

Could this 500 foot, Bjarke Ingels-designed observation tower rise in San Diego?

The tower would be part of the \$2.4 billion Seaport San Diego project.

HIGH-RISE CONSTRUCTION | JULY 25, 2019 | DAVID MALONE, ASSOCIATE EDITOR



Courtesy Seaport San Diego

A new 500-foot observation tower from Bjarke Ingels Group could grace San Diego's waterfront Central Embarcadero in the near future... if it passes an environmental review and is approved by the California Coastal Commission.

If built, the observation tower would be like nothing else that currently exists along California's coast, thanks to the 1976 Coastal Act that puts a 30-foot height restriction on most of the state's coastal zones. But, as [The San Diego Union-Trust](#) reports, Downtown San Diego is exempt from that restriction.

The tower is designed as a stack of spinning discs that appear differently at varying vantage points and elevations. At the base, the tower will include retail, food options, and a hotel.

See Also: [Bjarke Ingels Group creates 66 homes for low-income citizens in Copenhagen](#)

At the tower's peak, exhibits will be spread across several floors to encourage the public to explore all the space has to offer. Possibilities include a butterfly exhibit, a suspended net for climbing, a wind garden with sustainable technology exhibits, an outdoor auditorium, and a 170,000-sf vertical aquarium that would span the length of the tower and resemble the varying depths of the ocean. The developer, 1HWY1, describes the concept as a "learning laboratory in the sky."

But unless this radical design gains the approval it needs, the tower may never be more than a 500-foot-tall quixotic dream.