

such good partners here with us locally where we infuse sustainability work into all we do. I'm not saying we are perfect at all, but we are embracing this in a very full way."

Piercy and Bohman cite examples of green city/VO collaborations including the Courthouse Garden on city land, the "greenest ever" Olympic Track & Field Trials, the HUD Lane Livability grant in support of sustainable communities, VO faculty involvement in both the Mayor's Sustainable Business Initiative and the Sustainability Commission, and dozens of others.

The city is also working on a basket of its own sustainability projects, such as the Climate and Energy Action Plan, Zero Waste Project, Green Building program, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Envision Eugene. "We feel it would be a better use of time and resources to continue to focus our efforts on these initiatives that already have a great deal of community support," says

Bohman, "rather than starting a number of new projects in one year as called for by the SCYP model."

Jones says for a program to be successful, it needs to be "supported and originated at the highest levels of the city government. In Gresham, Salem and Springfield it came from the city manager's office, and had the strong support of the city councils. If you don't have those things, the program really can't run."

Salem's experience

Salem chose projects that were "closely tied to City Council goals so the students could move those projects forward," says Jones. "Now the staff are following up on the student recommendations to take the next steps." Those projects included a north downtown waterfront redevelopment, conceptual designs for a new police station and civic center, downtown parks connectivity and

bike paths, natural area restoration and improved civic engagement with the Latino community and other groups.

Close to 600 VO and PSU students from 10 academic disciplines put in some 80,000 hours to make their recommendations. The police station design project alone involved 24 students and two architectural firms. VO students majoring in product design worked on improved street lighting in parks.

The Salem SCYP got the attention of *The New York Times* in a story by Michael Burnham (Aug. 23, 2010). VO architecture professor Nico Larco is quoted saying, "Sustainability is something we have to pay attention to. ... We're starting to see 'green' translate not only into environmental and human health but also into business and dollars."

Salem's *Statesman Journal* newspaper did a series of about 15 stories about the Salem SCYP, and those stories and others can be found at sci.org.edu/press

Irreplaceable Nature

Architect Timothy Beatley drew big crowds on the VO campus in mid-January with a film and lecture about nature in our cities. Beatley is a VO graduate and the Theresa Heinz professor of sustainable communities at the University of Virginia. He is known internationally through his books, the latest published in 2011 by Island Press called *Biophilic Cities: Integrating Nature Into Urban Design and Planning*. Shelley Deadmond, a graduate student in a new program called OLIS, Oregon Leadership in Sustainability, reviews Beatley's book for EW.

My earliest memories of interacting with the natural world date back to when I was about 4 years old when my older brother and I would catch and collect frogs in a five-gallon bucket until dinnertime. My parents' semi-rural home in Northern California was abundant with the inch-long hoppers after wet springs created prime breeding grounds. When dinner was ready, we'd do a final count, then set them free and run inside to wash up before eating.

These are the types of memories Timothy Beatley suggests everyone should have, regardless of where they live, in his newest book *Biophilic Cities*. Beatley wants to expand the discussion beyond buildings and sites to biophilia, or abundant nature, at the city scale.

"Biophilic cities place the focus squarely on the nature, on the presence and celebrations of the actual green features, life-forms and processes with which we as a species have so intimately coevolved," he writes.



Because of its local focus, a biophilic perspective will mean different things depending on location. Natural histories and site-specific abundances vary greatly by place but are of crucial importance to a city that thrives with life of all kinds, not just humans. Beatley argues that the extent to which nature is regarded as ancillary in some modern urban cities is nearly criminal. He cites Richard Louv's notion

of American children having what he terms "nature deficit disorder," where the only remedy is to go outside.

The basic argument is that close-proximity access to natural and wild spaces is essential at all times. Understanding that this will depend on a city's physical conditions, infrastructure, and governance priorities, Beatley gives compelling examples of ways in which cities have made some aspects of biophilia the focus of a given initiative, neighborhood or building.

The not so subtle assertion that nature is God will likely be the books' main criticism. Beatley does everything but say it. Nature is his religion and he's preaching far and wide. He's not alone. An ever-growing choir recognizes the ecological horrors of the past 150 or so years and is actively seeking a less harmful means for living on the planet.

Garnering social capital, working within and reforming current governmental policies and the investment of money and time are the main challenges a biophilic endeavor will face. Beatley doesn't give any solid methods for approaching these challenges but rather encourages readers by giving examples of why these will be changes worth fighting for.

Beatley clearly demonstrates his understanding of the creative power of thought; we manifest that to which we give value, and so he asks for a re-valuing of ourselves and thus the physical places where we live. He pleads page by page for his reader to agree that nature must be considered vital, primary, irreplaceable. — Ted Taylor

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