



The architectural team led by WEST 8, winner in the competition for the Central Park of Madrid Nuevo Norte

The multidisciplinary team headed by the Dutch studio WEST 8, together with Porrás Guadiana Arquitectos as local partner, will design a new public space that will become a landmark in the city of Madrid.

Its technical viability has been especially valued for guaranteeing its feasibility against the challenge of building on the covering structure of the Chamartín tracks and for its proposal, which is based on principles of design, sustainability and innovation.

The Chamartín CBD Management Committee (APE 05.31) of Madrid Nuevo Norte has awarded the design of the Central Park to the multidisciplinary team led by WEST 8, together with Porrás Guadiana Arquitectos as local partner, the proposal for which was unanimously chosen by the Governing Council, following a decision that was also unanimously ratified by the Assembly of this entity, responsible for the urban development management of the project area.

The team also includes the engineering firms TYPESA and INES, together with the specialised consultancy firms RWDI, LDC, POR, PHARES, ZINCO and PROES.

The winning project was announced this morning by the Mayor of Madrid, José Luis Martínez-Almeida, who highlighted “the link between the chosen architectural teams and the city, who are responsible for such emblematic projects as Madrid Río, and who undoubtedly submit the best project for this future iconic green space in Madrid”.

Belén Piserra, president of the Chamartín CBD Management Committee (APE 05.31), emphasised that “the selected team has demonstrated with its proposal an exceptional knowledge of the challenges to be resolved in order to create the benchmark destination park of the future of Madrid, guaranteeing its technical viability against the challenge of having to build on the structure that covers the tracks and with a park proposal based on principles of design, sustainability and innovation”.

A large urban forest linked to the history of the site

The proposal by WEST 8 and Porras Guadiana is committed to creating a large urban forest with an identity closely linked to the history of the place, rising up on the paving slab that will cover the bundle of tracks that has occupied this space in Chamartín for decades. For this reason, the design of the project is centred on the layout of the tracks, creating a series of flowing lines that run along the length of the park while also connecting the neighbourhoods that surround it, thus closing the historic gap that divides the north of the city in two.

As explained by Adriaan Geuze, director of WEST 8, and Fernando Porras-Isla, director of Porras Guadiana Arquitectos, the 14.5-hectare Central Park is presented as “the new welcome gateway to Madrid for visitors coming from the public transport hubs, especially from the future Chamartín station and its transport interchange”.

The park will feature an emblematic element that will become a new landmark for Madrid: the Jardín del Viento (Wind Garden). It is a unique green structure in the shape of a spiral that will be erected in the middle of the park and will be covered by vegetation, producing its own microclimate. In Geuze’s words, “this large vertical garden will rise above the height of the treetops to capture the high breezes and direct them through its green framework, reducing the surrounding temperature and creating a cool space inside, becoming the main meeting point of the park”.

The proposed design creates a vibrant park, with activity throughout the day, as it will enhance the commercial areas on the ground floor of the perimeter buildings and its interior will be open to multiple uses thanks to its different zones and spaces with kiosks, restaurant terraces, pavilions, food trucks and sports areas. An environment that will give visibility to environmental aspects with elements such as rain gardens, pollinator beds, urban vegetable gardens and a large meadow, allowing visitors to connect with nature.

The new park will also be an innovative and interactive digital space, which will construct sensory environments of changing light and sound throughout the year that will expand along the park’s path network.

The Central Park will be integrated into the city’s large system of green areas formed by the Madrid Metropolitan Forest, the Madrid Green Arch and the Madrid Nuevo Norte network of parks.

Selection process

As Belén Piserra explained, in order to choose the winning project, an international competition was held in which a selection of 40 teams were invited to participate based on their previous experience in building similar parks, with a focus on sustainability and innovation.

The 14 initial proposals submitted were evaluated based on criteria such as proposed team, methodology, experience and knowledge of the environment. Ultimately, this resulted in a selection of five teams (led by West 8; BIG; James Corner Field Operations; Grant Associates; and Rubio Arquitectura) that were invited to the final phase.

A key factor in the evaluation of the proposals was their compatibility with the track covering structure. In addition to this technical factor, the process took into account the most advanced approaches to design, innovation and sustainability, as well as the potential of the proposals to turn the Central Park into a landmark public space for the Madrid of the future”, explained Piserra.

The Urban Development Process for the Central Park of Madrid Nuevo Norte forms part of the set of projects of the Chamartín Business Centre area, which are already in the development phase, with the objective of presenting an initiative to execute these projects next year. In addition to the park, these include other projects such as the covering of the tracks on which the Central Park will be built, the Chamartín interchange, two new bridges over the M30, as well as the rest of the development of the project area, which will integrate all of the above, as well as the common and shared infrastructures with the other project areas.

The decisive stage of Madrid Nuevo Norte

Álvaro Aresti, chairman of DCN, the main private promoter of Madrid Nuevo Norte, referred to the Central Park as “the most singular and decisive element of the city of the future that we are creating and the initiative that best embodies all the values of this great urban transformation project”. Furthermore, Aresti stressed that the fact that the Chamartín CBD Management Committee has awarded this project shows that Madrid Nuevo Norte has entered a new phase, “the decisive stage in which this project will begin to be built”. “The time has come to start up Madrid Nuevo Norte and we are not going to do it alone, it will be the Management Commissions, the germ of the future Compensation Boards, who will do it”, he assured.