**The secret life of trees**

Picture an iconic tree in silhouette, branches bare, bark composed into a creepy face, staring at you in an artwork or scary movie. Now picture a row of established trees along that iconic and expensive neighbourhood street that is around the corner from you…

I guess I can understand from the first image why trees might get a bad rep. However,

there really are not that many evil trees out there, and even fewer out to get the human race. Trees positively contribute to all dimensions of our Hauora (holistic health). So, it really fascinates me why so often I get into a conversation about ‘trees killing people’ or the need to paint concrete green instead of providing planting.

The humble tree provides an essential role within the urban realm. Not only does it bring street appeal, it can also greatly reduce the impacts of so many issues that we are facing through climate change, carbon emissions and health. This presentation is a pitch for the humble tree, the value it can bring to a site, the street and our city communities as a whole. Beyond the obvious decarbonizing benefits, did you know trees can also reduce the effects of urban heat islands and provide much needed canopy within our city for biodiversity. This presentation will touch on the benefits and mitigations that trees provide for all of the four conference themes through pictures. I will set a challenge to not think of the humble tree as the potential evil villain in your project. Instead, it could

become a humble warrior that provides the opportunity to create an enhanced environment and resilience for the future.

