Green Communities :: Good Health
the evidence of health benefits

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Oklahoma Community Forestry
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in the background
trees & forests for human health & well-being
evidence about the importance of ‘nearby nature’
Community Trees, Urban Forests for Health

scientific evidence
health & well being benefits
life course concept
‘cradle to grave’
Urban Forests and Newborns
the natural environment may affect pregnancy outcomes...

10% increase in tree-canopy cover within 50m of a house
= lower number of low weight births
(1.42 per 1000 births)

Donovan et al., Health & Place, 2011
Nature & Psych Development

children’s play & imagination

Richard Louv - Last Child in the Woods
http://www.treeclimbing.jp/
physically disabled & tree climbing!
recreational tree climbing – youth therapy
Ascending the Giants

Portland, Oregon
back on track . . . .
School & Learning
Green High School Campuses

- cafeteria & classroom window views with greater quantities of trees and shrubs
- positively associated with:
  - standardized test scores,
  - graduation rates
  - %s of students planning to attend a four-year college
  - fewer occurrences of criminal behavior

Matsuoka. 2010. Landscape & Urban Planning
Trees & Crime Reduction

- trees in the public right of way are associated with lower crime rates
  - smaller, view-obstructing trees are associated with increased crime
  - larger trees are associated with reduced crime

Donovan & Prestemon. 2012. *Environment and Behavior*
Green & Crime Reduction

- vacant lot greening in Philadelphia (4 sections)
  - consistent reductions in gun assaults across 4 sections
  - consistent reductions in vandalism in 1 section

Branas et al. 2011. *American Journal of Epidemiology*
EAB Tree Loss & Public Health

1990 to 2007, 1,296 counties in 15 states infected areas vs. no bugs
15,000 more deaths from cardiovascular disease
6,000 more deaths from lower respiratory disease
controlled for demographic, human mortality, and forest health data at the county level


Toledo, Ohio in 2006, pre EAB
2009, EAB in neighborhood

photos: Dan Herms, Ohio State University
Shinrin-yoku  Forest Bathing

- extended forest walks
  - reduced ‘fight or flight’ nervous system activity
  - lower cortisol – a stress indicator
  - increased immune function
  - lower pulse rate & blood pressure
Attention Restoration Theory
Rachel & Stephen Kaplan U of MI
directed attention
fatigue . . . .
Workplace Nature Views

- **Well-being**
  - desk workers without view of nature reported 23% more ailments in prior 6 months

- **Job Satisfaction**
  - less frustrated and more patient
  - higher overall job satisfaction and enthusiasm

ART Design Elements

- being away
- ‘soft’ fascination
- extent
- compatibility
the better office cubicle!

bottom line = $$ benefits of trees & nature
Physical Activity & Depression Reduction

- Review of 13 high quality studies
  - exercise recommended for mild to moderate depression
  - people who are willing & motivated
  - associated meditation and mindfulness are important

parks, recreation, active transit
Effects of nature window view on recovery from surgery (Roger Ulrich, 1984)

• Shorter stays
• Less pain
• Fewer minor complications
• Better emotional well-being
hospital healing gardens: patients; family and friends; professional staff

health care $$ savings
Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center
Stenzel Healing Garden 1997
Rehabilitation Institute of Oregon
Oregon Burn Center Garden
Hospital Staff – Respite and Support
Nature: A stress coping resource for employees 24-7

thanks to Teresia Hazen for slides
Elders: mobility & social connections
What is the Evidence?

Urban Greening & Nearby Nature
Human Health, Welfare & Function
Finding that study . . . . . .
Sponsors:
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NGO partners

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Mary Ann Rozance
Sarah Krueger

www.greenhealth.washington.edu
Local Economics

Trees in cities are not grown and managed for products that can be bought and sold on markets, but they do provide many intangible services and functions! This article serves two purposes. First, it introduces valuation methods that are used to convert intangible benefits to dollar sums. Then, it shows how nonmarket valuations can support local decision-making.

Fast Facts

- The presence of larger trees in yards and as street trees can add from 3% to 15% to home values throughout neighborhoods.

- Averaging the market effect of street trees on all house values across Portland, Oregon yields a total value of $1.35 billion, potentially increasing annual property tax revenues $15.3 million.

- A study found 7% higher rental rates for commercial offices having high quality landscapes.

- Shoppers claim that they will spend 9% to 12% more for goods and services in central business districts having high quality tree canopy.

- Shoppers indicate that they will travel greater distance and a longer time to visit a district having high quality trees, and spend more time there once they arrive.
Abraham Maslow
Hierarchy of Needs
Summary

nearly 40 years of health evidence
diverse health benefits
‘cradle to grave’

nature for health & wellness
expand partnership & collaboration
Human Dimensions of Urban Forestry and Urban Greening

featuring research on peoples’ perceptions and behaviors regarding nature in cities

Nature and Consumer Environments
Research about how the urban forest influences business district visitors.

Trees and Transportation
Studies on the value of having quality landscapes in urban roadsides.

Civic Ecology
Studies of human behaviors and benefits when people are active in the environment.

Policy and Planning
Integrating urban greening science with community change.

Urban Forestry and Human Benefits
More resources, studies and links . . .

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www.naturewithin.info