

Project Statement (398 words)

The noun “*Alpha*” is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, with origins in ancient Egypt. It’s used as a synonym for “beginning” or “first”, formerly used also for number “one”. It’s the name of the most brilliant star in every constellation. In computer technology “*Alpha Version*” means the starting development phase of every new project. *Alpha* is the top member of society hierarchy and in religious beliefs it means eternal.

This Alpha building shape aims at elevating its presence to something higher, not only in physical terms...

That is why a triangular base crystal pyramid stands on top of the massive concrete structure, with a cusp projecting to the infinite. The three glazed faces of the pyramid, (177ft high at top), which reflect the sun during the day, becomes a futuristic lighthouse at night. The entire green-roof system cover has several positive purposes, such as providing insulation, creating a habitat for wildlife, decreasing stress levels in people, providing a more aesthetically pleasing landscape and helping to lower urban air temperatures as well. This solution provides the building with a complete integration in the Guadalupe River park that, in this case, won’t lose any green square meter. Extensive green roofs are designed to be virtually self-sustaining and should require only a minimum of maintenance.

Beside the emergency stairway tunnels (one on each side), two funiculars cabins -balanced to contain consumption- climb the steep wings up to the top; the external covering of their path, clearly visible on the roof, can be done with photovoltaic panels to further meet “net zero” requirements.

The low ramps host cultural activities: an exhibition hall in the southern wing, a conference hall in the northern one. The northern side staircase/ramp roof can also be turned into an external arena. A panoramic terrace and a coffee shop (or a restaurant) are located on the top. Under the building a big -partially covered- square is created; coming from the “*Sap Centre*” side, this building appears as a huge gate leading into the new San José City epicentre. “*Under the Alpha*” should become a gathering place for social and public events. The contemporary neatness of this geometry, which may remind the ancient *Electric Tower*, is bound to become a timeless icon. In world-wide imagination Silicon Valley represents the starting point of the digital era and the Alpha symbol perfectly epitomizes the extraordinary peculiarity of this place.