

## The Prism - San Jose Light Tower Regeneration

### *Urban Confluence Silicon Valley Competition*

Silicon Valley is a well-known place where the pioneers of technology change our daily life. As an overwhelming tech center, with the blistering pace to take the lead in the world, San Jose inevitably faces the issues of inequity, which has seeped into every aspect of people's life. The gap exists among different groups and is sharpening in 2020 under the big Covid-19 and racism that has yet to be solved. The massive wealth put San Jose on the top, while the extreme poverty continually lingers in the shadow. The Prism Light Tower Project tries to address these issues by proposing a brand-new type of structure that differentiates from the traditional impression of a vertical light tower. Operating as a bridge from past to present to future, the Prism Light Tower offers multiple layers of views along the visiting route, and is easy to access from the ground layer of the public landscape.

The design is inspired by the theory of light waves through the prism. It is meant to serve as a confluence hub for people, regardless of age, discipline, and professional status, who come here and enjoy their time. Residents and visitors act as a ray of white light that travels through the Prism at an angle and comes out as a spectrum that encourages diversity and communication. The entire structure expands above the river and gives access to both sides. The rising part in the middle holds various programs, providing both intimate and activated spaces. The platforms without partitions allow people from different backgrounds to communicate and interact with each other.

Embracing the theme of innovation, our design also looks into the role of technology, considering the energy-serving and environmentally friendly materials, like the solar panel paving, living green wall, and the kinetic sources of light. The light flows from the ground and then led by the circulation of the structure, acting like the refraction of white light, then transforms into a rainbow in the middle part of the Prism. The landscape is also integrated with the structure through topographic change, cut and fill, plantings, and ground materials. The overall design is to create an enduring landmark in the center of San Jose that brings more opportunities to the site, and at the same time manifests the ever-changing culture of innovation in Silicon Valley.