

SAN JOSE SKY WALK

To Create ...

- A park in the sky.
- An iconic landmark conceived as an immersive public experience, not simply an object to look at or look out from.
- An urban intervention that helps tie the new and old fabric of the city together.

These are some of the primary aspirations of the San Jose Sky Walk project.

A City Divided

Highway 87 splits San Jose's traditional center to the east from the substantial planned development that, together with the expansion of Diridon Station, will soon form a "new downtown" west of the freeway. Arena Green, the competition site, lies at the edge of this divide, and thus has the potential to establish a dialogue between the two pieces, symbolically knitting the city together.

Approach

A linear open-air pavilion serving as a community gathering space runs along N. Autumn Street, set back from the highway, creating a permeable filter through which the rest of the park grounds can be experienced. This pavilion is then looped (for continuity), shaped (reacting to the path of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek), and raised (conforming to the allowable buildable footprint).

The resulting hybrid bridge / cantilever structure—a dynamic form, illuminated at night, that constantly changes with the viewer's perspective—rises 200 ft above the landscape, providing a unique elevated promenade that will become a favorite destination for locals as well as tourists.

Site Strategies

A number of site interventions are envisioned to link the different parts of Arena Green. At the west, around the pavilion, a series of interconnected circular plazas—incorporating an info hub / pop-up gallery and an interactive fountain—contrast with the more rigid angular building geometry.

The east side of the park remains open, with a large hill built using excavated soil replacing the tennis courts, and a 15-20 ft tall barrier behind providing visual and acoustic separation from the freeway. Two new pedestrian bridges over the river / creek are proposed (in addition to the existing bridge which will be upgraded) to allow the site's varied neighborhoods to better compliment each other and function as a more unified whole.

Sustainable Engineering

To meet net-zero energy goals the pavilion incorporates approximately 14,000 sf of fabric-integrated photovoltaic panels at the top of its upper and lower bars, which also act as a translucent canopy providing gentle shading for visitors.