The Benefits of Trees for Livable and Sustainable Communities
Drs. Jessica B. Turner-Skoff and Nicole Cavender

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Key Findings: Trees can help us reach 15 out of 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals

- The world is increasingly urban and suburban.
- Society must confront challenges posed by the Anthropocene and climate change.
- The benefits of trees can alleviate many of these challenges.
- We need to plant and protect trees in our cities.

In this review, the scientific benefits of trees are placed in the following categories:

**Health and Well-Being**
- Reduce pollution
- Improve physical and mental health
- Strengthen community ties
- Increase physical activity
- Decrease aggression and violence
- Reduce crime

**Cognitive Development and Education**
- Improve student performance
- Reduce stress
- Increase in concentration
- Reduce symptoms of ADD/ADHD
- Increase in attention
- Increase in self-discipline

**Economy and Resources**
- High investment returns
- Support tourism
- Increase home values and rental rates
- Reduce energy use and bills
- Promote food sustainability
- Provide resources and firewood

**Climate Change Mitigation and Habitat**
- Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect (see figure 1)
- Store and sequester carbon
- Provide critical habitat

**Green Infrastructure**
- Manage storm water
- Reduce pollution
- Protect life below water and on land

To maximize the benefits of trees, we need to:

- Plant the right tree, in the right place, give it the right care.
- Care for trees so they reach maturity. Mature trees provide more benefits.
- Incorporate green infrastructure early in city planning and recognize the true value of trees over time. City budgets should prioritize tree planting, care and maintenance.
- Acknowledge the long-term benefits of trees and treat them as an investment that appreciates in value.
- Support a new era of horticulture where we focus on how to best grow trees and plants in the complexities of the urban environment and how we can incorporate green infrastructure as a way to address society’s greatest challenges.