The EAB has been found in Sault Ste. Marie and Minnesota, but not northwestern Ontario, as of yet. Black ash trees are components of the ecosystem along the Trans Canada Highway between Thunder Bay and the Manitoba border. In Kenora, fall gold ash trees have been used extensively in the downtown core revitalization (30 plantings) and can be found in other parks and green spaces.

Full responsibility for urban forest management rests on the shoulders of individual municipalities. **Kenora's Urban forest is estimated at \$15 Million dollars.** The responsibility of this massive inventory falls under the Parks Department with very little budgetary dollars. Canadian urban forest professionals are advocating for change to the support structure for urban forestry. The resolution presented with the enclosed letter was drafted by the Northwestern Ontario Emerald Ash Borer Task Force Steering Committee to advocate for federal and provincial roles in urban forestry and to emphasize the urgency of supporting programs in the light of the current threat from EAB. It is in the interest of all municipalities to help stop or at least contain the spread of

this invasive pest before it makes its way across the Northwest, as well as the management of other invasive pests that may appear.

Budget:

N/A

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Resolution only.

Distribution: R. Perchuk, B. Manson, Northwestern Ontario Emerald Ash Borer Task Force Steering Committee.