

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

RESOLUTION

Calling on the Mayor's Administration to Fully Fund Ash Tree Inoculation

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago is home to at least roughly 50,000 mature ash trees, an average of 1000 per Ward, with many blocks lined with multiple ash trees; and

WHEREAS, the invasive emerald ash borer is a serious threat to the health of these trees, and can cause degradation of the tree structure leading to branch and limb loss and eventual death of the tree; and

WHEREAS, mature trees provide immediate and long-lasting benefits to the City of Chicago, including climate resiliency, heat abatement, air quality improvement, and habitat for native species; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation has in previous years provided chemical inoculation against the emerald ash borer through its Bureau of Forestry, and estimates current costs of inoculation effective for three years at \$120 per tree, or \$6 million for the entire ash population; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Forestry estimates the current cost of removing and replacing a dead tree at \$1500 per tree, or \$75 million for the entire ash canopy; and

WHEREAS, branch and limb removal from deteriorating trees adds further work for Bureau of Forestry crews, and can cause damage to private property that impacts the quality of life of residents and may make the City liable for claims of damage at still further cost to the City; and

WHEREAS, ash tree inoculation could be fully funded for over thirty years and still be the more cost-effective option than the City's current strategy of unmanaged die-offs; *now therefore*:

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the City Council of the City of Chicago, do hereby call upon the Administration to include in their 2022 Budget Recommendations appropriations for a fully funded ash tree inoculation program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon the Department of Streets and Sanitation to adopt a managed ash tree program that combines regular inoculation with the removal of least-healthy trees until the ash tree population is replaced.



Andre Vasquez, Jr.
Aldersperson, 40th Ward