Trees & Retail Environments Research
Visibility = customer appeal?
“low maintenance”
Trees & Retail Environments Research

• Research Questions •
  trees and visual quality?
  trees and consumer behavior?
  trees and product pricing?

• Methods:
  mail out/in surveys
  national or local sample
  residents/nearby city residents

partners: U of Washington, NGOs, business organizations funded by USDA Forest Service & NUCFAC
Methods

surveys

mailings across selected districts

person-to-person contact

interviews
Image Categories (sorted by ratings)

Pocket Parks
mean 3.72
(highest)

Full Canopy
mean 3.63

Scale: 1 = not at all, 5 = like very much,
26 images
Enclosed Sidewalk 3.32

Intermittent Trees 2.78
No Trees
mean 1.65 (lowest)
(high - 3.72)
Small Malls (strip malls)

Preference ratings 1-5

1: Mixed Screen - mean 3.18, 0.91 sd

2: Ordered Trees, mean 3.09, 0.78 sd

3: Shrub Edge, mean 2.35, 0.96 sd

4: No Vegetation, mean 1.39, 0.83 sd

mean 3.18

mean 1.39

preference ratings 1-5

mean 3.09

mean 2.35
Small Malls (strip malls)

Mall Having Trees

- Amenity: much higher
- Business Quality: higher
- Positive Merchants: higher
- Wayfinding: much lower

Product Pricing

- willingness-to-pay
- 8.8% more

Wolf, Arb & UF, 2009
funding by ISA Tree Fund
Product Pricing

![Graph showing product pricing for different goods categories: convenience, shopping, specialty. The graph compares mean reported WTP between no vegetation and mature vegetation.](image)
1. Place Perceptions
   - Place Character
   - Interaction with Merchants
   - Quality of Products

2. Patronage Behavior
   - travel time, travel distance
   - duration & frequency of visits
   - willingness to pay for parking

3. Product Pricing
   - higher willingness to pay for all types of goods
   - higher in districts with trees – 9-12%

Place Marketing
Relationship Marketing
retail & place marketing

“Companies stage an experience when they engage customers in a memorable way.”
Double row trees, Conifer plantings
Edmonds, Washington
Edmonds in Bloom
Austin, TX
Planning Guidelines for Trees and Retail Business

Pacific Northwest Chapter
International Society of Arboriculture
Nature and Consumer Environments

Shoppers are increasingly interested in the experience of shopping, as well as the goods and services they expect to purchase. A series of studies has investigated associations between the urban forest and people’s response to shopping settings.

These studies show that providing for trees in the streetscape is an important investment for a business community. The presence of a quality urban forest positively influences shoppers’ perceptions, and probably, their behavior. Information below includes research studies, booklet to help create and sustain beautiful streets.

Studies

Trees and Business - Growing Together
A National Research Program

Trees provide environmental benefits in cities, but also contribute to the health of shoppers and their neighborhoods. These findings have been consistent across large, mid-size, and small cities. The most positive consumer response is associated with urban forest where overhanging tree canopy helps create a sense of place. The results across several research studies. Details of research found in sections below.

www.naturewithin.info
trees = livability & human capital