

Concept

The concept of “Urban Spiral” derives from the form of the landmark – two embracing spiral stairs, ascending to the sky, and rippling into surrounding communities and eco-corridors via swirls of paths. It is a confluence destination for people of all ages and abilities, locals and visitors.

Site Plan

The landmark is located at the original site of Children’s Carousel and Tot Lots & Playground of Arena Green West. Its tapered shape promotes a small footprint, minimizing the impact on the existing vegetation. Well integrated with existing segments, paths leading to the landmark are paved in a designed pattern with vivid color for better wayfinding purpose. A new bridge crossing Guadalupe River is proposed so as to create a direct connection between Arena Green west and the east.

Architecture

The landmark’s double helix structure comprises of approximately 800 steps for people to climb up to the sky deck and enjoy the existing and new horizons of San Jose and the valley from different heights, perspectives and outlook points. For universal design purposes, there are core elevators connecting exterior stairs at different levels via glass bridges. Glass material allows for sky light to penetrate its atrium, projecting a futuristic look – a symbol of the marvelous innovation and technology of San Jose. Site activation programs like café, souvenir shop, etc., are arranged at the B1 level, connecting to the ground level with ramps. The shell is furnished with Corten Steel, which not only elevates visual prominence but also facilitates easy maintenance.

Net-Zero Energy

Via computational design tools, zones of the shell receiving majority of the solar radiant during the year are mapped out. Solar panels are proposed to be embedded in these zones to maximize solar energy harvesting. As per initial assessment, the renewable energy generated from approximately 12,000 square feet of solar panels is meant to power its energy efficient LED lighting strips over the course of a year.

Lighting

At night, the landmark will become the most marvelous visual presence in San Jose. Embellished by an intelligent LED lighting system, it hosts splendid daily lighting shows as well as special shows on occasions such as New Year Eve. Dynamic patterns are created by a central server that controls each LED lighting strip in terms of color, luminance and time-clock. Up-lighting is avoided in the design for the purpose of respecting the sensitivity of the surrounding site.