

Good evening.

My name is Dan Keusal, I live in Seattle and I'm here to ask that you work with Save Shoreline Trees to preserve the trees along Dayton Avenue and other streets that are at risk as part of the WSDOT renovation project.

I realize that each of you has many things going on in your life *other* than your duties as members of the Shoreline City Council. You have jobs, families, hobbies. And even *in* your role as a member of the Shoreline City Council, you have many, many projects and issues that are calling for your attention.

So I'd like to use my brief time here tonight to speak to this question: when it comes to *this* issue, when it comes to *these* 130 or so trees...*why should you care?...Why does THIS...merit your time, your attention, and your action?*

There are *many* concrete, pragmatic benefits to preserving trees. They combat climate change. Their shade and canopy lowers utility bills. They've even been shown to increase property values.

But...since I've worked for 27 years as a psychotherapist, *I'd* like to speak to the benefits that trees provide for our *mental* health, for our *emotional* well-being.

Let me give just one example. A study published in the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* shows that driving along *tree-lined* streets actually *lowers the stress levels*...and *strengthens the immune systems* of drivers...which leads to them drive *slower*. In other words, trees make our streets, and our city, safer and healthier places.

Let me go a bit deeper...Trees are valuable both as present, *living things*, and as ancient, archetypal *symbols*. They model for us the value of rootedness and of reaching. They remind us to reach down for the essential nutrients we need in order to thrive and grow. And they remind us to reach up toward the light, to engage in a kind of psychological photosynthesis that transforms the "carbon dioxide" from our daily grind into life-giving "oxygen" that fuels our next endeavors. Finally, trees offer us an aesthetic and a presence with nutrients nearly as essential as oxygen itself.

This...is why you should care, and why I am urging you work with Save Shoreline Trees to preserve the trees that are at risk as part of the WSDOT renovation project. Thank you for *all* you do for the Shoreline City Council, and thank you for your attention to this important issue.