

# PROJECT STATEMENT

## URBAN CONFLUENCE SAN JOSE | Portal into the future

The project emerges as a dynamic yet impactful iconic form that entices visitors to approach and interact with the surrounding landscape. We propose a landscape of recreational elements on the West site and the iconic *Portal* tower with plaza, gardens and Eco-center on the East Arena Green. In this location, east of the Guadalupe Freeway, the tower will reduce its impact on natural wildlife and require no trees to be affected. Furthermore, it is most visible here: when viewed from the highway it appears to change from a striking triangular shape to one that reveals the open portal which frames the views and the city, making San Jose part of the design itself.

The project aims to express a culture which is forward looking, contemporary and technologically cutting edge while harnessing the importance of place and natural ecosystems. A net-zero proposal that uses solar powered elements for all lighting and energy requirements and timber as the main construction material for the iconic tower. Timber's aesthetic quality speaks to our environment; it absorbs carbon thus impacting positively in our climate as well as having highest load-bearing capacities. All wood types would be from ecologically managed forests.

Both sides of Arena Green are activated, providing spaces for the community to come together for events and provide amazing views of the surrounding site from the top of the tower. An Ecology Learning Center is proposed at the south-east, with an education center to share the richness of San Jose's indigenous history and local ecosystems. Bird watching tours could start here, and end at the top of the tower. The landscaped areas between the tower and the eco-center offer seating, shade, water features, and enticing green mounds for casual relaxation. To promote biking, there is a bike area at the north east, and paths are bike-friendly.

Solar powered "light umbrellas" are evenly distributed to create bird-friendly lighting, as well as larger trellis structures for shading by day and light at night. All energy will be harnessed from the solar panels, incorporating lighting strategies that protect birds and local ecosystems. (The solar-panel array shown to the east of the plaza could be relocated). The proposal also provides space for additional trees, plants and flowers, adding an everchanging tapestry to the project, livening it up as it changes coloration and flowers through the seasons.

Stunning effects come into play when the tower is viewed from various site vantage points, as well as when the city is viewed from the overlooks along the tower, which culminates with three-tiered dramatic overlook cantilevering over the site.