

Winn Park Regeneration: An extroverted introvert

Design Brief (Submission ID: 353451)

01 | Introduction

The Fire Alarm Building in the park represents an important element within Sacramento's history of urban infrastructural development. The structure, that once played a pivotal role in the multi-nodal fire communication network, now sits vacant and barred. It has lost all connections with the adjacent urban fabric and has adopted an introvert personality. The historical references that it can offer are currently not easily available to the public.

Albert Winn Park and the integral fire alarm building, located in midtown Sacramento, can be seen as a tiered composition that consists of the central structure on one end, followed by the park and the adjoining city. As it stands, these components are disjointed with limited interaction between them.

The park on the other hand, lacks an active core and programming, is parcelized and not utilized to its fullest potential. This creates a void within the urban fabric, which inhibits creation and growth of a vibrant community.

Our proposal for the park and its constituent elements aims to change their disjointed nature to allow for an overlap of programs and circulation throughout the space.

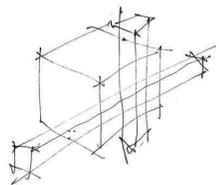
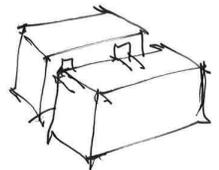
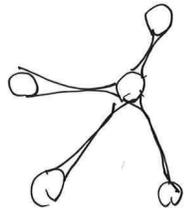
02 | Parti

With an abandoned building at its core, the existing diagonal walkways within the park terminate at a dead end, resulting in overall inactivity. Solution? The introverted structure gets modified into one with an extroverted agenda, which allows the park and the city to be in constant interaction with the new space.

A *geode* serves as a valuable analogy in this context. Like a geode, only a cut through can reveal the most unique and precious contents within. A similar process of modification will reveal the most historically rich and contextually important aspects of the original building.

The major modifications to the building are two-fold:

1. A deletion of space at the center (identified as yellow in the diagrams) provides three distinct experiences:
 - A dynamic, indoor/outdoor, elevated dining experience infused with natural light and natural ventilation through the use of retractable glass walls.
 - Direct ground level delivery access for the kitchen.
 - A Public bicycle and pedestrian path through the park lined with a historic museum experience. The original fire alarm dispatch control panels are relocated and displayed behind glass along the path through the "cut."
2. Central vertical circulation light well addition (identified as blue in the diagrams). This vertical element provides access to the roof garden while flooding the spaces below with natural light. This feature also provides a beacon that helps to clearly identify the main public entry.



These new dynamic gestures respect and respond to the existing historic and formal geometry by aligning with the lines, features, and forms while maintaining a clear distinction between new and old.

03 | Site Strategy

The design proposal calls for reconnecting the structure with its context through the creation of horizontal and vertical; circulation and light corridors through the building. These corridors provide a continuation of the newly established circulation pathways within the park, allowing for visual connectivity and freely flowing pedestrian movement. The core, as a result, stops being a dead end. The central north-south circulation corridor divides the Fire Alarm Building and provides visual access to the original fire notification panels now on display along the glazed facades. The additional arched pathways connect all portions of the park diagonally and serve as accessible routes to and from the building.

The pathways divide the park into six different areas which have been programmed to varied extents to allow for a balance between fixed and flexible use. These include an amphitheatre on the east side, unprogrammed park space on the west side with a children's play area, two groups of community gardening plots in the northwest and southwest zones, and outdoor public seating in the northeast and southeast portions of the park.

04 | Program for the Building

The concept for the program is based on the ideas of business incubators and art galleries, but is centered around the community connector of food. With a small commercial kitchen on the ground level and dining space on the upper level (with outdoor park dining as well), the reimagined facility is designed to support a rotating chef or restaurant on a periodic basis. This venue could support two types of opportunities:

1. As a restaurant incubator. Startups, previous food trucks, or previous home-spun food service entrepreneurs could use (or even share) the space for a pre-determined amount of time as a way to kick-start their business in a licensed commercial kitchen and in an exciting community dining venue.
2. As a local chef/restaurant feature "showing." Local restaurants or chefs could be featured at this venue for a set period of time. Like an art gallery showing, the chef could start their own show with a kick-off event or an "open house," then feature different meals throughout the time period (perhaps one month).

Either option would create a flowing and dynamic public attraction to the park and reduce stagnation that would potentially follow a permanent tenant.

The north/south path and ramp down provides food delivery access to the building. Roof access provides opportunities for the chef to grow herbs, vegetables, and fruits on site in a secure location. A dumb waiter would be provided for direct access from the kitchen to the dining space. Patio doors and a platform on the west face of the building (including exterior accessible ramps) provide direct access to both the indoor and outdoor dining experiences.

