

URBAN CONFLUENCE SILICON VALLEY

SPIRAL WALKWAY

At the confluence of the Guadalupe river and Los Gatos creek in San Jose, we created an elliptical spiral, an elevated walk in the park, winding through the trees and over the rivers. Rising at an easy incline of 2 degrees, the path starts at ground level and slopes up to 40+ feet at the highest point across the street from the SAP Center, from where it slopes down again to ground level on the other side of the river to complete the approximately half mile spiral, creating opportunities to occupy the structure below, beyond the 100' Riparian setback.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

The spiral structure is inspired by geometries found in nature- from whirlpools, sunflowers, vine tendrils to hurricanes, galaxies and the structure of DNA. The spiral symbol, found in different cultures and religions, signifies the evolution of life. We were intrigued by the idea of the circumambulatory, and the act of walking the land as a transformative journey. The geometry of the structure is made up of elliptical sections with a common center point at the confluence of the two rivers. The elliptical form is used to create a public space to enhance and bring together the existing monuments and structures at the site.

URBAN DESIGN

We envisioned a low, horizontal structure at the confluence point, within the context of the linear form of the Guadalupe river and park. When the Google campus is completed, the higher buildings around SAP Center and Diridon Station will complement the buildings in downtown San Jose, across the horizontal expanse of the river and park. At the west end where the structure rises to a height of 40'+ we have proposed a large public space with galleries, restaurants, cafes and lounges and an amphitheater for gatherings and performances. On the opposite side of the river, where the structure is lower and varies from 10' to 20', we have used the structure as a quiet, contemplative space around a shallow pool of water leading to an amphitheater overlooking the trail and river.

LIGHTING AND ENERGY

Lighting is minimal, along the railings on the walk and below the walkway, outlining the elliptical form. Facades are perforated so that light spill from the interior will be subtle and indirect. Sustainability is inherent to our concept and would be a core strategy for development. A comprehensive net zero strategy would encompass material selection and energy generation.