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## City Partners with HDR to Promote Urban Forestry

Harrisonburg, Va. – The city of Harrisonburg is partnering with Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR) to promote urban forestry and the “upcycle” of trees.

Some city-owned trees have been infested with the emerald ash borer, a non-native beetle that has damaged ash trees throughout Virginia. Since May 2017, city staff have identified numerous trees suffering from the emerald ash borer and approximately 90 of those infested trees have been removed.

Although these trees have been removed, the lumber is being reused for another purpose. More than 45 trees have been replanted so far this season with 145 more trees scheduled to be planted in the fall. The goal is to plant a new tree for every tree that must be removed. In an effort to diversify the city’s urban forests, the city is planting a variety of native species of trees.

“We are working with other organizations and local artisans to upcycle the lumber,” explained Jeremy Harold, superintendent of parks with the Parks and Recreation Department.

One unique partnership is with HDR to build conference tables for their new office space. An infested ash tree was recently cut down from city property at Heritage Oaks Golf Course. HDR purchased the logs through the city’s public auction and it has since been delivered to a local sawmill. After the lumber is cut, it will be delivered to a local carpenter, who will make new tables for HDR.

“Working with a local miller and a downtown craftsman to design and build our tables aligns with our mission to support local businesses,” explained Andrea Dono, executive director of HDR. “We’re excited to show how the community can reuse Harrisonburg wood and to keep this valuable resource out of the landfill.”

“This is another unique opportunity to partner with local wood crafters, to promote our local economy and talents,” explained Brad Wroblewski, owner of Knoched VA. “This whole process is taking place within 10 miles from where the tree was standing to where the table will find its new home. We are excited to promote what Harrisonburg has to offer.”

Moving forward, city staff will continue to work to replace declining trees with native, low-threat trees. If you are interested in these efforts, or would like to be a part of the urban wood utilization discussion, please contact Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation at 540-433-9168. Members of the public are welcome to purchase logs from infested ash trees that have been cut down by visiting [www.publicsurplus.com](http://www.publicsurplus.com)

