

## GPAC: Public Comment

Paul, Christina <cpaul@cityofpetaluma.org>

Thu 11/17/2022 4:29 PM

Dear GPAC,

Please see public comment (and a cool article from Kris Rebillot) relevant to the General Plan below. See you soon.

Best,

Christina

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Greetings Cristina,

I'm very sorry that I missed your presentation to the Sonoma County Food Systems Alliance. I was busy helping staff at the Petaluma Health Center farmstand but really wanted to be there! I was informed that the zoning issues related to the Bounty Farm was discussed and I want to make sure I understood what was relayed. I also want everyone part of the general plan process to understand what I think will be a good solution to various issues around growing food on spaces not specifically identified as agricultural.

Presently, there are concerns that the zoning and codes of Petaluma don't necessarily allow for food production unless it is specifically listed as an allowable activity. I would like to suggest that all parties involved in the process consider making Community Food Production an "Opt Out" Activity- as in, it is assumed that Community Food Production is allowed on all parcels unless explicitly noted as unallowable due to existing environmental or public health concerns. This would address ongoing issues related to community gardens, school gardens, home gardens, and potentially the Bounty Farm in the City of Petaluma.

For Petaluma Bounty, it would also avoid exacerbating competing interests with the current land owners who are seeking developers to purchase and put housing on the land. We are in conversation with various Land Trusts who are hesitant to provide support until we address the zoning issue. What I am suggesting would address that issue. I submitted this concept and link in a community listening meeting, and wrote a blog on it. <https://www.petalumabounty.org/ensure-community-food-security-and-food-growing-is-a-shared-value-in-petaluma-city-of-petaluma-general-plan-update-process-needs-your-input/>

Community Food Production is defined in California Retail Food Code as follows:

*California Health and Safety Code*

*Sec. 113752*

*“Community food producer” means a producer of agricultural products on land that is not zoned for agricultural use but is otherwise in compliance with applicable local land use and zoning restrictions, including, but not limited to, restrictions governing personal gardens, community gardens, school gardens, and culinary gardens.*

There is also an Urban Ag. Incentive Zone definition but might be more complicated: [https://california.public.law/codes/ca\\_gov't\\_code\\_section\\_51040](https://california.public.law/codes/ca_gov't_code_section_51040)

Let me know if you have any questions or would like a conversation.

Wishing you well!

Suzi

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Suzi Grady

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<http://www.facebook.com/petalumabouty>

<https://www.instagram.com/petalumabouty>

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Thank you Kris for this information.

I am passing it on to Chris Thomas in PCS and Cindy Chong and others in City as well as ReLeaf.

John

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Petaluma is in a drought. There are many programs and incentives to help you conserve water! Learn more [HERE](#).

On 11/17/2022 9:40 AM Kris Rebillot <[krebillot@rebillot.com](mailto:krebillot@rebillot.com)> wrote:

# Planting trees can save lives, study shows

A 30-year tree planting campaign in Portland, Oregon, allowed researchers to show that the number of trees planted in the street is associated with reductions in mortality, and that the association grows stronger as the trees age and grow

## [Peer-Reviewed Publication](#)

BARCELONA INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH (ISGLOBAL)

PrintEmail App

In the past 30 years, the non-profit organization Friends of Trees planted trees along the streets of Portland, Oregon. Now, [a new study](#) shows that **each tree planted** was associated with **significant reductions** in non-accidental and cardiovascular **mortality** (of 20% and 6%, respectively, for trees planted in the preceding 15-30 years). The researchers also estimate that the annual **economic benefits of planting trees greatly exceed the cost** of maintaining them. The study, co-led by the [Barcelona Institute for Global Health](#) (ISGlobal), an institution supported by the "la Caixa" Foundation, together with the [USDA Forest Service](#), was published in *Environment International*.

Evidence pointing to an association between exposure to nature and lower mortality is accumulating.

"However, most studies use satellite imaging to estimate the vegetation index, which does not distinguish different types of vegetation and cannot be directly translated into tangible interventions," says **Payam Dadvand**, ISGlobal researcher and senior author of the study.

Thus, the authors took advantage of a **natural experiment that took place in the city of Portland**: between 1990 and 2019, [Friends of Trees](#) planted 49,246 street trees (and kept records of where the trees were planted, and when). So, the research team looked at the **number of trees planted** in a given area (specifically, a census tract, where approximately 4,000 people live) in the preceding **5, 10 or 15 years**. They associated this information with **mortality due to cardiovascular, respiratory or non-accidental causes** in that same area, using data from the Oregon Health Authority.

The results show that in neighbourhoods in which more trees had been planted, mortality rates (deaths per 100,000 persons) were lower. This **negative association** was **significant for cardiovascular and non-accidental mortality** (that is, all causes excluding accidents), particularly for males and people over the age of 65.

Furthermore, the association got **stronger as trees aged and grew**: the reduction in mortality rate associated with trees planted 11-15 years before (30%) was double that observed with trees planted in the preceding 1-5 years (15%). This means that older trees are associated with larger decreases in mortality, and that **preserving existing mature trees may be particularly important** for public health.

This study doesn't provide a direct insight into how trees improve health. However, the finding that large trees have a greater health impact than smaller ones is telling, because larger trees are better at absorbing air pollution, moderating temperatures, and reducing noise (three factors linked to increased mortality).

“We observed the effect both in green and less green neighbourhoods, which suggests that **street tree planting benefits both**,” says **Geoffrey H. Donovan**, from the USDA Forest Service and first author of the study. The analysis took into account other factors that may influence mortality, such as income, education and racial composition of the neighbourhoods.

Finally, according to the authors’ estimates, the **benefits of tree planting greatly outweigh the cost**: the annual cost of planting and maintaining one urban tree in each of Portland’s 140 census tract areas would range somewhere between 3,000 and 13,000 USD, while it would generate around 14.2 million USD annually in lives saved.

“Our results provide an important evidence-base for tangible interventions (e.g., planting trees) to increase the longevity of urban residents,” concludes Dadvand.

## Reference

Donovan, GH, Prestemon JP, Gatzolis D, Michael YL, Kaminski AR, Dadvand P. [The association between tree planting and mortality: A natural experiment and cost-benefit analysis](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2022.107609). *Environment International*. 2022. doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2022.107609

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## JOURNAL

Environment International

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

Observational study

## SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

People

## ARTICLE TITLE

The association between tree planting and mortality: A natural experiment and cost-benefit analysis

## COI STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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One of the most distinctive resources that Petaluma has is the River Corridor. It is major contributor to the distinctiveness of our city. The 1996 River Enhancement Plan had good intentions although it is very general and lacking of details, it should be a starting point further defining what can and can not happen adjacent to the rivers edge. Specific design guidelines need to be developed for adjacent land use and parcel design. Dimensions for setbacks for each zoning condition and nature of site utilization, such as parking lots, pedestrian access and trails, building heights and setbacks and so on. Also revegetation requirements for all adjacent projects along river corridor areas. There are many good examples of positive project interface that have been constructed that we

can learn from as well as many poor examples of what should not have happened during previous developments.

The river corridor is a very important resource to focus on. Corridors that also need attention and design guidance are the primary boulevards, Petaluma Blvd. North and South, Washington Blvd. East and West, Western Blvd. and D and B streets.

In the recent past they have been thought of primarily in terms of traffic carrying capacity, or bike trail corridors. These public corridors form the resulting image that most people have of Petaluma as they move through them in their automobile or bicycle and we should value what they look like and how they contribute to the image of Petaluma. Street corridor design should be a part of the general plan as an element include pedestrian walks, parkways and street trees, intersection design, building and parking setbacks, street lighting and signing. They all are important to incorporate on an equal basis to traffic carrying capacity and bike safety. At present the Public Works bias has dominated the design of streets and it has resulted in creating very inconsistent and unattractive public corridors. I would like to see an Urban Design element as part of the master plan documents that deals with the main public image corridors of Petaluma, both River and Roads.

Thanks,  
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Petaluma is in a drought. There are many programs and incentives to help you conserve water! Learn more [HERE](#).