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From: Nancy Morris <taweyahnan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 1:56 PM
To: Plancom
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Imperative for all policy makers to read REPORT: Fires, heat waves cause 'climate anxiety' in youth

Importance: High

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Hello Planning Commissioners:

RE: Fast paced development and clearcutting of neighborhoods and challenges to human health for our children and youth. See **REPORT: Fires, heat waves cause 'climate anxiety' in youth:** By Claire Rush | AP. June 15, 2022 at 9:45 a.m.

EDT: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/report-fires-heat-waves-cause-climate-anxiety-in-youth/2022/06/15/cdefe9d6-ec60-11ec-9f90-79df1fb28296_story.html

I implore the commissioners to read the above report in its entirety. To quote briefly from this report:

... “Lead author Julie Early Sifuentes, with OHA’s Climate and Health Program, said she hopes the study “generates conversations in families, in schools, in communities and **that it informs decisions in policy making.**” . .

“... While focusing on Oregon, the report underlines broader concerns about youth mental health in the United States amidst growing rates of depression and suicide nationwide.

Climate change and the coronavirus pandemic have further exacerbated an already alarming youth mental health crisis. The number of high school students reporting persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness increased by 40% from 2009 to 2019, according to a Surgeon General’s Advisory issued in December. Citing national surveys, the same advisory noted that suicide rates among young people ages 10-24 increased by 57% between 2007 and 2018.

Despite the crisis, study participants also expressed a sense of resilience.

“One of the biggest, bittersweet takeaways from our focus group is that we’re not alone in this,” said 23-year-old Mecca Donovan during Tuesday’s briefing. She said for young people with “all of these crowded thoughts,” having more opportunities to talk could help with mental health.” . . .

CLIMATE TRAUMA AND ANXIETY

There are a number of important facets involved when facing challenges of climate emergencies, climate trauma and anxiety, and population growth in our Shoreline community. Mature trees are not the complete answer to mitigating climate emergencies. Neither is the total removal of entire standing groves of healthy trees for the densification of our communities with fast paced development when all these new residents in apartments and other complexes will need trees for the sustainability of emotional health in such heavily populated areas along with the environmental protection mature trees provide (see important references below) such as mitigating climate emergencies: heat islands and devastating heat waves. Mature trees are an important ally in all this and are not receiving the protection in Shoreline that they need. Hundreds of trees are coming down along with losing these mature tree stands forever and what they provide for human health, our Northwest native and migratory birds’ need for habitat, and overall biosphere health. Most ongoing development in Shoreline does not take any environmental responsibility for sustainable growth and is mostly concerned with maximizing profit for developers — most with no community ties to this area.

Recent studies show the important, positive effects for human health from exposure to nature in urban environments. Contact with nature in urban areas is extremely beneficial to mental and physical wellbeing (see references 1-2 below). Yet, both the city codes and the developers’ attitude in Shoreline indicates we should remove all semblance of any connection to nature with no attempt to design and/or incorporate mature tree groves in Shoreline developments. Regardless that current codes allow this, it is not okay to destroy mature tree groves for maximum density -- especially given our climate emergencies. The city continues to allow the destruction of citizen owned assets for the sole benefit of developers who continue to see the trees as simply in the way of so-called progress. There are ways to incorporate our living assets into well-designed developments that can help sustain the trees, birds, and people. Science based information presented to commissioners, council, and staff over the past months confirms the importance of preserving as many mature northwest trees and groves as possible — it helps us all, including those who will be living in new Shoreline developments. Clear cutting neighborhoods is hardly the best way forward. It represents a lack of imaginative design and to reiterate is based solely on profit making while ignoring sustainability and reducing quality of life for current and future generations.”

Regards,

References specific to CLIMATE TRAUMA AND ANXIETY (second part of comment):

1. “Nature at work: The effects of day-to-day nature contact on workers’ stress and psychological well-being.” *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, Science Direct Volume 66, December 2021, 127404:* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1618866721004313?via%3Dihub>

2. “Disconnect from nature is apparent in high-rise apartment dwellers-how can we bring nature to apartment buildings?” July 2018 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327666100 Disconnect from nature is apparent in high-rise apartment dwellers-how can we bring nature to apartment buildings](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327666100_Disconnect_from_nature_is_apparent_in_high-rise_apartment_dwellers-how_can_we_bring_nature_to_apartment_buildings) “. . . Results: Interim results indicate that although the majority of high-rise apartment dwellers agree that they are not separate from nature but are a part of it, they do not have high nature relatedness. Forty-four per cent of respondents visited local parks less than once per month, if at all; 38% never visited bushland areas; and 46% never went to national parks. However many had preferences for green spaces to be around them, with over 80% of respondents saying that they would prefer a park and street trees around their apartment buildings. Almost half (45%) of health survey respondents stated that they experienced emotional problems that interfered with social activity, and 61% felt worn out at least some of the time.”. . .

3. Climate Action Plan Update (City of Shoreline) March, 2022: <https://www.shorelinewa.gov/our-city/environment/sustainable-shoreline/climate-water-energy/climate-action-plan-update>

Previous References for review:

- **“Urban Forests and Birds That Need Them”. Seattle Audubon Program Meeting - July 15, 2021** <https://vimeo.com/575918179> “Trees are one of our best hopes for becoming a climate-resilient city. They are one of the cheapest, simplest, and most effective tools for reducing temperatures in urban areas. The benefits trees provide extend far beyond the parcels where they stand. They are essential community assets.”

- **“What Technology Could Reduce Heat Deaths? Trees.”** <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/climate/trees-cities-heat-waves.html>, from the *New York Times* July 2, 2021
- **“Trees save lives in heat, so why aren’t we saving trees?”** *Seattle Times*, July 2, 2021: <https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/trees-save-lives-in-heat-s-so-why-arent-we-saving-trees/>
- **“Learn About Heat Islands,”** EPA report: <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/learn-about-heat-islands>
- **“Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect,”** EPA Report - <https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect>).
- **“2021 heat wave is now the deadliest weather-related event in Washington history”** <https://www.kuow.org/stories/heat-wave-death-toll-in-washington-state-jumps-to-112-people> 112 people died during the most serious heat wave in our state end of June 2021
- **“Why ‘tiny forests’ are popping up in big cities,”** *National Geographic*-June 22, 2021: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/why-tiny-forests-are-popping-up-in-big-cities>
- **“Trees Are Key To Fighting Urban Heat — But Cities Keep Losing Them,”** *NPR* piece (2019): <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/04/755349748/trees-are-key-to-fighting-urban-heat-but-cities-keep-losing-them>
- **“Urban Trees and Human Health: A Scoping Review”** (Wolf, et al., 2020):<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32570770/>
Powerpoint presentation (Wolf): http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/UrbanForestryCommission/Resources/TreesNHealth_WolfPostbySiegelbaum061220.pdf

- **“Urban Green Infrastructure For A Changing Climate.”**:Rottle Presentation (UW, 2015): <http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SPU/3RottleUrbanGreenInfrastructureforaChangingClimate.pdf>
- **“A tree-planting decision support tool for urban heat mitigation,”** Policy Analysis (Boston, 2020): <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0224959>

Environmental Justice References:

- *KUOW*, (June 23, 2021) **“Heat wave could hit Seattle area neighborhoods differently – possible 20 degrees difference”**: <https://kuow.org/stories/heat-wave-could-hit-seattle-area-neighborhoods-differently-possible-20-degrees-difference-e15e>
- *Seattle Times*, (July 5, 2021) **“Communities of color are the ‘first and worst’ hurt by climate change; urgent action needed to change course”**: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/communities-of-color-are-the-first-and-worst-hurt-by-climate-change-urgent-action-needed-to-change-course/>
- *New York Times*, (Opinion, June 30, 2021) **“Since When Have Trees Existed Only for Rich Americans?”**: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/30/opinion/environmental-inequity-trees-critical-infrastructure.html>
- *Seattle Times* (June 23, 2021): **New maps of King County, Seattle show that some communities are harder hit by heat waves**: <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/new-maps-of-king-county-seattle-show-how-some-communities-are-harder-hit-by-heat-waves/>
- *National Geographic*, (June 17, 2021) **“Los Angeles confronts its shady divide”**: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/article/los-angeles-confronts-its-shady-divide-feature>
- *National Geographic*, (July 2021) **“How L.A.'s urban tree canopy reveals hidden inequities”**:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/graphics/how-los-angeles-tree-canopy-reveals-hidden-inequities-feature>

- Hoffman ([January 2020](#)): **“The Effects of Historical Housing Policies on Resident Exposure to Intra-Urban Heat: A Study of 108 US Urban Areas”**: https://www.mdpi.com/2225-1154/8/1/12?type=check_update&version=1
- Benz and Burney (2021), **“Widespread Race and Class Disparities in Surface Urban HeatExtremes Across the United States”**
[Press coverage](#), [GIS product](#)
- **American Forests Tree Equity Project** (June 2021), [“Ensuring tree cover in cities isequitable”](#) [Tree Equity Score documents](#),
- **“A tree-planting decision support tool for urban heat mitigation”** Policy Analysis (Boston, 2020): <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0224959>