

BIOPHILIC CITY RESOLUTION

Adopted by the Arlington County Board on December 17, 2019

WHEREAS, Arlington County's commitment to environmental sustainability and community health and wellness stretches back to the 1940s, when the County undertook significant efforts to secure land for parks, natural areas and recreation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the County's efforts have continued through the decades through the adoption of innovative policies and practices, including a Community Energy Plan and a Public Spaces Master Plan that foster a healthy, safe, prosperous and equitable county; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has a varied ecosystem that provides benefits to residents, workers, visitors and the diverse species we share it with; and

WHEREAS, evidence demonstrates that people are happiest, emotionally and physically healthiest, and most productive when working and living in close proximity to nature; and

WHEREAS, exposure to nature can reduce stress, aid recovery from illness, enhance cognitive skills, improve academic performance, and aid in combatting childhood and adult illnesses; and

WHEREAS, in an increasingly urbanized world, it is incumbent upon cities to provide vital natural habitat to animal species that may otherwise perish; and

WHEREAS, biophilic design reinforces the innate human need for connection with nature by incorporating natural patterns as a tool for improving health and well-being in the built environment; and

WHEREAS, a biophilic city extends the idea of biophilia to urban environments, where the urban area works to conserve abundant biodiversity and nature and to creatively and responsibly add new elements of nature, and fosters connections to the natural world; and

WHEREAS, the "Biophilic City Network" is a community of biophilic cities that places nature at the core of design and planning and works to create abundant opportunities to learn about and connect with nature; and

WHEREAS, a commitment to becoming a biophilic city with abundant and accessible nature will support Arlington County's environmental sustainability and health goals;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Arlington County Board that Arlington County supports joining the Biophilic Cities Network and commits to monitoring and reporting on the following Biophilic indicators:

1. Expanded biophilic planning and design principles throughout existing policies and processes, such as comprehensive plan elements, sector plans, site plans, park master plans, and multimodal transportation plans and projects;
2. Educational opportunities for the community, including residents and development stakeholders, about the benefits of biophilic principles to further the presence of nature in our buildings, facilities, homes and public spaces;
3. Expanded natural elements within Arlington's built environments, as well as conservation of our natural resources;
4. Creation of publicly accessible urban nature projects;
5. Equitable access to green spaces, parks and other natural elements.