

From: [Sonja Wiser](#)
To: [Steve Thalberg](#); [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#); [Jenna Kay](#)
Cc: [Oliver Orjiako](#); [Jose Alvarez](#)
Subject: RE: comment for EIS portion of CGMP
Date: Thursday, May 16, 2024 10:04:17 AM

Good morning Steve; thank you for your comments related to the EIS portion of the Clark County Comp Growth Management Plan Update. I will forward to staff and add to the Index of Record.
Thank you

From: Steve Thalberg <sathalberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2024 9:54 AM
To: Cnty 2025 Comp Plan <comp.plan@clark.wa.gov>
Subject: comment for EIS portion of CGMP

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please consider the following comments for the Environmental Impact Statement portion of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan for Clark County.

trees benefit long-term health of the local neighborhood citizens, improve neighborhood value, decrease summertime energy use and costs, and have an unmatched positive benefit-cost ratio.

1. health benefits of trees far outweigh any of the other benefits.
2. urban trees have not been properly included in clark county's environmental impact statement, nor in the comprehensive growth management plan for clark county.
3. need to include the health benefits of trees, forests, and green spaces in order to make proper political decisions.
4. trees can absorb air pollution, and air pollution is a risk factor for health problems.
5. trees grow slowly, therefore need to plan now for future benefits.
6. there is strong link between greenness of neighborhood and health.
7. climate change results in more tree mortality. the county need to step up and improve their policy of replacing dying/dead trees.
8. there is currently a failure to see trees as a community resource. this can literally be a matter of life and death. the benefits of trees on a lot spill over to the whole neighborhood.
9. there is a trend towards replacing single family dwellings with multifamily homes. frequently this entails cutting down trees on the lot to make room for the larger multifamily dwelling. this has a negative impact on health and the economy. preservation of large trees should be part of the permitting process for construction permits.

clark county should dramatically increase its efforts at planting neighborhood trees, and protect habitat corridors and green spaces:

1. longitudinal studies have found that planting of trees results in a decrease of non-accidental, cardiovascular, lower-respiratory, and accidental mortality. these studies were performed in portland, oregon, so they certainly pertain to the situation in clark county.

the dose-response association between tree planting and non-accidental mortality increased in magnitude as the trees aged and grew. each tree planted in the preceding 1-5 years was associated with a mortality rate of -0.154, whereas each tree planted in the last 6-10 and 11-15 years was associated with a reduction in mortality rate of -0.262 and -0.306 respectively.

the study estimated that planting a tree in each of portland's 140 census tracts would generate \$14.2million in annual benefits. in contrast, the annual cost of maintaining those 140 trees would be under \$13,720. this results in a cost savings of over \$100,000 per tree planted. the benefit-cost ratio is 1,727:1. very few other interventions by the county can result in such a huge return in benefits.

<https://doi.org/10.1015/j.envint.2022.107609>.

2. there is a link between trees and human health:

trees lost from the emerald ash borer, which poses no direct threat to humans, but killed more than 100million trees in the united states, was associated with an additional 15,000 deaths from cardiovascular disease and an additional 6,000 deaths from lower respiratory disease. deaths occurred at higher rates in wealthier counties, where more trees are typically found in urban areas.

usda forest service science findings, issue 158, jan/feb 2014, pacific nw research station.

3. there is a positive association between urban trees and birth outcomes:

study location: portland, oregon.

greater tree canopy cover within 50 meters of the mother's house was associated with a reduced risk of having an underweight baby. exposure to the natural environment reduces stress levels, which may be the source of improved birth outcomes.

houses fronted with more street trees experienced lower crime rates, as did houses with large yard trees.

usda forest service science findings, issue 137, nov 2011, pacific nw research station.

4. street trees increase home prices by \$8,870 in portland, oregon and a neighborhood tree growing along the public right-of-way added an average of \$12,828 to the combined value of all the houses within 100 feet.

shade trees reduce household energy use by an average of \$25.16/month in summertime, in sacramento, california.

usda forest service science findings, issue 126, sept 2010, pacific nw research station.