In Silicon Valley’s current tech boom, sleek Class A buildings and campuses with enviable amenities are the new norm. What’s the exception you ask? It’s projects that turn an underutilized space into a green oasis — like a two-acre park on top of a parking structure. Enter the High Garden.

Chris Mateo, one of the High Garden’s landscape designers, sat down with our marketing team to answer a few questions about the space that is currently under construction at Moffett Place in Sunnyvale.

Q: WHAT MAKES THE HIGH GARDEN SUCH AN EXCITING PART OF MOFFETT PLACE?

The High Garden will be one of the first rooftop gardens in the Bay Area that includes both mature landscaping and active spaces.
We think it is going to set a new trend for corporate campuses.

**Q:** HOW DID THE IDEA FOR IT INITIALLY COME FORTH?

As you know, amenities are a major draw for tenants to new spec campuses. But, the High Garden takes this to the next level.

**Q:** HOW DOES THE HIGH GARDEN ENHANCE MOFFETT PLACE?

The goal of the design was two-fold: provide experiential moments when you are in the High Garden and give people in the nearby office towers beautiful, lush views. To provide value to the variety of users, we designed it to provide a comprehensive set of individual, social, and athletic experiences.

The top of the parking structure will become an elevated park — part garden, part sports space, part open green space. By elevating the garden, it creates a separation from the street and site. It will be a highly usable and visually stimulating place.
On the two acre rooftop, there will be a basketball court, multi-purpose sports court, running track, putting green, bamboo garden, vegetable garden, and of course, a variety of green open spaces.

Meandering pathways and an elliptical running track thread through the park drawing people to experience each individual space, whether someone is taking an impromptu lunch break or playing in a pick-up game. For those who want to sit and enjoy the park, a sloped berm and terraced seating face the sports court, which connects passive users with the active spaces. The goal was to provide visitors with a cohesive experience through a physically and visually connected space.
Waterproofing was a major challenge — the sloped berm actually plays a dual role that fulfills the design intent and provides an engineering solution. The slope directs water towards collection points at the bottom of the berm for drainage off the structure.

A complex combination of structural deck, foam, concrete, and topsoil are being used to achieve the design intent. There is a maximum of twelve inches of topsoil for ground cover plants. The mature trees will be located along the berm because these trees need more soil. The height of the berm created the opportunity for deeper planting containers. Because of this added weight, all the trees were strategically placed above structural beams.

The maple and evergreen elm trees are going to be pretty substantial, ranging in size from 16 to 25 feet at install with the potential to grow to 35 to 45 feet.
WHAT EXCITES YOU THE MOST ABOUT THE HIGH GARDEN?

Definitely excited to see and experience the space once it’s complete in June 2015 and watch as everything comes together and the plant material grows to maturity.

Just like any other landscape architecture project, the project is never really done, you plant something and you watch it grow. I can’t wait to see people lunching out on the berm, playing basketball, running around the track, hanging in the bamboo garden, and of course, growing food in the vegetable garden!