



“Talking Points” to Market Sustainable Landscaping

Cost Savings

- Swedish Issaquah Campus has reduced annual costs by \$50,628 just by switching to a sustainable landscape maintenance contract. The previous annual cost of a maintenance contract under conventional specs was \$69,228. The current annual cost under a sustainable landscape contract and guidelines of IPM policy is \$18,600 (Zappler).
- Swedish First Hill Campus has an annual water usage savings of \$2,384 by switching to sustainable landscaping (Zappler).
- Swedish Medical Center has an overall cost savings of \$13,723 per year by eliminating pesticide use at the First Hill, Cherry Hill and Ballard campuses. Previously, the calendar spray program consisted of dormant oil spray, three insect/disease control applications, and a deep root feeding – all of which have been eliminated through an IPM policy (Zappler).
- According to the U.S. Department of Energy, proper placement of only three trees can save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in annual heating and cooling energy costs (Hopkins 145).
- One acre of turf grass mown eight times per year costs approximately \$3480 to maintain compared the cost of \$435 to maintain one acre of meadow mowed annually and \$870 if mown biannually (Lucey, Barton).
- The Target Center Arena in Minneapolis has decreased annual energy costs by \$300,000 converting to a green roof (Clements et al.).
- Chicago City Hall-County Building’s 20,300 sq. ft. green roof yields \$3,600 in annual energy savings (Clements et al.).

Reduction of Labor

- Labor costs have been decreased at the Swedish First Hill Campus from 1.6 FTE to 0.6 FTE with the implementation of sustainable landscape management (Zappler).
- Climate-appropriate, sustainable landscape design requires 68% less maintenance than a traditional landscape. A sustainable landscape requires 15 hours of maintenance compared to a traditional landscape requiring 80 hours of maintenance annually (Sustainable Landscape: The Numbers Speak for Themselves).

Aesthetic Appeal

- Landscaping can increase both residential and business property values by 15-25%, and can also decrease a home value by 10% (Hopkins 86).
 - NOTE: This is a more generalized statement about landscaping that can be used to support the value found in sustainable landscaping.

Reduction in Pollution/Runoff/Waste



- Climate-appropriate, sustainable landscape design generates 56% less yard waste than a traditional landscape. A sustainable landscape generates 250 pounds of yard waste compared to a traditional landscape generating 670 pounds of yard waste (Sustainable Landscape: The Numbers Speak for Themselves).
- Soils amended with compost reduce the volume of surface runoff by 29 to 50% (Kolsti et al.).

Energy Conservation

- Plantscapes performed a lighting retrofit at their own facilities, conserving 40,378 kilowatts per year which decreased their carbon footprint by 42 tons (“Winner of the Leader in Hazardous Waste Reduction & Sustainable Business Practices Award”).
- A recent NRDC study showed that during the summer in Southern California, a green roof can reduce daily energy demand for cooling in a one-story building by more than 75% (Clements et al.).
- Based on Forest Service models for the Midwest region, a single large tree can generate nearly \$45 in energy savings annually (Clements et al.).

Water Conservation

- Climate-appropriate, sustainable landscape design uses 83% less water than a traditional landscape. A sustainable landscape uses 6,000 gallons of water compared to a traditional landscape using 57,000 gallons of water annually (Sustainable Landscape: The Numbers Speak for Themselves).
- Pacific Landscape Management installed upgrades on sprinkler heads (converted to MP rotators) and decommissioned irrigation heads in areas where mature plants did not need supplemental irrigation to create a more water-efficient irrigation system. This saved an average of 614,108 total gallons of water between 2012 and 2013 (Schwartzkopf).
- According to the EPA, one large building in Seattle use large-capacity cisterns to meet 60% of their toilet flushing needs (Clements et al.).
 - NOTE: This source did not explicitly mention which building this was. I attempted to research and find the name of this building, but was not able to find it.
- Researchers have found that landscaping that utilizes rain gardens and bioswales, adds approximately 7% to the average rental rate for office buildings, and can increase residential property values by 2-5% (Clements et al.).

Improved Plant/Soil Life

- By switching to mulch-mowing, Plantscapes found that customers were happier, soil health was improved, and less fertilization and water were required to upkeep maintenance (“Winner of the Leader in Hazardous Waste Reduction & Sustainable Business Practices Award”).
 - NOTE: This does not contain any quantitative data, but more so qualitative. It was part of the PDF that I received from Laurel Tomchick.



Reduced Crime

- Numerous studies have found significantly lower rates of property crime, violent crime, graffiti, vandalism, and littering in urban areas with high levels of vegetation as shrubs and bushes can be designed to minimize impacts on sight lines to improve safety. Deterring such crimes can result in significant avoided costs for commercial property owners (Clements et al.).
 - NOTE: This is a more generalized, qualitative statement on landscaping.

Improved Wellbeing & Health

- Researchers have found that office workers have a clear preference for nature near the workplace leading to improved health, job satisfaction, and reduced levels of stress (Clements et al.).
 - NOTE: This is a more generalized, qualitative statement on landscaping.

Works Cited

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