

Inspired by the outsize technological ambition of the original San Jose Light Tower's goal of comprehensively illuminating its entire surrounding city, this design constructs symbolic portals to extend off-site view corridors found within the project's urban surroundings. The transposition of the outlines of downtown streets from across Highway 87 onto the project's site implies a reconnection of disconnected urban fabric. The superimposed view corridors juxtapose a range of different scales of space onto the site, ranging from the width of a pedestrian street to the breadth of the nearby airport's runways, in order to create contrasting moments where collisions between spaces of both grand and human-oriented scales could evoke a sublime sense of monumentality. The complex visual results generated from the intersections of such viewing tunnels, in which a view through one procession of visual frames might provide glimpses of the edges of other intersecting portals, evokes the omniscient interconnectedness of another Silicon Valley achievement: that of the Internet itself.

As the visual frames extend across the site, the repetitive intensity of their forms offers a solution to the constraints of the competition's 200-foot height limit, by instead creating dramatic formal extrusions within the greater lateral dimensions of the site's borders; the design's longest viewing tunnel extends approximately 782 feet between the two available sites, including a 500-foot span bridging across the site's rivers. Sloping pedestrian ramps weave upward through the portals to provide a universally-accessible river crossing. Visitors traveling along the ramps would encounter a picturesque procession of distant views out of each portal they approach, along a path reminiscent of the sloping character of the local region's topography.

The open-air nature of the structures produced by the processions of portals enables the design to be inherently sustainable; its porous frame admits light to travel through it down to the riverbank foliage below, while minimizing heating and cooling needs for its limited enclosed spaces. Solar panels could be added to the roof areas of the structure to generate the project's remaining electrical consumption in order to meet net zero design goals. The portals would also enable an opportunity to create dramatic forms of nighttime illumination in an environmentally responsible manner; lights illuminating the interiors of the portals could be positioned to face away from sensitive natural areas, and dynamic schemes of lighting activation could travel along the lengths of their corridors in a further evocation of their digital complexity.