

# From "22 Benefits of Urban Street Trees"

By Dan Burden, Senior Urban Designer Glattig Jackson and Walkable Communities, Inc; May, 2006

<http://northlandnemo.org/images/22BenefitsofUrbanStreetTrees.pdf>

## Selected excerpts

- For a planting cost of \$250-600 (includes first 3 years of maintenance) a single street tree returns over \$90,000 of direct benefits (not including aesthetic, social and natural) in the lifetime of the tree.
- Although care and maintenance of trees in urban places is a costly task, the value in returned benefits is so great that a sustainable community cannot be imagined without these important green features.
- Street trees (generally planted from 4 feet to 8 feet from curbs) provide many benefits to those streets they occupy. These trees provide so many benefits that they should always be considered as an urban area default street making feature.

## Properly placed and spaced urban street trees provide these benefits:

### Economic Benefits

- **Improved business.** (Businesses on treescaped streets show 20% higher income streams)
- **Added value to adjacent homes, businesses and tax base.** Realtor based estimates of street tree versus non street tree comparable streets relate a \$15-25,000 increase in home or business value.
- **Less drainage infrastructure (reduced flooding potential)**
- **Lower urban air temperatures.** (Asphalt and concrete streets and parking lots are known to increase urban temperatures 3-7 degrees. These temperature increases significantly impact energy costs to homeowners and consumers. A properly shaded neighborhood, mostly from urban street trees, can *reduce energy bills for a household from 15-35%*.)
- **Longer pavement life.** (Studies conducted in a variety of California environments show that the shade of urban street trees can add from 40-60% more life to costly asphalt.)

### Health Benefits

- **Create safer walking environments**
- **Gas transformation efficiency** (Trees in street proximity absorb 9 times more pollutants than more distant trees converting harmful gasses back into oxygen and other useful and natural gasses.)
- **Reduced blood pressure, improved overall emotional and psychological health**
- **Rain, sun, heat and skin protection**
- **Reduced harm from tailpipe emissions**
- **Lower Ozone**

### Quality of life

- **Reduced and more appropriate urban traffic speeds**
- **Filtering and screening agent.** Softens and screens utility poles, light poles, on-street and off-street parking and other features creating *visual pollution* to the street.
- **Connection to nature and the human senses.**
- **Reduced road rage**
- **Time in travel perception.** Other research and observations confirm that motorists perceive the time it takes to get through treed versus non-treed environments has a significant differential. A treeless environment trip is perceived to be longer than one that is treed