

PCT

100, 200, 222 North Sepulveda Boulevard
El Segundo, California 90245

El Segundo is well known as a business center for the aerospace and defense industries. Built in an era of these large single occupancy users, the three towers which form PCT (formerly Pacific Corporate Towers) is one of El Segundo's major office centers. In order to keep up with a competitive business climate and changing tenant demographic, management sought to renovate the existing structures and landscape to attract and better suit this new tenant mix.

The objective was to create a campus that unified the three towers, while improving and enhancing the outdoor space. The concept was to develop a park-like setting with a flexible and relaxed atmosphere more aligned with the contemporary business practices of the creative office market. Transformation of a primarily visible landscape into one that was participatory, the landscape architect reprogrammed the existing un-useable outdoor space into comfortable outdoor rooms more consistent with the attitudes and expectations of the real estate sub-market. Rich finishes including stone, wood decking and decomposed granite help enhance the feeling of comfort and warmth in these inviting new people spaces.

Located between El Segundo Blvd. and E. Grand Ave. on N. Sepulveda Blvd the PCT site includes three 20-story towers and 11 acres of landscape. From the outset the project team was committed to employing sustainable practices and strategies creating more functional, flexible and aesthetic landscape. Where possible existing elements were retained and enhanced. Other elements were removed or repurposed as needed to help facilitate a fresh, new character.

The existing landscape was primarily comprised of large areas of unused, un-programmed lawn. To reduce water consumption and green waste, a large portion of lawn was replaced with decomposed granite ground cover. This new treatment created functional spaces for amenities such as seating areas and garden rooms. Other areas were planted with less water intensive plants creating a strong geometric and colorful ground plane, breaking up monotony and establishing a new identity for the site. Together the new materials, ground cover treatments and planting create a campus feel, linking the buildings together, creating cohesion and unity while removing approximately two thirds of lawn.

The new site design includes a large number of amenities that help increase the overall value to the user experience. A basketball court and ping pong table provides options for exercise and play while taking a break from the workday. A bike share program encourages employees to bike to the beach or to lunch. Outdoor offices provide an alternative to traditional workspaces and allow for new types of interactions between service providers and their clients. Lounge seating, garden rooms, picnic space and an outdoor fireplace provide new opportunities for social interaction and recreation.

A coastal locale is one of the site's biggest advantages. The temperate coastal climate of El Segundo creates a wonderful environment for the iconic Southern California indoor/outdoor lifestyle. This ocean side setting is also one of the sites biggest liabilities. Afternoon offshore ocean breezes are funneled between the buildings creating a Venturi effect of strong, cool winds.

Past attempts at creating a wind screen were unsuccessful and exacerbated the problem in certain places. Knowing the entire area could not be sheltered, the landscape architect employed a strategy of personal wind protection, creating smaller areas of refuge and comfort within the overall space. Personal windscreens were created and took the form of outdoor offices, complete with lighting, wifi, power and heaters. A high backed built-in chaise lounge banquette creates a protected place to relax in the sun. Cupping the space, creating the focal point of the courtyard space. Usable open space was expanded in front of the buildings, outside the Venturi effect, with trees and ground cover providing additional protection from the breezes and elements, reinforcing the act of replacing lawn for more functional space.