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COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

June 5, 2012

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION REQUESTED

Re: Erie County Tree Inventory and Emerald Ash Borer Policy Project

Dear Honorable Members:

Enclosed please find a memorandum and proposed resolution from the Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry requesting support for a grant application to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for its Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation requires a resolution of support from the applicant's governing body in order to apply for the grant, which is due June 21, 2012.

Should your honorable body require further information, I encourage you to contact Troy Schinzel, Commissioner of the Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/md
Enclosure

cc: Troy P. Schinzel, Commissioner of Parks

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry
Re: Erie County Tree Inventory and Emerald Ash Borer Policy Project
Date: May 24, 2012

SUMMARY

It is recommended that the Legislature approve the attached resolution prepared by the Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry providing legislative support for a grant application to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program. Legislative support is necessary prior to submission. Erie County's grant proposal is entitled "Erie County Tree Inventory and Emerald Ash Borer Policy Project." This project will involve a tree inventory at Como Park, which is adjacent to some current known infestations of the Emerald Ash Borer and will create a County policy and strategy regarding the Emerald Ash Borer.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

If awarded, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will supply $50,000 in funding. The required 50% match will be supplied through the in-kind services of Erie County employees in the Departments of Parks, Recreation & Forestry and Environment & Planning.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Approval of this resolution will enable Erie County to apply for up to $50,000 in State funding to conduct a tree inventory in a County Park and establish an Emerald Ash Borer policy and strategy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Emerald Ash Borer is an invasive species which has decimated the ash tree population in other areas of the country. Typically the trees die within 2 years of infestation. This fact, as well as the large amount of ash trees found in Erie County, has the potential to create a public health hazard on County property. The first step in addressing this issue is conducting a tree inventory, which will enable the County to identify the location of ash trees. The project will then work to create an Emerald Ash Borer policy and strategy.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Erie County will be ineligible to apply for the grant.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Erie County Departments of Parks, Recreation & Forestry and Environment & Planning will work together to submit a grant proposal to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation by the deadline of June 21, 2012.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY

Re: Erie County Tree Inventory and Emerald
Ash Borer Policy Project

WHEREAS, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has recently issued a solicitation for project proposals for its Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation & Forestry has decided to lead by example by conducting a tree inventory in at least one County Park and creating a county-wide Emerald Ash Borer policy and strategy-; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry would benefit from the aforementioned work as it will allow the County to prepare for the anticipated liabilities associated with the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive species that destroys ash trees; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 10% of all trees in Erie County are Ash Trees; and

WHEREAS, the proposed grant funding will not exceed $50,000 and the required 50% grant match will be met through in-kind services by Erie County personnel; and

WHEREAS, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) application requires a resolution of support from the applicant's governing body.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry is authorized to submit an application for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Grant Program; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature send certified copies of this resolution to the County Executive's Office, the Comptroller's Office, the Director of the Division of Budget and Management, the County Attorney, and the Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Planning.