

Moon and Back – Project Statement

The *Moon and Back* proposes an eventful journey that links scenery views of the natural and urban landscape in San Jose through a large-scale staircase sculpture. It puts people at the center by serving as an observation deck and public space for cultural events.

The gigantic *Moon and Back* sculpture sits at the heart of Silicon Valley next to the confluence point of Los Gatos Creek and the Guadalupe River and along the palm trees-lined West Santa Clara Street. Textured stainless steel gives the installation a radiant glow in both day and night. Standing behind rows of gorgeous palm trees, the moon sculpture triggers a mysterious California dream about humanity and space exploration. The eleven-story height and clean circular shape make the "moon" highly visible and recognizable from all directions, including the Diridon transportation hub, Guadalupe Freeway, surrounding innovation and commerce districts, and even from the planes setting off from San Jose International Airport!

Besides its bold visual presence, *Moon and Back* put a strong emphasis on engaging people. Two stairways on the ground level invite pedestrians for a journey up and beyond. Each floor opens up new perspectives, from the confluence point of two water bodies to the palm treetops, from San Jose skyline to distant mountain valleys. The sculpture extracts people away from the mundane. Yet, the unfamiliar perspectives function as reflections of the city, making visitors more aware of their living environment than before. At night, the sculpture becomes further animated by people through motion-triggered LED lights. This feature is energy efficient and provides just enough illumination for stairs when being used. From a distance, the sculpture brightens and dims based on the amount of human movement.

Moon and Back also serves as a public platform for cultural events and local gatherings. Its flexible loop circulation makes it easy to adapt to temporary events like exhibitions, farmers' markets, public art installations, culture fests, and more. In addition to the major sculpture, a community garden and a solar farm are also tentatively proposed at Arena Green East.

In a digital age advancing towards artificial intelligence, *Moon and Back* is a gentle reminder of human values for future generations. It is through people that space becomes activated and memorized, that a landmark becomes influential and iconic!