

Ompil.e Mountain Park

Oj.ompil.e is the native Miwok name for Mt. Diablo, the tallest mountain in the region. To the local tribes, *Oj.ompil.e* was a mysterious destination for ceremony and gathering. The mountain was considered the birthplace of the world--a site that united the region's people in a shared space.

This is the guiding principle for *Ompil.e Mountain Park*. It is a destination space, where a diverse population (local, regional, and global) can come together in a varied setting that encourages relaxation, exploration, and learning. *Ompil.e* is a multileveled, community park and recreation area that embraces and supports its local citizenry while breathing new programmatic life into its surroundings. High performance, advanced design connects to the social and economic structures that give it rise, in turn creating capital and resources to support art, education, and science.

The project consists of an organic, reinforced concrete superstructure that rises from the earth, peeling up to create a raised, mountainous shell above the existing site. It forms an elevated, semi-perforated topology with gardens and lawns above and below. The structure spans both sides of the existing park, stretching and tapering to create a wide-span pedestrian bridge with views of the surrounding park and the river confluence below.

The program for the site is diverse, with the potential to expand and contract as needed: To the west, the main structure is an elevated park, bleeding into the existing site to create circulation and sloping hillside lawns. Below, at street level, is an open, flexible space, filled with dappled sunlight, which is easily adaptable to a wide variety of commercial and community functions--locally owned cafes and restaurants, community theater, farmer's markets.

The proposed program for the eastern site is an educational center dedicated to the restoration of the area's habitat and to retaining the cultural heritage of the local indigenous populations.

Three fundamental strategies:

1. Increase usable green space within the downtown urban locus, creating a safe, pedestrian friendly environment. At the same time protecting and encouraging the restoration of the site's existing biodiversity.
2. Create a dynamic, shaded destination for recreation, relaxation, and entertainment within, upon, and around a new landmark superstructure, complete with commercial and cultural activities that promote regional economic development.
3. Reintegrate the historical context of the land, its peoples, its biodiversity, and its agricultural heritage.

