



The Object-Oriented Ontologies of THE BRAID

The Valley of the Valley
The Silicon Valley has historically been a connection point of diverse creative people. Arena Green Park in San Jose at the confluence of Los Gatos Creek and the Guadalupe River has potential to become one of the symbolic cores of Silicon Valley – ‘the Valley of the Valley’.
Our design for the park and its landmark quality is analogical to an independent, multi-cultural personality or an active communication interface. The park can become a social connector.

Light Effects
Arena Green Park can become famous for its suggestive effects of light. The proposed unique spatial characteristics with the meandering, serpentine BRAID in the air, insinuates changes in light and shadow on the ground on daytime, and most notably, creates distinctive night lighting – strips of light. The structures in the air increase the sense of lightness

and the singularity of the area. Highlighting the independence of the landmark, THE BRAID emphasises the sense of freedom with its swerving turns. The vertiginous experience of moving along THE BRAID reminds of a bird’s flight and emphasises its sculptural character. The forms of THE BRAID reflect the distant mountains. On the ground, the experience of surrounding nature is immersive and we have added a network of new clusters of light and outdoor furniture there alongside pedestrian routes. During night time, the technology takes over and THE BRAID lights up. Its surface consists of programmable led lights under glass panes. The glass covers wooden surface, attached to a steel structure. The glass protects the wood and allows the moving and stable led effects without compromising the smooth surfaces. The electricity for the led surfaces are generated by solar power brought to the site from nearby desert solar farms, where it is more efficient and practical to produce the voltage than on this site. The net zero energy principle of the site is based also on geothermal wells, which will be installed simultaneously with other construction.

A Landmark Redefined
Because of its geometry, this landmark is simultaneously horizontal and vertical. The interweaving curved lines and the meandering landscape fuse. The landmark is simultaneously landscape and part of an ecosystem of living and man-made things. This object-oriented attitude removes human beings from the centre of the Earth. This post-anthropocene attitude lays basis to a new definition of what a landmark can and could be in present and future society and environment. A landmark should not anymore be just a landmark in space, but also in time – representing new ideals, and in this case, a world with equal nature, humans and man-made objects.

Framed by the Landmark
There are many existing monuments on the site that have not been valued or supported by the composition and design of their surroundings and contexts properly yet. THE BRAID and the new divisioning of the area elevates the heritage of existing monuments by framing them. Paths around them – many in the air – connect and highlight their unique value as important and self-standing objects. The present activities in the park have been preserved and new possibilities for activities added, including places for daily festivals.

Stretching out from the two competition sites and connecting them
The new buildings, where people can access, touch ground only on the plots designated in the competition. The most striking ones stretch over the rivers as lightly supported tubes or bridge structures. People can access these stripes of space. It is possible for visitors to elevate to the highest parts of the structures and have magnificent vistas out, as in Eero Saarinen’s Gateway Arch in St. Louis. The tubes have enough thickness for indoor spaces including stairs, ramps, terraces, balconies and the windows are large enough to open the spaces comfortably to outside. Structurally, they are tubes with steel truss structures, supported by I- and A-shaped steel pillars in the manner of contemporary roller coaster ride structures.
The park is efficient and safe to use, with little high temperature exposure due to the lush vegetation. It doesn’t obstruct movement through and there is no misleading pedestrian flow. The ramps and bridges will be accessible with a wheelchair and safe with high enough support and railings.



Environmental Diversity

A feasible analogy with our design for the site is also the diversity of nature. We wanted to create a fascinating multitude of materials and colors – an ecology of interweaving. A factual ecology in the park is the new indigenous flower beds from the geographic area, which the new park displays. The result could be even called as ‘the Garden of the Valley’. In a similar manner, as there is diversity in healthy biotopes, there can be diversity in the man-made systems of objects. Our design manifests this and integrates the area.

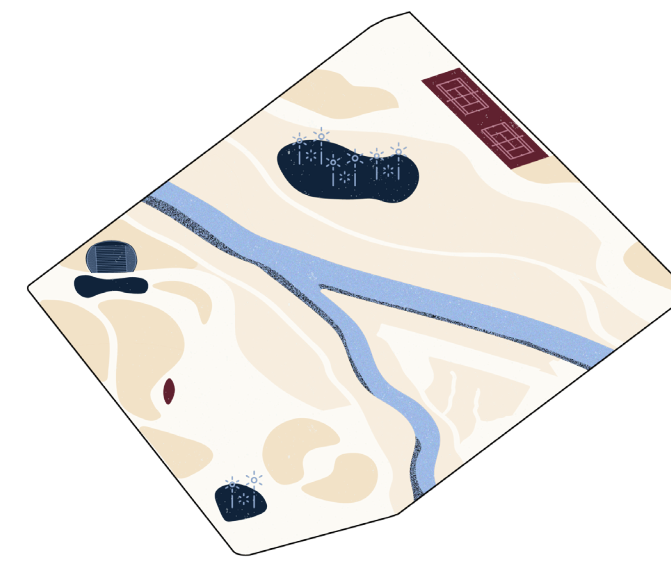


- 1. Sculptural bridge structures
- 2. Urban street furniture
- 3. Lights on bridges
- 4. Wooden surfaces
- 5. Inside THE BRAID

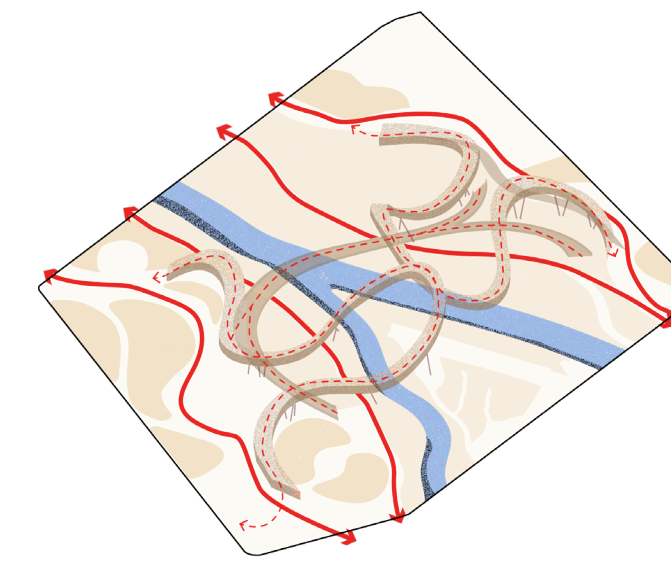




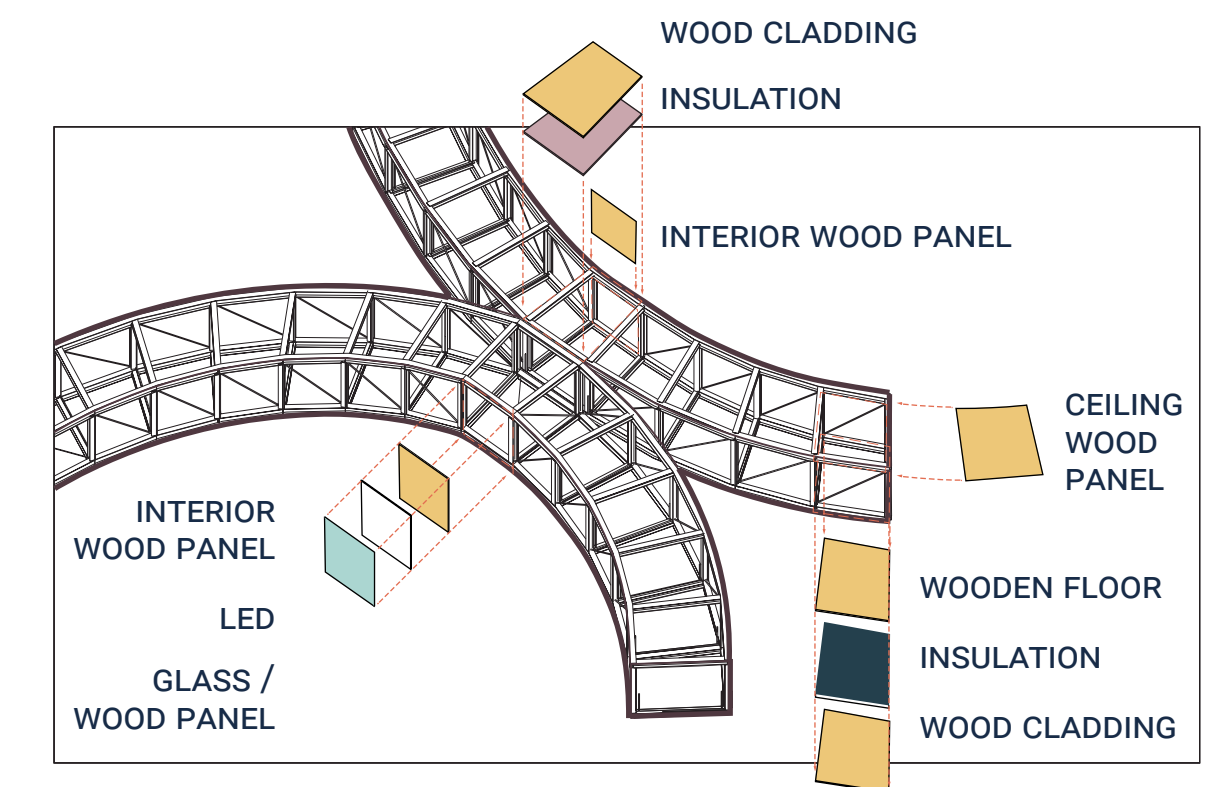
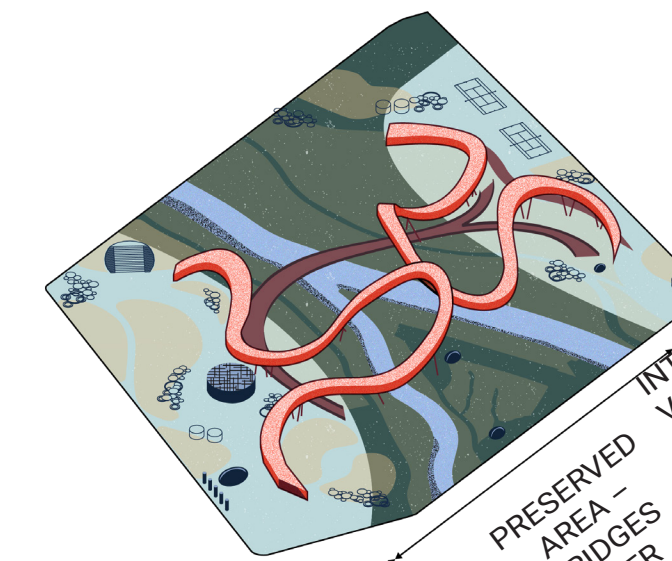
Events and Sports



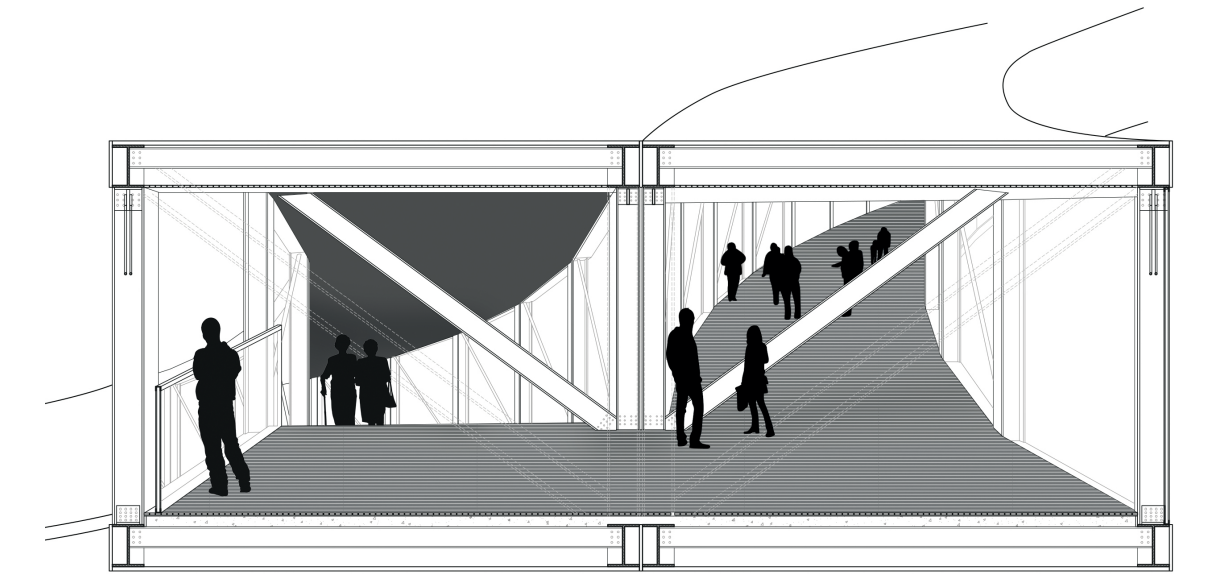
Main routes



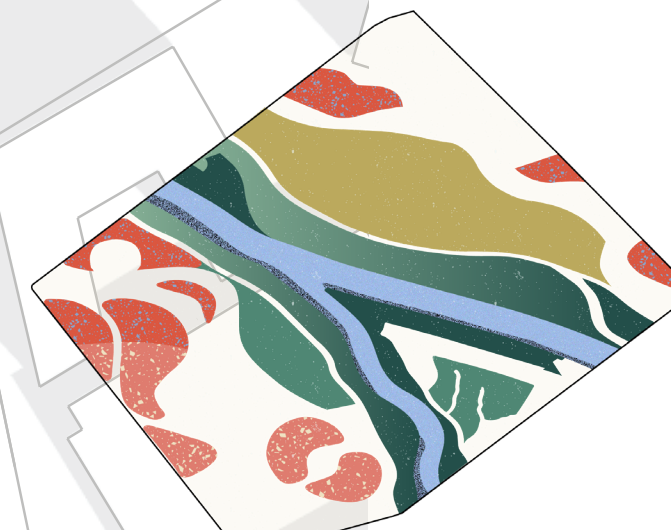
Area distribution



Steel Structure Diagram



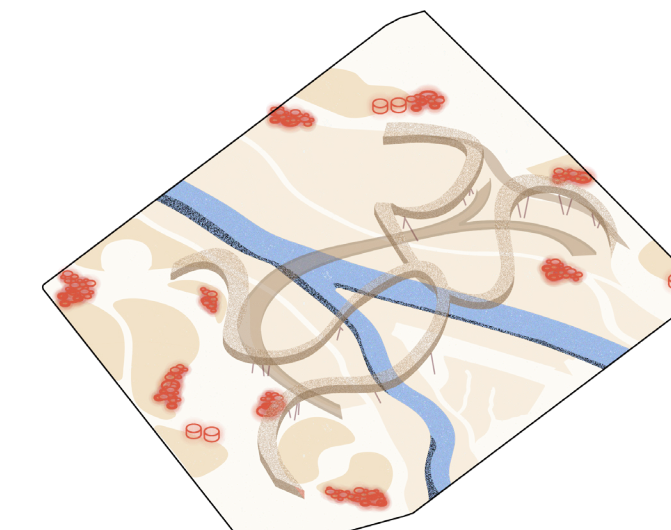
Section of the connection point of THE BRAID



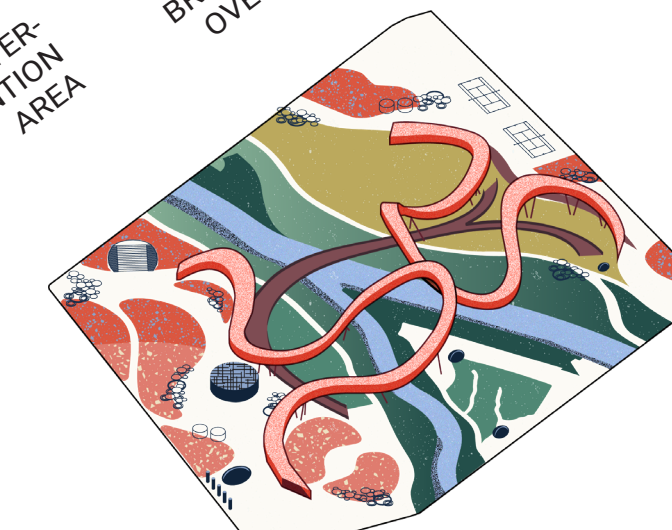
New gardens + existing meadows



THE BRAID + existing monuments



New supporting functions



THE BRAID + gardens + functions

Site Plan

1. Main north-south pedestrian and bicycle roads, including running tracks
2. A planted bridge, which allows the green belt to cross the east and west banks
3. Above ground bridges with views
4. Event area
5. Sports: tennis on the east, petanque on the west
6. SAP square: main entrance
7. The Children's Carousel
8. Five Skaters
9. Weavers' Gift
10. San Jose Vietnam Memorial
11. Tributaries' Monument
12. Rangers Station
13. Santa Clara St. Overlook Plaza
14. Tickets / Kiosk
15. Toilet facilities
16. Outdoor Amphitheatre
17. Elevated wooden deck
18. Resting area with canopy and benches



The bridging structures are made of steel and clad with wood and glass, stemming from concrete and stone basements.



At night, technology envisages vivid experiences and THE BRAID turns into a band of light, a diffuse interactive device.



Inside THE BRAID there are ramps, stairs and balconies.

