

**From:** [Melody Fosmore](#)  
**To:** [Heidi Costello](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] email for inclusion for tonight's council - agenda comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 21, 2022 4:26:21 PM

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Hi Heidi - since my email is flagged as spam, I am sending you my comments to be included in tonight's agenda and am asking to be a party of record. Thank you for helping me out on this!

Dear Mayor Scully and members of the Shoreline City Council:

Tonight you will be voting on the Biennial Budget which includes Amendments 2 and 3 which includes the funding the completion of the public street tree surveys and the Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) study in 2023. **I am asking for approval of Amendments 2 and 3 AND the invocation of RCW 36.70A.390 for a crisis response to our climate change.**

When I was a child growing up in San Fernando Valley in the 1950's and 1960's the smog was so bad we had to stay inside whether we were in school or at home. In 1970 President Nixon started the EPA which then put measures into place to create better air for all the nation and now LA's air has greatly improved. That's a 50 plus year timeline of identifying the problem, trial and error, changing people's perceptions and finally getting results.

In the 1970's carpooling rose to popularity as part of the fuel crisis - there also was gas rationing then - and by 1980 25% of Americans were riding in carpools. As soon as the economy eased up, the four wheel SUV became popular and having a gas guzzling Hummer was a status symbol. Meanwhile, carbon from cars continued to increase. Nowadays, the number of households without cars declined by 22% in 1960 to 8.5% in 2020 and the number of households with two or more cars INCREASED from 22% in 1960 to 59% in 2020. <https://transportgeography.org>.

We all know America has a love affair with cars and regardless of what is best for our environment, it's clear we choose freedom to drive where we want, when we want, in the car of our choice regardless of smog, gas prices, or climate change. If past history is prologue, people are not going to easily give up their cars.

Recently Council did not approve revision of the code for retention of 10% of existing trees on the MUR 70' zoned lots giving the new neighbors moving to Shoreline some respite from the heat island effect and noise from the freeway. The clear-cutting of these zoned lots are creating heat islands which will continue the climate crisis in a very definable way. Deference is given to the building community over the tax-paying citizens living in the Parkwood, Highland Terrace, Meridian Park, Richmond Highlands, Ridgecrest, Echo Lake Hillwood, North City and Ballinger neighborhoods.

Our community is exhausted by all the changes and loss of landmark trees who graced our streets as we travel to work or school. More street trees are scheduled to come down on N 145th and 1st Ave NE for sidewalk expansions. We hear from the planners that 'all efforts will be made to save the trees' however when all is said and done, the trees are removed for a variety of reasons. When does the quality of life and health of our community take as much priority as the developer's needs? Why cannot transportation projects incorporate 8'-wide sidewalks?

We all need to take a break from the fast pace of expansion and truly take stock of our community and the consequences of the decisions. The City has acknowledged that we are in a climate crisis by Resolution 494 – a climate emergency resolution. Weather events like hurricanes or tornadoes or earthquakes are immediate and have huge upheavals to everyday life and grab our attention. The heat dome of 2021 killed hundreds of people in the Pacific NW without hardly any media coverage. Hundreds of people.

(<https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2021/07/14/weather/worst-urban-heat-island-cities/index.html>.)

Taking down our tall trees and intensifying existing heat islands will endanger the lives of our community. So basically one human-led solution has created another human-led crisis. Except this crisis is already affecting thousands of people who currently live in Shoreline and with the next heat dome or extended heat wave we could see deaths in Shoreline because heat can kill. You know the value of our trees, however a crisis requires more than just a study and a plan on paper. A crisis indicates the need for urgency and not complacency or assumptions that just because today is looking good doesn't mean all will be well next summer when the next heat wave could hit. <https://www.cbsnews.com/amp/news/heat-islands-cities-extreme-temperatures-climate-change/>; <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/urban-heat-island/>

Current City code does not protect our public street trees from removal during this time of high development and growth. **I am asking you now to approve the invocation of RCW 36.70A.390 for 6 months, which can be extended by 6 months, to determine the best way to protect our public trees on heat islands.** The history of our collective decisions when it comes to the environment and people's needs has been an on-going experiment of trial and error but clearly what tends to win out every time is the immediate desires of Americans. That is why we continue to speak for the trees. PLEASE, approve the amendments to study our tree canopy and public street trees, and the moratorium for removal of public trees on heat islands so we don't look back on this time with regret and sorrow.

Our very lives are at stake, and this cannot be understated.

Respectfully,

Melody Fosmore

Co-Chair, Save Shoreline Trees