



# City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

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## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Sponsors:** Bob Therres  
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**WORKSHOP ITEM** Robert Therres, Public Services Manager

### EMERALD ASH BORER DISCUSSION

Earlier this year Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was discovered in Blaine and since that first discovery we are finding it in several areas throughout the City. Finding EAB in Blaine is not a surprise as it was located in Shoreview back in 2008/2009 and it was just a matter of time before it showed up in Blaine.

Since 2009, the City has started proactively removing Ash trees from public boulevards to get a head start on EAB. Until this year these were trees that were not infected and we got residents consent before they were removed. Those who want to keep their boulevard Ash are being told that they will have to inject the Ash tree. The City offers to replace the boulevard trees with a variety of species. About half of the residents opt to have the boulevard tree replaced.

The City's policy is to now remove infested boulevard trees immediately without residents consent but still offer to replace the boulevard trees.

There are effective treatments to prevent Ash trees from getting EAB. Ash trees can be injected with chemicals that guarantee protection. The treatments must be done every two to three years and runs \$9-\$12 per inch of diameter, or about \$200 for an average sized tree.

We estimate that there are thousands of boulevard Ash trees in the City.

Staff is looking for some feedback from the City Council on some questions we are starting to receive from our residents:

- Will the City be willing to remove infected Ash trees from private property and then assess the cost on the property owner's taxes? This is for residents who may have several infected Ash trees on their property that could run into thousands of dollars to remove. We have done similar assessments in the past but on a more individual basis.
- Some neighboring cities are offering some help to residents to deal with infected Ash trees on private property that include paying 20% of an initial injection for one tree on your property, negotiating a preferred vendors amount with several tree removal firms for your residents or hiring staff to treat Ash trees at a reduced rate.

Staff will be increasing our tree removal and replacement budgets as the rate of tree removals will increase over the next couple of years. As more communities are discovering EAB it looks like there might be some State funding in the future.

Provide feedback to staff on what type of EAB programs we should consider for our residents.