



**Greater Des Moines
Botanical Garden**

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**Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden Announces Campus Improvements
to Enhance Visitor Experience**

Des Moines, Iowa (April 9, 2026) – The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden today announced the next phase of campus improvements, with plans to construct a temporary entrance addition in 2026 – an essential step in preparing for a comprehensive renovation and expansion of the Garden’s primary lobby, anticipated to begin in early 2027.

Construction on the temporary entrance is anticipated to begin in mid-May 2026.

Designed to ensure uninterrupted public access during construction, the new structure will serve as the Garden’s primary entrance while work on the main lobby is underway. Once completed, the space will transition into permanent administrative offices and staff and volunteer support areas, addressing long-standing operational needs driven by the Garden’s continued growth.

“This project allows us to do something incredibly important—continue welcoming our community without interruption while we invest in the future of the Garden,” said Kim Perez, President and CEO of the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. “It’s a thoughtful, dual-purpose solution that supports both today’s visitor experience and tomorrow’s organizational needs.”

The proposed addition will be approximately 1,920 square feet and designed as a single-story structure that integrates with the Garden’s existing architecture. Plans include a new public entrance, temporary garden shop, volunteer check-in area and staff support spaces. The design prioritizes accessibility, functionality and a welcoming arrival experience for the nearly 150,000 annual visitors to the Garden.

Renderings presented to the Urban Design Review Board on April 7 illustrate a clean, modern structure with materials and colors selected to complement the Garden’s iconic dome while remaining visually understated.



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This project represents the next chapter in a decade of strategic reinvestment at the Botanical Garden. Since transitioning to a nonprofit organization in 2013 through a public-private partnership with the City of Des Moines, the Botanical Garden has evolved into a year-round cultural and educational destination. Key improvements have included expanded outdoor gardens, enhanced programming and events, and major infrastructure upgrades—including a geothermal system installed in 2024 to improve energy efficiency and sustainability.

The planned 2027 lobby renovation will build on this progress by creating a safer, more accessible and more welcoming arrival experience for all visitors. The temporary entrance ensures that the Garden can remain open and fully operational throughout that process—continuing to host educational programs, community events and daily visitation without disruption.

“This is about more than construction,” Perez added. “It’s about strengthening our ability to serve as a vibrant, accessible resource for the community—now and into the future.”

Following completion of the permanent lobby renovation, the temporary entrance will be converted into expanded office space. This approach reflects the Garden’s commitment to thoughtful, strategic investment and responsible stewardship of resources.

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About the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is a vibrant, 12-acre public garden in the heart of downtown Des Moines. Guided by a mission of exploring, explaining, and celebrating the world of plants, the Botanical Garden is more than a dome, is the connection point between plants, people and the natural world. It’s a place where you can be who you are, do the things you love and spend time with the people who matter most. A place where anyone can explore, create, connect and find their true nature. The Botanical Garden is a 501(c)(3) privately governed, not-for-profit institution.