

**From:** [Kathleen Russell](#)  
**To:** [agenda comments](#)  
**Cc:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Letter from Save Shoreline Trees to City Council re 10-10-22  
**Date:** Sunday, October 9, 2022 1:25:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [SST Letter to CC re CAP 10-10-22.docx](#)

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The attached letter is for the document library pertaining to the City Council meeting 10-10-22.  
This letter is from the Save Shoreline Trees Board.

Thank you,

Kathleen Russell  
Save Shoreline Trees/Co-chair



October 9, 2022

VIA EMAIL to [agendacomments@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:agendacomments@shorelinewa.gov), and

To: Mayor Keith Scully ([kscully@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:kscully@shorelinewa.gov));  
Deputy Mayor Betsy Robertson ([brobertson@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:brobertson@shorelinewa.gov));  
Council Member Doris McConnell ([dmccconnell@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:dmccconnell@shorelinewa.gov));  
Council Member Laura Mork ([lmork@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:lmork@shorelinewa.gov));  
Council Member Eben Pobe (epobe@shorelinewa.gov);  
Council Member John Ramsdell ([jramsdell@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:jramsdell@shorelinewa.gov)); and  
Council Member Chris Roberts ([croberts@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:croberts@shorelinewa.gov))

Re: Draft Climate Action Plan presentation by Staff to Council on October 10, 2022.

Dear Mayor Scully and City Council Members,

As we all know, established trees in Shoreline are being decimated on the 7 zones where all trees can be clear-cut and no tree replacements are required. In addition, trees in neighborhoods are being removed, public street trees are being cut down for too-wide sidewalks and transportation projects. The environment, particularly trees, are the true victim of Shoreline's growth and density.

Save Shoreline Trees (SST) has followed and input comments about the retention and importance of our City's tree canopy since the beginning of the update of the 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP). SST hoped and expected that the draft CAP would incorporate the City's private and public trees and support tree retention during this climate crisis. Many neighboring municipalities, national and international cities, have recognized the evidence that trees are an important line of defense in climate change and the need to plant more trees. But the implementation plan of Shoreline's CAP being presented to you on October 10, will not support tree retention in Shoreline for several years. The reason as included in the Climate Action Plan and Staff Report states:

*Because the removal of atmospheric carbon is a passive process, global protocol and industry best practices do not count sequestration toward emissions reduction targets. Instead, sequestration is considered a pathway to achieving carbon neutrality, our 2050 goal.<sup>1</sup>*

"A passive process" is, in other words, too weak to make a difference. Retention of trees on private property was assigned a low priority score of 2.85.<sup>2</sup> We now understand that many trees in Shoreline will be removed, trees will not be protected and over time, there will be some tree planting along streets and a free tree program for residents. It will require several years for to-be planted trees to grow to the point that they provide the same benefits as the established trees do now. It takes a tree approximately 18 years to sequester carbon, and any trees planted after 2030 will store carbon around 2048.<sup>3</sup> At the current rate of the City's tree loss, our tree canopy will take decades to return to the 37% tree canopy of 2017.<sup>4</sup> The Council's primary goals are to meet the recommended housing density targets and reduce GHG emissions, but to sacrifice the City's trees for these goals is shortsighted.

Your inaction to protect Shoreline’s trees is scaring us. SST’s outreach to residents during the Farmers Market overwhelmingly echoes our concern that the City Council either refuses to accept the science-based evidence that established trees should be retained and protected, or does not understand the connection between our trees and the public.

Each of you can make a difference in this course of action. On behalf of hundreds of Shoreline tree advocates, Save Shoreline Trees asks you to direct staff, while they are leading the City towards electrification and transit oriented housing, to also retain trees in Shoreline.

Sincerely,

Save Shoreline Trees Board and Advisory Board

Melody Fosmore  
 Kathleen Russell  
 Susanne Tsoming  
 Carla Carroll  
 Barbara Johnstone  
 Kathy Kaye  
 Jonelle Kemmerling  
 Claudia Turner

## References

- <sup>1</sup> [Discussion of the Draft Climate Action Plan Update](#), Oct. 10, 2022, page 8b-10
- <sup>2</sup> [Discussion of the Draft Climate Action Plan Update](#), Oct 10, 2022, Attachment A, Appendix C, page 8b-143
- <sup>3</sup> [2020 City of Shoreline Sustainability Report](#), page 16
- <sup>4</sup> [City of Shoreline, Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2018](#), tree canopy assessed at 37% (extrapolation of 2017 data)

## Additional Information

[Tree Facts from the Arbor Day Foundation](#) (City of Shoreline is a member of the Arbor Day Foundation)  
 “Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30% and can save 20–50% in energy used for heating.”

[Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect, EPA Report](#)

[Why some Seattle neighborhoods are hit harder by heat waves](#), Seattle Times, Aug 25, 2022

[Forests ‘Cornerstone of Life on the Planet’](#), United Nations Assembly President, May 9, 2022  
 “forests – and trees outside forests”