



Lakewood, a Minneapolis Landmark, Announces Plans to Become More Inviting, Accessible and Sustainable

Campus improvements and a new “net zero” Welcome Center will help the local treasure increase accessibility and environmental stewardship

Minneapolis (April 28, 2022) — Lakewood Cemetery will break ground this summer on a new building and landscaping project that aligns with the progressive vision of the 150-year-old nonprofit. The project includes a 25,000-square-foot, environmentally conscious Welcome Center and surrounding gardens that will offer an enhanced experience for the thousands of people that Lakewood welcomes and serves each year.

The project reflects and supports Lakewood’s role as a nonprofit service organization and community resource, open to all, through:

- A more welcoming entrance with contemplative gardens and walking paths open to the public
- A warm, comfortable and accessible building for serving families and the community that is inviting for all generations, faiths and cultures
- Dedicated space for community education and engagement
- Expanded office space for a growing team of mission-driven advisors and service professionals
- Responsible stewardship of Lakewood’s energy, water and plant resources

“Lakewood is celebrating a huge milestone — 150 years of serving our community,” said Lakewood’s president, Chris Makowske. “As we look ahead, we believe this is the perfect time to reimagine what a cemetery can offer and to explore new possibilities for becoming more accessible, sustainable and welcoming to our community. We’re excited about how the new Welcome Center will help us realize this vision.”

The Welcome Center will be built in an undeveloped area of Lakewood to the east of the current Administration Building and greenhouses. (The current Administration Building will be repurposed; several options are being explored.) The project will be managed with respect to the cemetery’s peaceful surroundings and to minimize disruption to families, neighbors/community, and ongoing operations.

A Supportive and Integrated Experience

The project’s design will facilitate a visitor’s transition from the city into Lakewood’s serene and historic landscape. New walking paths and signage will provide clearer wayfinding for families and visitors at the entrance. The road to the east will lead to the new Welcome Center building and surrounding gardens.

The Welcome Center building’s multiple entries create a strong connection for those arriving from all directions. A rooftop canopy creates a continuous cover around the building, providing sheltered spaces for drop-off and to gather and connect with others. More than a half a mile of accessible walking paths, four distinct garden areas, and three water features will be added surrounding the building and front entry — all open to the community.

Designed in a warm, modern style using natural materials like stone and wood that mirror elements of Lakewood’s other buildings, visitors to the Welcome Center will be greeted in a reception area with a fireplace and views to the gardens outside. Families will be accompanied to a separate lobby area with private rooms for consultation. Other visitors may browse exhibits in the gallery or attend an educational event in the community room. Lakewood team workspaces will be located on the upper level.



Responsible Stewardship of Resources

The Welcome Center has been designed to have “net zero” energy use, meaning it will produce as much energy as it uses. This is accomplished through a geothermal mechanical system, a high-performance building envelope, and the use of renewable energy created by a rooftop solar array.

In addition to designing a building that generates solar energy and uses less resources for heating and cooling, several sustainable practices will be employed during the project’s design and construction. These include:

- using sustainably sourced building materials
- minimizing and recycling construction waste
- using landscaping materials that require less watering

A Collaborative Design Partnership

The project team consists of a unique partnership with three local architecture firms: Miller Dunwiddie, Snow Kreilich Architects and TEN x TEN Landscape Architecture. JE Dunn will serve as construction manager. Because the project aims to balance tradition with innovation, this team brings experience in historic and modern architecture, as well as landscape design and conservation.

About Miller Dunwiddie

Miller Dunwiddie is a full-service architecture and design firm based in Minneapolis. Founded in 1963, the work of the firm began with a focus on aviation, workplace, and governmental projects. Since then, the firm’s expertise has grown to include preservation, interior design, transportation, and building envelope systems. Understanding history, context, and technology is paramount to the body of their work whether it’s the rehabilitation and renovation of an existing structure or creating a new building from the ground up.

About Snow Kreilich Architects

Snow Kreilich Architects is a nationally recognized and award-winning architectural studio-based practice in Minneapolis. With each project led by design principals Julie Snow and Matt Kreilich, the studio focuses on producing architecture that performs against multiple measures of design success. This focus has resulted in consistent design recognition for projects that rely on a fresh and intensive design investigation of every project. They have developed shared working methodologies that result in consistently intelligent buildings that are well conceived and carefully detailed.

About TEN x TEN Landscape Architecture

TEN x TEN is a landscape architecture and urban design practice grounded by a shared curiosity and passion for experimentation and agency. They collaborate with visionary clients and teams to co-create immersive future-focused landscapes that will adapt to social, economic and environmental transformation. TEN x TEN designs for resilience and flexibility, monitoring what makes places thrive, adapt and be loved long after they are built. Their approach elevates the everyday human experience through a deep respect for the authenticity of people, culture and ecology.

About JE Dunn Construction

Established in 1924, JE Dunn Construction is a national commercial contractor, with 24 offices, including its Minnesota office which has been in operation for over 75 years. As an employee and family-owned business, they are known for creatively driving value during design and construction; as a result, over 80% of its business is derived from existing or referral relationships. Its local projects demonstrate a breadth and depth of talent unmatched in the region, with a portfolio composed of buildings that cut across type and function. These are projects with unique features, complex code and regulatory issues, and often complicated challenges; each brought to life through collaboration and what their clients tell them is a great experience.



About Lakewood — A Place to Remember

Lakewood is a serene haven in the heart of Minneapolis' renowned Chain of Lakes—a place to come together to honor, remember and reflect. Since 1871, Lakewood's 250 acres of urban memorial parkland have served as a community gathering place and a chronicle of our region's traditions, cultures and people. A history keeper and a thought leader, Lakewood honors its roots as a landmark cemetery while reimagining its role in modern life, through thoughtfully designed events, experiences and spaces.

Today, Lakewood is making memorialization more relevant, accessible and inviting for new audiences and generations—with more creativity and choices. As a nonprofit organization

governed by a board of trustees, Lakewood is committed to preserving and enhancing its grounds and architectural treasures and uses proceeds generated from activities and events for that purpose.

More Information

See renderings, FAQs and more information at lakewoodcemetery.org/welcome-center.

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