

PROJECT STATEMENT

In *Hyper*natures, Nature is monumentalized. Rather than a designed object or built icon, *Hyper*natures amplifies that which is often set in contrast to Technology. The scheme introduces as its primary move a monumental redwood forest – emblematic of its region – put on display by an interactive circulatory structure that brings people into close contact with the lower canopy while offering views of the city beyond. The ringed forest, made luminescent by sensitive night-lighting, is the icon that can be seen from near and far. The scheme’s two other primary elements, which are intimately discovered within the park, are the Amplified Ecologies and Amplified Atmospheres:

Amplified Ecologies

The park is made up of three plant communities – (1) the Coast Redwood forest (*sequoia sempervirens*) and its companion plants situated in the RING; (2) the existing (and enhanced) Willow Riparian Forest+Scrub along the RIVER; (3) the Urban Oak Woodland+Savanna within the PARK. Each provides critical habitat and sequesters significant amounts of carbon.

Ring

Redwood forests are essential to the regional identity of Santa Clara Valley, populating the Santa Cruz Mountains, where both the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek originate. Redwood habitats support diverse wildlife which would be brought into the city as part of the spectacle of the introduced forest. Redwoods can be transplanted quite large and are fast-growing – thus maturing for the developing city to witness through time.

River

The Willow Riparian Forest+Scrub habitat that is present along the river will be preserved and enhanced to encourage breeding and foraging opportunities created by a healthy tree, shrub and herbaceous layer. While the paths enter into the riparian setback, this is intended to provide park visitors the opportunity to experience this unique habitat.

Park

The “park” is planted as an Oak Woodland+Savanna as part of the effort to “Re-Oak Silicon Valley” (an effort by Resilient Silicon Valley, funded by Google’s Ecology Program). The oak is critical to the region’s indigenous, colonial and ecological histories. The predominant Valley Oaks were cut down for agriculture but remain the region’s most iconic trees.

Amplified Atmospheres

Immersive built experiences are situated within the park and amplify natural phenomena as another means of making HYPER the park’s Natures. Each structure – a kind of folly – uses passive, zero-energy strategies to heighten awareness of intangible natures – light, sound, wind, moisture, temperature.

Designed by an architect, landscape architect, lighting designer, structural engineer, climate engineer, and media artist, the *Hyper*natures landmark park monumentalizes Nature without Othering it – recognizing it as a fundamental source of awe and inspiration, and as critical to our survival.