

Located in the intersection of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek, the Arena Green Park is site of diverse interactions and many potentials. The Urban Confluence Silicon Valley Competition recalls the historical San Jose Light Tower, which was once an iconic landmark that symbolized the heart of the community. In its absence, the City of San Jose lacked a defining landmark to reflect the recent growth, innovation and prosperity of the region. Thus the competition is a call for innovative and speculative ideas to activate the Arena Green Park as site of place making and connection.

As a response, this project seeks to reflect the industrial history and context of the surrounding landscape. It works with confluence of the two water ways as a point that radiates out towards the park. Proposed within this radial grid are structures that function as a stage for diverse activities and events. They are to be modular yet simple in assembly. Using a typical steel scaffold system, the structures not only provide flexibility but also reflect the industrial character of landscape. The structures begin as a fixed stair module that function as a lookout tower above the tree line. In changing events, other modules such as walkways, ramps, and platforms are aggregated around the tower to form various spaces including markets, theatrical stages, exhibits, and even sites of protest and expression. Platforms are walled with sandblasted plexiglass and integrated interior lighting to emphasize the projection of movement and action. The structure thus becomes a theatrical and sculptural piece from both the interior and exterior environment.

In the world today, we are confronted with complex social and political issues that requires attention. We need to rethink landmarks not only as a static symbol but also as a site of opportunity and collective memory. This landmark does not seek to symbolize a fixed moment in time but to represent and accommodate the ever-changing cultural landscape and those that inhabit it.