

What is Biophilia?

Biophilia describes the connection between humans, nature, and the built environment. Biophilic urbanism then incorporates this concept into city planning to integrate natural elements into the built environment, which creates healthier, stronger, more resilient and livable communities.

Project Design/Methods

- community-based project combining traditional research and participatory art
- qualitative and mixed-methods approach, highlighting investigative theory building and action learning
- Preliminary research on green development and climate resistance efforts in modern cities was conducted
- participatory design workshop:
 - open community event coordinated with LA River Arts
 - briefly explain the importance of urban green spaces like the LA River
 - invite residents to use colored paint to paint over B&W researcher-generated depictions of the LA River area to include biophilic elements

From Gray to Green: Biophilic Designs for the Present

Presented by: Coryn Bray

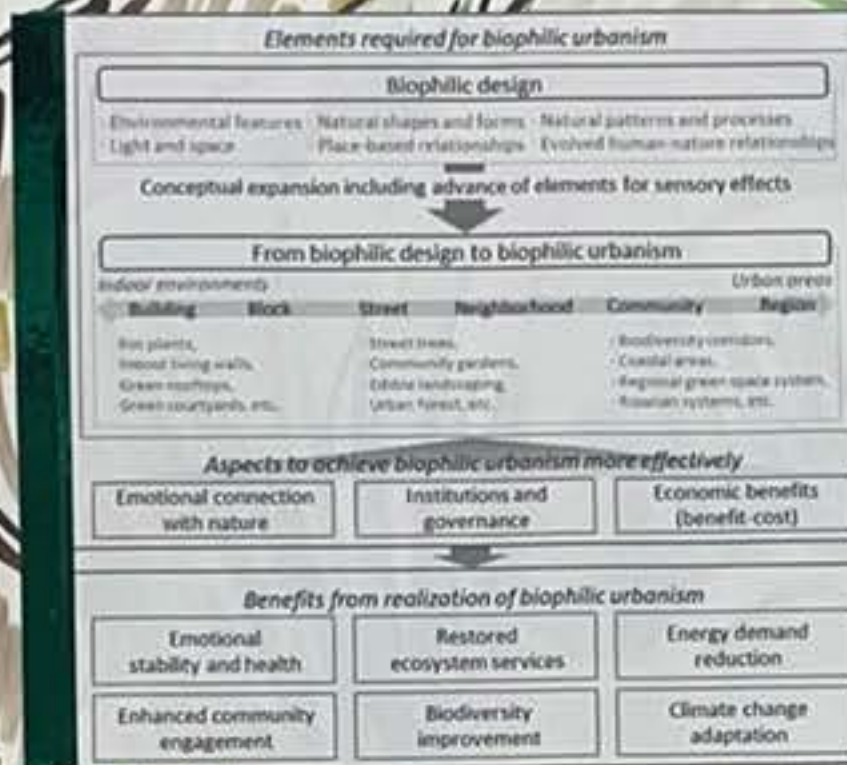


Fig. 1. Conceptual Model for Biophilic Urbanism (Lee & Kim 2021)

Project Outputs

Event Participants, Community Partner Engagement, Creative Environmental Action Roadmap Access

Youth Involvement

This initiative targets all members of the community. By visiting and presenting at high schools within LBUSD I strive to encourage students to advocate for climate action and become local leaders. In the coming weeks, I will speak to high school students at Cabrillo, Lakewood, Millikan, and Long Beach Polytechnic High School about environmental justice, biophilic urbanism, and the history of the LA River. I will also use these presentations as an opportunity to introduce my project.

Project Outcomes

Creative Environmental Event and Shared Community Roadmap for Local Action

Purpose & Significance

- spread awareness of environmental justice as it pertains to the LA River area
- promote sustainability and sustainable urban development
- engage with members of the community
- form significant relationships with organizations that are leading the change
- utilize a diverse range of perspectives generated by co-creation to reveal a nuanced understanding of environmental justice
- empower Long beach residents to assert their agency in improving the quality of life in their neighborhoods

Environmental Justice & the LA River

The Los Angeles River Spans 51 miles from the San Fernando Valley to Long Beach and has transitioned from a free-flowing waterway to a Flood Control Channel. In the early to mid 1800s the LA River region experienced significant floods. In response, the LA County Flood Control District was formed in 1915.

- 1930s - 1950s:
 - 1936 Flood Control Act: authorized US Army Corps of Engineers to channelize the river with concrete enforcement
 - 80% of the river paved for flood control
- currently most public access to the river has been suspended, causing communities along the river to become "park-poor" and disproportionately affected by climate change

This Honors Thesis Project is to be presented at the Fall 2025 Honors Symposium.

literature review

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