

City Council and Administration Budget Workshop May 7, 2005

Department: Parks & Forestry Department – Forestry Division

Department Issues/Concerns: We are operating in crisis management mode with insufficient staffing to handle the departmental responsibilities. Our Forestry routine maintenance is not being done because of the tree removals and stump grinding tasks caused by the emerald ash borer. This lack of maintenance will cause future tree safety concerns within our community and result in higher costs in the future.

New Responsibilities/How Handled: Stump-grinding backlog was addressed by contracting out the work to a private company using Tree Fund dollars.

2004 Projects (Completed):

- Gypsy Moth Control
- Ash tree removals/ plantings
 - Grants
- Tree planting

2005 Projects (Initiated/ Completed):

- Ash tree removals and stump grinding (in progress)
- Tree planting (escrow and co-op tree programs)
- Tree planting
- Tree maintenance

2006 Project (Objectives)

- Maintenance Building addition (Spencer Park)
- Ash tree removals and stump grinding

What City Council Objectives can you INITIATE and LEAD in the implementation without additional resources?

Enhance/Maintain Infrastructure:

- Proactive Maintenance – CANNOT BE DONE WITHOUT ADDITIONAL FUNDS AND TIME, BUT NEEDS TO BE A PRIORITY

Efficient Government:

- Upgrade facilities, staff, equipment – ANY FORESTRY FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT UPGRADES WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH FLEET AND CIP FUNDS.
- Program Prioritization by Department – PRIMARILY IN MAINTENANCE MODE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS.
- Outsourcing and privatization -

- ❖ TREE TRIMMING/REMOVALS REQUIRING AN AERIAL TOWER
- ❖ STUMP GRINDING (ABOUT 50%)
- ❖ TREE PLANTING

- Regional “Shared” Resources – OAKLAND COUNTY (GYPSY MOTH PROGRAM)

Enhance Quality of Life:

- Threat to Quality of Life – GYPSY MOTH, EMERALD ASH BORER
- Pro-active Code Compliance –WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE PRO-ACTIVE CODE ENFORCEMENT, SENDING LETTERS TO RESIDENTS WHOSE TREES AND SHRUBBERY ARE GETTING OVERGROWN AND INTERFERING WITH BIKEPATHS AND/OR CAUSING SIGHT DISTANCE PROBLEMS.

Maintain Financial Stability:

- Contain costs – FORESTRY IS STILL OPERATING AT 2003 ACTUAL COST LEVELS. NO GROWTH IN FORESTRY DIVISION SINCE INCEPTION IN 1985 EXCEPT FOR
- Maximize Grants and other funding sources – WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK GRANTS BUT FUNDING SOURCES ARE DRYING UP.