



SLOANE CONSULTING GROUP

# GUAJE PINES CEMETERY

## MASTER PLAN

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# Acknowledgments

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## Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan

### Table of Contents

<b><i>Executive Summary</i></b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Project Background</i></b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Purpose and Intent of the Master Plan</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>History and Context of Guaje Pines Cemetery</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Planning Process and Community Engagement</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b><i>Existing Conditions Assessment</i></b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Burial capacity and land use</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Access, Circulation, and Vehicular Roads</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Maintenance Facilities</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Restrooms</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Landscape &amp; Trees</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>Cemetery Features</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Children’s Burial Area</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Visitor Experience, Signage, and Wayfinding</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Irrigation</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b><i>Needs Assessment &amp; Program Development</i></b> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>Demographic and Mortality Overview</b> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>Burial Trends and Capacity Analysis</b> .....	<b>42</b>
Current Activity: Burial and Unit Sales.....	42
Burial Capacity .....	44
Future Expansion .....	46
<b>Competitor Overview: Columbaria and Cemeteries in the Region</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>Operational Recommendations</b> .....	<b>49</b>
General Operations .....	49
Pricing / Fee Structure .....	50
Policy / Ordinance .....	52
Indigent Burial Program .....	55
Maintenance.....	56
Financial Framework.....	58
Programming .....	60
<b>ADA Accessibility</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>Honoring Legacy: Drawing Inspiration from the Los Alamos Memorial Rose Garden</b> .....	<b>65</b>
<b><i>Master Plan Design Concepts</i></b> .....	<b>67</b>
<b>Overall Site Plan</b> .....	<b>67</b>

Time-to-Depletion Scenarios.....	68
<b>Overview of planning zones.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Front Entrance Enhancements .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Roadway and Circulation Improvements .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>North Lawn Burial Expansion Area .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Western Inventory Development Area.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Children’s Area .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Honor Court Circles.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Eastern Inventory Development Area.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>In-Fill Development Opportunities.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b><i>Capital Planning and Cost Estimates .....</i></b>	<b><i>93</i></b>
<b>Overview of Framework.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Opinion of Probable Cost: External Delivery.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Practical and Actionable Phasing .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Capital Phasing Summary .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Costs by Major Development Area.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Implementation Approach .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Detailed Budget .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Funding Strategy .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b><i>Appendix .....</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>
<b>County Resources.....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Community Survey Results.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Los Alamos Columbaria .....</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Significant Cemeteries in the Region.....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>Opinion of Probably Cost.....</b>	<b>117</b>



# Executive Summary

This document presents the Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan, a comprehensive community informed roadmap for future improvements, expansions, and stewardship of Los Alamos County's only public cemetery. Developed through extensive community engagement, site analysis, and best practices in memorial landscape design, the plan ensures that Guaje Pines continues to serve residents with dignity, functionality, and beauty for decades to come.

Guaje Pines is approaching a critical capacity threshold. At present demand levels, the remaining columbaria niches will be exhausted in less than a year, and casket graves could be depleted within two years. These shortages underscore the urgent need for thoughtful, strategic expansion, especially given the cemetery's limited land base and the sustained demand expected over the next two decades as the Baby Boomer generation reaches peak mortality.

Looking at today's limited capacity and the two paths forward underscores the importance of acting strategically:

- **Current State:** The existing developed inventory cannot meet near-term needs, with some burial types facing imminent depletion.
- **Business-as-Usual:** Developing readily available land according to historic burial type allocations would extend capacity, up to 33 years for casket burials, 50 years for in-ground cremation, but would risk misalignment with changing preferences.
- **Master Plan Approach:** Implements a balanced, adaptable mix of burial and cremation options that matches the casket capacity of the business-as-usual approach (approximately 33 years) while greatly extending cremation capacity to 106 years in some categories. Overall, the plan provides a combined capacity of 69 years. Additional amenities such as memorial walls, ossuaries, and scattering gardens, though not reflected in unit counts, offer virtually unlimited opportunities for remembrance, further extending the cemetery's service life.

The master plan is guided by three principles: maintaining a balanced mix of casket burial, expanded high-density cremation and alternative memorialization (Balanced Capacity Maximization); deploying inventory projects in scaled phases to provide flexibility and respond to short-term demand (Phased Development); and integrating amenities such as improved circulation, landscaping, gathering spaces, and new memorial features (Amenity Integration). These principles shape the eight planning zones, each with a distinct role in meeting capacity needs, diversifying offerings, and enhancing the visitor experience.

1. **Front Entrance Enhancements:** A new gateway design to establish a clear, dignified arrival experience through upgraded signage, native plantings, and symbolic elements.
2. **Roadway and Circulation Improvements:** A long-term strategy for roadway maintenance, ADA access and equipment entry.
3. **Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements:** A consolidated, screened service zone that streamlines material handling and equipment storage while providing visual separation from burial areas, with the added benefit of freeing space in the Eastern area for future inventory development.

4. North Lawn Burial Expansion Area: Expansion of casket burials that preserves the cemetery's lawn-level marker tradition and maintains the next-in-line sales protocol.
5. Western Inventory Development Area: The initial phase of high-density, cremation-focused expansion, featuring columbaria, memorial walls, and other commemorative elements designed to maximize space and diversify memorialization options.
6. Children's Area Enhancements: Upgrades and additions to the memorial garden offering increased capacity and an environment of comfort, sensitivity, and symbolic beauty.
7. Honor Court Circles (Veterans and First Responders): Two commemorative spaces within the existing roundabouts to recognize service, paired with recommended pricing discounts for eligible groups.
8. Eastern Inventory Development Area: A flexible, long-term expansion space for both cremation and casketed burials, incorporating a scattering pavilion, niche elements, and naturalistic design features.

Together, these planned improvements represent a significant capital commitment. The Master Plan outlines \$3.33–\$6.53 million in investments, phased over Immediate (1–3 years), Intermediate (4–10 years), and Long-Term (10+ years) timelines. The Immediate Phase, estimated at \$528,000 to \$1,057,000, targets urgent needs such as expanding burial capacity, improving the Children's Area, introducing a memorial garden with high density cremation burial, consolidating maintenance facilities, and addressing priority tree and irrigation work. These projects deliver early operational benefits and visible community enhancements.

By implementing this plan, the County will maximize land use during the projected peak in demand through the late 2020s and 2030s, safeguard against service gaps, and ensure Guaje Pines remains a well-maintained, community-centered facility. This is a prudent, forward-looking approach that balances the realities of limited land with the responsibility to serve the community's needs now and far into the future.

Beyond physical improvements, the plan evaluates Guaje Pines Cemetery's operational framework through the lens of national cemetery industry standards and best practices in municipal cemetery management. Overall, the County has made thoughtful and effective strides in aligning its governance, customer service, and policy environment with contemporary expectations.

Los Alamos County in 2024 consolidated cemetery operations under the Community Services Department's Parks and Open Space Division to streamline service delivery and improve responsiveness. This transition was accompanied by updates to the cemetery ordinance and rules and regulations, which clarified burial procedures, codified maintenance expectations, and created a single point of contact for residents. These updates provide a strong foundation for long-term operational resilience.

To support continued progress, the plan recommends targeted refinements such as regular pricing structure reviews, the development of a formal indigent burial program, and consideration of discounts for first responders and veterans. It also supports incremental increases to property, merchandise, and service fees to balance affordability for the community while providing resources for the long-term preservation and care of the site.

Additional recommendations include the expansion of programming and partnerships, and pursuit of arboretum accreditation to reinforce the cemetery's ecological and interpretive value. Maintenance related improvements include enhanced tree and landscape care, turf management, thoughtful access to burial sections, and policies that ensure reverence for the cemetery's appearance and function. The plan also recommends irrigation system upgrades to improve water efficiency, support turf consistency, and advance Los Alamos County's sustainability goals through smart technology and responsible water use.

Financially, the cemetery is anchored by a \$1.5 million Perpetual Care Trust Fund managed by the New Mexico State Investment Council. Interest from this endowment supports long-term maintenance, and while it does not yet fully cover annual operating needs, it is approaching a sustainable threshold. The County has a meaningful runway, approximately two decades, to continue growing the fund so that interest earnings alone can support basic maintenance costs in the future. Achieving this goal will require a clear understanding of true operating expenses and a continued commitment to annual contributions and prudent fiscal management.

Together, these investments in capacity, operations, and amenities will ensure that Guaje Pines Cemetery remains a dignified, inclusive, and forward-thinking civic space that meets the community's needs while honoring its traditions for decades to come.

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## Project Background

### Purpose and Intent of the Master Plan

The Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan is intended to serve as a strategic framework for guiding the long-term development, maintenance, and stewardship of Los Alamos County's sole public cemetery. This plan aims to ensure that Guaje Pines continues to fulfill its essential role in the community, providing dignified, accessible, and sustainable interment options, while preserving its natural beauty and historical integrity.

Key goals of this master plan include:

- Maximize the use of existing cemetery land to expand burial capacity and improve operational efficiency, while remaining responsive to the community's evolving preferences and needs.
- Preserve and enhance the site's natural beauty and character, ensuring that future development respects the landscape and reinforces the cemetery's tranquil setting.
- Provide an achievable and actionable set of phased capital improvement recommendations that address the operational and aesthetic needs of the cemetery while remaining fiscally responsible.
- Offer clear operational guidance to support respectful, safe, and efficient cemetery management, prioritizing resident satisfaction and aligning with regional and national best practices.



## History and Context of Guaje Pines Cemetery

Guaje Pines Cemetery, located on County-owned land in Los Alamos, New Mexico, has served the community since its establishment in the mid-20th century. Nestled near the historic Guaje Canyon, the site offers sweeping views and a tranquil atmosphere that reflect the natural beauty and solemn purpose of the cemetery. Originally established on land deeded from the Atomic Energy Commission in 1960, it was designed as a garden-style cemetery to meet the burial needs of local residents. The cemetery was formally dedicated on May 30, 1961, and its name honors the serene setting below Guaje Ridge.

The cemetery comprises approximately 9 acres, of which around 2.5 acres are currently undeveloped. Burials at Guaje Pines include both in-ground casketed and cremated remains as well as above ground columbaria offerings. In addition to its role as a final resting place, the cemetery serves as a location for remembrance, public events, and quiet reflection.

As the only public cemetery in Los Alamos County, Guaje Pines plays a critical civic role and plans need to account for increasing demand, limited land availability, and shifting community preferences in burial and memorial practices.

## Planning Process and Community Engagement

Los Alamos County issued Request for Proposal 25-37 for the preparation of the Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan in early 2025. The contract was awarded to Sloane Consulting Group, in partnership with Civisworks. Sloane Consulting Group brings extensive experience working with municipal, religious, and not-for-profit cemeteries across the United States. Bringing a deep understanding of national best practices, industry headwinds, and experience operating cemeteries to this project. Civisworks is a creative and pragmatic design firm specializing in urban design, landscape architecture, and master planning with substantial expertise in cemetery design.

Project work began with a comprehensive assessment of current cemetery operations, informed by extensive discussions with County staff and other key stakeholders. Through multiple site visits, the team identified both operational and physical opportunities for improvement.

The Master Plan's development was shaped by a collaborative and inclusive engagement process involving multiple stakeholder groups and members of the public. This collaborative approach ensured that the plan reflects both practical realities and the aspirations of the community it serves.

Engagement included direct input from:

- Los Alamos County Parks and Open Space staff
- Cemetery maintenance personnel
- County administrative and planning officials
- Community members through public surveys and meetings

The planning team conducted site visits, reviewed burial records, assessed cemetery infrastructure and facilities, and gathered input on operational challenges and community priorities. Engagement activities focused on identifying evolving burial needs, preferences for interment types, and opportunities to enhance the cemetery's role within the broader open space and trail system.

A public survey, open through May 30, 2025, gathered feedback on future burial space, interest in alternative end-of-life options, and what residents value most about Guaje Pines Cemetery. It was promoted as an opportunity for the public to influence the long-term development of the site.

The community survey received a strong response for a planning effort of this kind, with 157 participants and particularly high engagement from residents aged 65 and older, who made up nearly half of all respondents. Over half indicated that they intend to be interred at Guaje Pines, underscoring the cemetery's lasting significance to the community. When asked about end-of-life preferences, respondents were allowed to select multiple options, resulting in totals exceeding 100%. Cremation-related choices emerged as the most common: 39% expressed interest in scattering remains outside the cemetery, 36% in cremated remains to be buried in the ground, and 21% in placement in a columbarium niche. Casket burial was still notable at 29%, followed by green burial at 20%, while interest in mausoleum entombment was limited to just 5.7%. Only 4.5% reported that they had not yet considered their burial preferences.

When asked about priorities for the master plan, respondents highlighted preserving the cemetery's historic features, expanding cremation options, and improving the overall visitor experience. Desired enhancements included increased tree canopy, clearer wayfinding, and additional seating. Together, these responses offer valuable guidance for shaping a plan that honors tradition while adapting to changing needs and community expectations. Complete survey results are included in Appendix: Community Survey Results.

Two sets of public meetings provided further opportunities for dialogue:

- A virtual meeting on May 14, 2025, invited residents to speak directly with the planning team and discuss issues such as burial capacity and preferences for Guaje Pines development.
- A second public meeting on June 25, 2025, included two sessions at Fuller Lodge and featured a review of initial design concepts. Participants provided feedback on layout options, inventory enhancements, and landscape character.

This open and iterative process helped shape the plan's recommendations and vision, ensuring it aligns with the community's values and needs for this sacred and significant space.

This master plan in addition to community input also builds on and integrates findings from the following documents and analyses provided by Los Alamos County:

- Existing interment mapping and GIS-based lot inventory
- Cemetery layout drawings and site development history
- Maintenance records and capital improvement records

- Previous site assessments on accessibility
- 2025 Los Alamos County Strategic Leadership Plan
- County GIS and zoning data

These documents provided critical insights into current conditions, spatial limitations, and future opportunities, which informed both the needs assessment and proposed design scenarios included later in this master plan.

The County's strategic goals serve as an important framework for evaluating Guaje Pines and guiding future recommendations. Of the five overarching goals, three (Operational Excellence, Quality of Life, and Environmental Stewardship) are especially relevant. They provide a lens for decision-making that ensures cemetery improvements not only meet operational needs, but also enhance the visitor experience, preserve the site's natural beauty, and support its long-term sustainability (both environmental and financial).

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# Existing Conditions Assessment

## Burial capacity and land use

Guaje Pines Cemetery is located within a visually distinctive setting, surrounded by a patchwork of adjacent land uses, including privately owned land to the west, Santa Fe National Forest to the north and east, and County-owned open space to the south. These boundary relationships define the site's physical limits and long-term expansion constraints. There are no current plans for expansion beyond the existing property boundaries, making it essential to maximize the use of the current footprint to sustain long-term operations.

Topographic and slope analysis shows that the central and western portions of the site have relatively gentle grades, generally under 10 percent, making them well-suited for in-ground casket burials, cremation gardens, and supporting infrastructure such as roadways and pedestrian paths. In contrast, the eastern area, currently serving as a backstage operations zone, features steeper slopes, making it less suitable for immediate use but a potential candidate for future development with appropriate grading and design interventions.

Guaje Pines Cemetery lies entirely within a single mapped soil type complex: Mirand-Alanos. The setting includes mountain and canyon landforms. Depth to bedrock, water table, or restrictive features is more than 80 inches. Parent material is colluvium from volcanic rock making it well-drained and non-hydric. In our opinion, these soils are suitable for both cremation and in-ground casket burials in areas of mild to moderate slopes. However, slopes in portions of the site exceed 20 percent and may require grading, erosion control, or other specialized design solutions to ensure stability and long-term viability.

Soil profiles include slightly decomposed plant material in the top 2 inches, loam 2 inches to 6 inches below the surface, and additional clay or gravelly loam soils to a depth of 60 inches. Loamy soils are generally ideal for plant growth. With a root zone depth of approximately 60 inches and moderate water-holding capacity, the soils can support turf and landscape plantings when paired with supplemental irrigation. These soils are generally suitable for cemetery use but represent a moderate constraint when coupled with more extreme (greater than 20 percent slopes) in the outer edges of the cemetery.

The soils present a high erosion risk, particularly along trails and access roads, highlighting the importance of proactive stormwater management and slope stabilization. While runoff is rated as moderate, well-considered drainage design will be essential to preserving surface integrity. It should be noted that no major drainage issues were observed on the site during this analysis. With thoughtful planning and careful stewardship, these soil conditions can still support cemetery development while safeguarding the site's visual character and ecological health.

Guaje Pines Cemetery currently accommodates a range of interment types, including in-ground casket and cremation burials, columbarium niches, and a designated children's section. The majority of developed available inventory is for in-ground cremation burials, with limited capacity remaining for casket burials and columbarium niches. Sales data from 2024 indicate strong demand for in-ground casket burials (60 units) and cremation options (64 units). With

only 88 in-ground casket spaces and 16 columbarium niches remaining, inventory for these burial types is limited and expected to run out soon. While overall burial capacity may last several decades, the immediate shortage of certain interment types underscores the need for near-term expansion planning to ensure continued service availability.

In addition to the developed inventory, the cemetery includes a significant amount of undeveloped land primarily along its western and southern edges. If fully utilized, this land could support approximately 2,000 additional casket burials, offering long-term flexibility. However, the master plan recommends a more nuanced approach, with portions of this land considered for alternative uses such as cremation gardens, memorial spaces, and naturalized areas. A detailed assessment of inventory, sales trends, and long-term demand is provided in the Burial Trends and Capacity Analysis section.

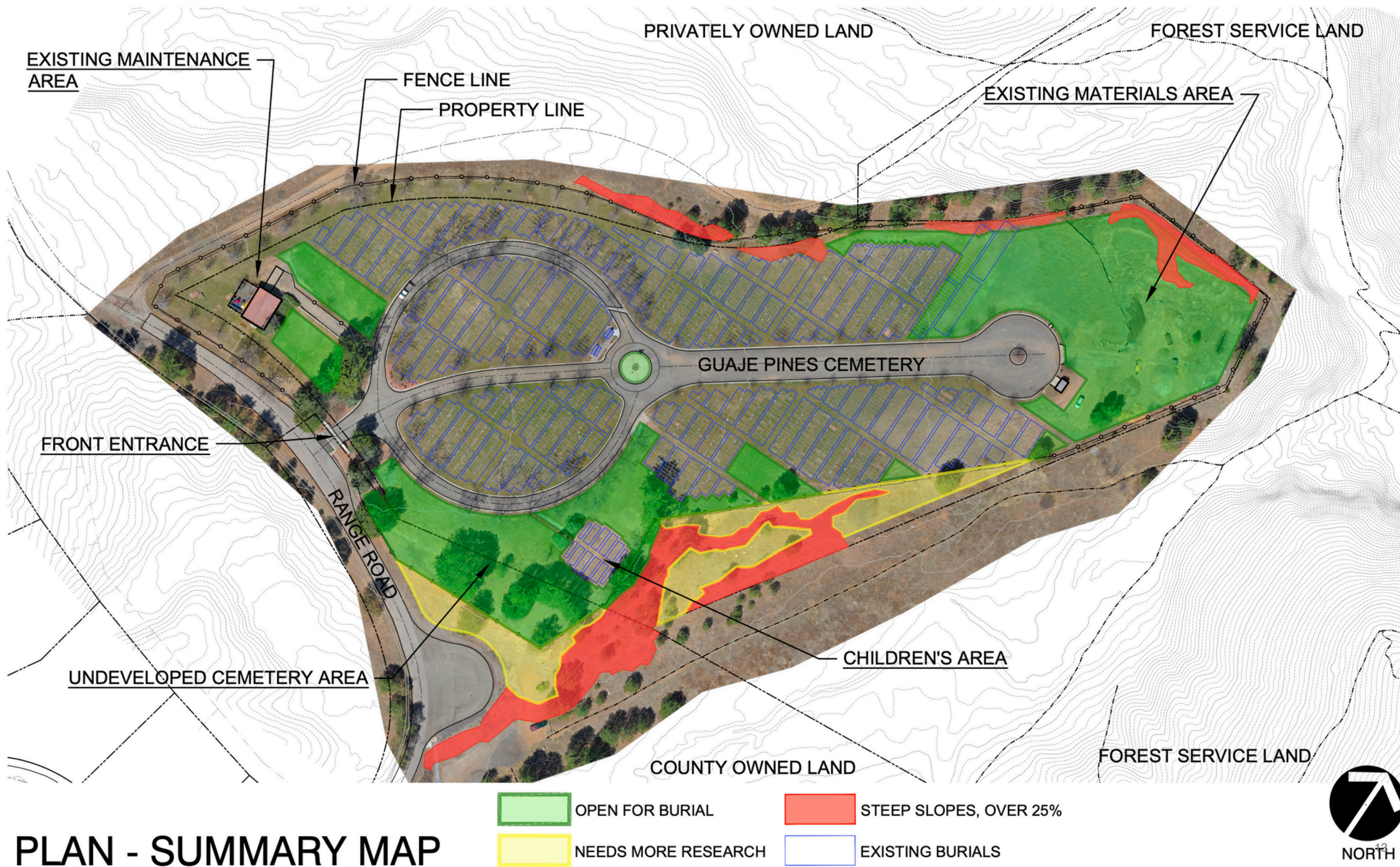
In terms of spatial distribution, the Summary Map illustrates existing burial areas in blue, future burial expansion zones in green, and yellow coded zones that require further evaluation due to a variance between existing fence lines and property lines. For the purposes of this master plan, we have utilized the fence line as our guide to developable property. Steep slope zones exceeding 25%, shown in red, are concentrated near the southern and northeastern boundaries and are considered unsuitable for burial development without significant engineering intervention.

### **Recommendations:**

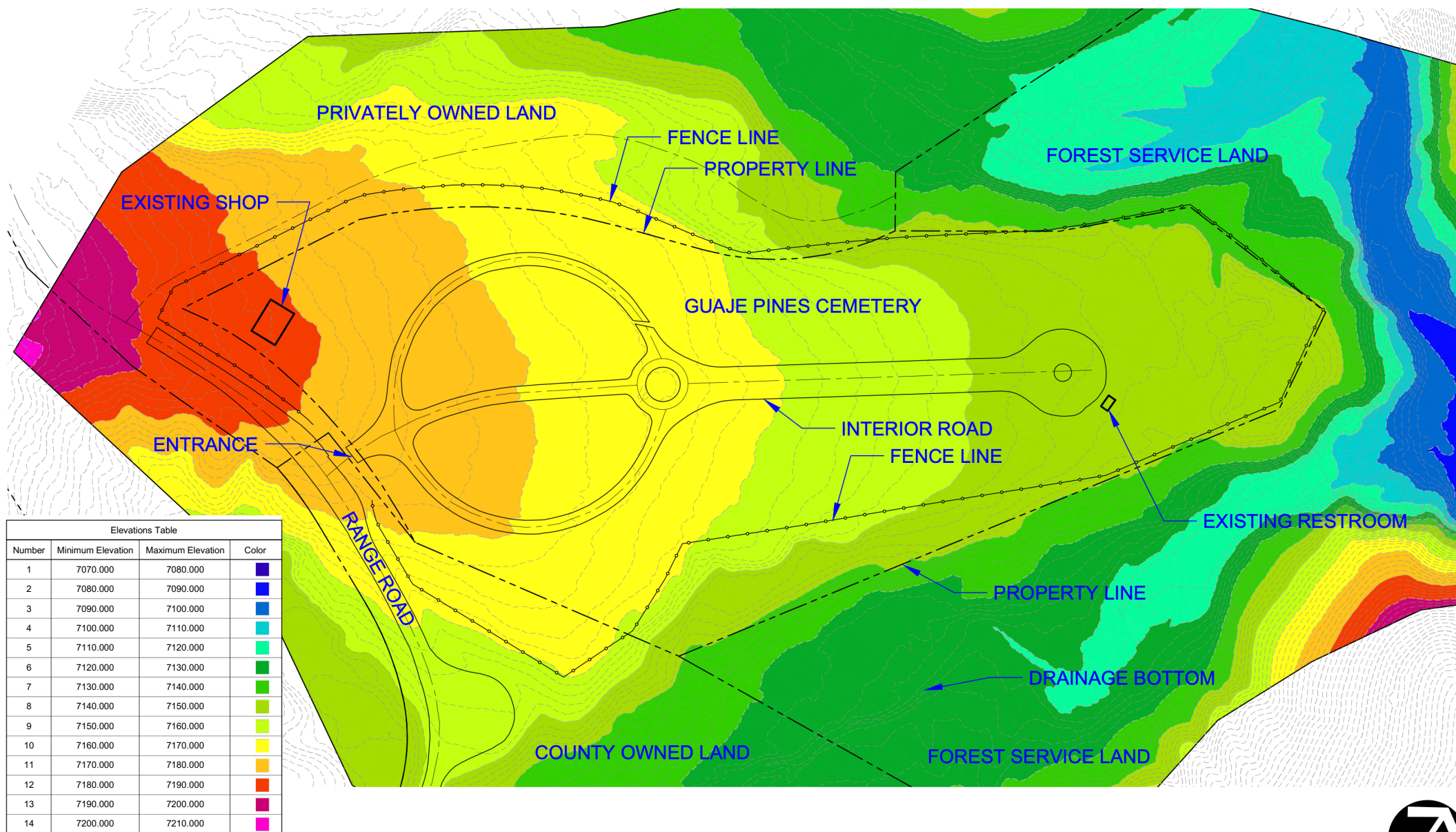
- Explore high-density burial options to optimize land use and extend the cemetery's useful life.
- Expand burial inventory by adding new columbarium structures and increasing both in-ground casket and cremation options in underutilized or developable areas.
- Avoid development on steep slopes and prioritize the preservation of natural drainage corridors to prevent erosion and protect site integrity.
- Improve internal circulation by evaluating opportunities to reconfigure or enhance access routes, particularly to the eastern portion of the site.
- Consider long-term expansion opportunities into adjacent County or Forest Service owned lands, subject to feasibility and jurisdictional coordination.

A data-informed approach will enable Los Alamos County to sustain Guaje Pines Cemetery as a respectful, operationally efficient, and community-aligned resource for decades to come.





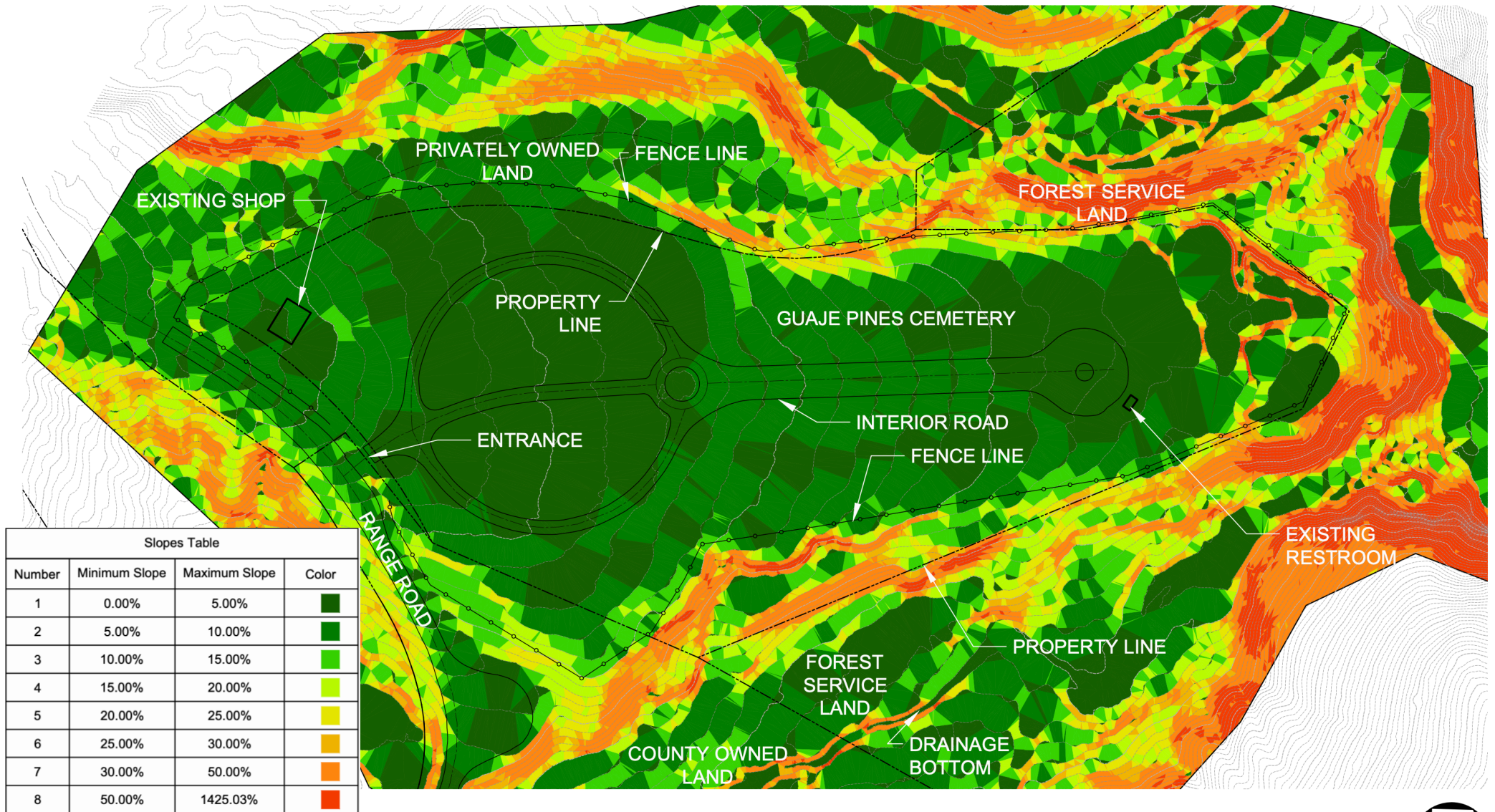




# PLAN - ELEVATION MAP







## PLAN - SLOPE MAP



## Access, Circulation, and Vehicular Roads

Guaje Pines Cemetery is accessed primarily via Range Road, with most visitors approaching from Diamond Drive, turning at the intersection near Los Alamos Fire Station #4. Although a small stone directional sign is present at this intersection, it is partially obscured by site grading, making it difficult to see, particularly for first-time visitors. This modest wayfinding element does not reflect the dignity or importance of the site and should be upgraded with enhanced signage and landscaping to increase visibility and provide a more appropriate gateway into the cemetery.

The main entrance to the cemetery is located further up Range Road. This entrance features a cattle guard, which serves the practical purpose of deterring feral cattle intrusion, and is flanked by stone pillars marking the cemetery's boundary. While functional, the entrance currently lacks a sense of arrival or the visual and emotional impact appropriate to Guaje Pine's significance. To reinforce the cemetery's contemplative atmosphere, the site would benefit from gateway enhancements, such as ornamental landscaping, improved monument signage, and architectural treatments that express the sacred and civic nature of the place.

Once inside the cemetery, visitors navigate a system of wide, gently curving, tree-lined roads that loop through the western portion of the ground before becoming a wide road that stretches to the eastern roundabout. These paved drives are bordered by concrete curbs and provide ample width for vehicular traffic and informal overflow parking. The mature trees that line the roadways add shade, beauty, and a park-like quality to the landscape, contributing to the peaceful experience of the cemetery. Notably, the trees in the older western portion of the cemetery are more mature and established than those in the more recently developed eastern areas, creating a distinct contrast in character and canopy coverage across the site.

The roadways are generally in moderate condition. While many sections are still functional, field assessments noted areas of cracking, potholes, patch failure, and surface degradation. These conditions detract from the visual quality and comfort of the ride, particularly near the restroom. A comprehensive road maintenance plan is recommended, prioritizing a phased approach that includes spot patching, surface sealing, partial resurfacing, and full reconstruction as needed. This approach will help extend the useful life of the road network while maintaining a respectful visitor experience.

Currently, there is no internal sidewalk system within Guaje Pines Cemetery, and pedestrian circulation is limited to shared use of the vehicular roadways. However, given that few visitors arrive on foot, and that vehicular traffic is typically light and slow-moving, this arrangement remains generally appropriate for the site's operational needs. Additionally, Los Alamos County maintains an extensive and well-connected regional trail system, including several trails adjacent to the cemetery, which further reduces the need to accommodate passive recreational uses such as walking within the cemetery grounds. Future planning may still consider small-scale pathway additions for accessibility or ceremonial purposes, but the current configuration largely supports visitor needs.

Drainage throughout the cemetery appears to function adequately, and no signs of erosion or significant ponding were evident during site visits. However, long-term monitoring is advisable, particularly along road edges and undeveloped sections where new interment areas or infrastructure may affect stormwater flow.

As the cemetery considers future development, access to the eastern section, which is currently more isolated, should be evaluated. It may be beneficial to establish an extended vehicular loop into this area to support expansion and operations, while minimizing disturbance to sensitive landscape features.

#### Summary of Recommendations:

- Improve visibility and design of wayfinding signage at Diamond Drive and Range Road.
- Enhance the main entrance through landscaping, signage upgrades, and architectural treatments.
- Develop a phased road maintenance plan combining patching, resurfacing, and targeted reconstruction.
- Explore the feasibility of a new access route or loop to the eastern undeveloped section.
- Monitor drainage performance over time, especially in areas identified for expansion or infrastructure changes.

These improvements will collectively support a more welcoming, navigable, and dignified experience for all visitors to Guaje Pines Cemetery.



# Front Entrance

The current entry is functional but understated. Enhancing signage, landscaping, and entry features would help establish a stronger sense of arrival and reflect the dignity of the cemetery.





# Vehicular Circulation: Current Conditions

Well-maintained roads lined with mature trees define much of the cemetery's peaceful setting. Low-speed access and informal parking work well here, with ongoing upkeep needed to protect long-term function.





# Vehicular Circulation: Current Conditions

These images highlight areas of pavement cracking, curb damage, and general wear near key access points. A phased road repair and resurfacing plan is recommended to improve safety and preserve visual quality.





## Maintenance Facilities

Guaje Pines Cemetery is currently supported by two primary operational spaces: a maintenance building located near the western entrance and a secondary spoils and materials area on the eastern side of the property.

### **Primary Maintenance Building and Yard**

Located near the entrance from Range Road, the primary maintenance building at the front of the cemetery is a block structure with a pitched roof that stores two utility vehicles, trailers, hand tools, and equipment. Inside, the space is heavily used, with narrow storage aisles and a small, basic office and break area. While the building continues to function adequately, it is approaching the limits of its capacity and shows signs of deterioration, both structurally and visually. To accommodate the relatively low number of burials, the County trailers in heavy equipment, such as a backhoe, from other County facilities as needed. This arrangement remains feasible due to the limited frequency of interment services.

Adjacent to the building is a fenced-in utility yard, enclosed by chain-link fencing, where larger tools, equipment, and traffic cones are stored. This area is intended to provide separation between operational materials and the active cemetery grounds but currently lacks screening. From multiple viewpoints, the yard remains highly visible to cemetery visitors and neighbors, detracting from the serene setting of the cemetery.

### **Secondary Maintenance / Spoils Area**

A second operational area is located at the eastern edge of the cemetery, across from the main burial lawns. This space is used to store excess soil ("spoils") from plot excavations and other excess materials. While it is functionally necessary, this area is also visible from burial sites and walking paths and currently lacks vegetative or built screening. As a result, the cemetery has two separate "backstage" maintenance zones that are exposed to the public: one at the entrance and one at the far eastern edge. This reduces the visual cohesion and overall sense of serenity throughout the site.

### **Recommendations**

- Assess opportunities to consolidate maintenance functions into a single, more efficient location, ideally repositioned or reoriented to reduce visibility from primary visitor routes.
- Enhance the appearance of maintenance and spoils areas by introducing vegetative buffers, fencing, or architectural screening to minimize visual impact.
- Consider long-term improvements to the maintenance building, such as upgrading to a more functional and durable structure (e.g., a pole barn with enclosed walls).

## Restrooms

There is a vault toilet that serves as the cemetery's restroom. It is a small, self-contained unit that remains functional and clean despite its modest construction. While not modernized, it is well maintained and continues to serve the needs of cemetery visitors. Future upgrades may

consider accessibility enhancements and aesthetic improvements to better align with the surrounding park-like setting.

### **Recommendations**

- Integrate screening and landscaping elements around the restroom to better blend the structure into the cemetery's natural, park-like setting.
- Consider long-term upgrades to the existing restroom facility to enhance user comfort and accessibility.

# Maintenance Facilities: Primary

The current maintenance building serves essential functions but is aging and over capacity. Interior photos show tight storage, while the exterior yard is cluttered and highly visible to visitors. Consolidation and improved screening are recommended to support operations while preserving the cemetery's serene atmosphere.





# Maintenance Facilities: Spoils Area

Located at the eastern edge of the site, the spoils area is utilitarian but lacks enclosure. Weather often makes access difficult, and the visibility of excess materials detracts from the setting. Relocating these functions to a screened, consolidated zone would improve both aesthetics and usability.





# Restrooms

The cemetery's single vault toilet is clean and serviceable but modest. While it meets basic needs, accessibility upgrades are required. Screening and landscaping are recommended to integrate it more fully into the park-like setting.



## Landscape & Trees

Guaje Pines Cemetery is defined by its mature pine canopy and open meadow aesthetic, which together create a tranquil, natural setting that reinforces the solemnity and dignity of the cemetery. The landscape benefits from an established mix of deciduous and evergreen trees that provide shade, seasonal interest, and frame views of the surrounding terrain. These elements contribute significantly to the cemetery's serene, park-like atmosphere and overall identity.

Field assessments, however, reveal a mixed condition across the existing tree inventory. While many trees appear healthy and well-maintained, others exhibit signs of decline, including limb dieback, bare crowns, or trunk girdling caused by overgrown turf or improper maintenance practices. In some areas, shrubs and dense ground vegetation are crowding tree bases, further stressing the trees. Some tree, shrubs and bushes will require removal and replacement. Younger trees are limited in number, and many are showing signs of stress, suggesting the need for more robust succession planting.

Shrubbery and ornamental plantings across the site are limited in number and, in several areas, noticeably overgrown, most prominently near the children's section. Turf conditions are generally healthy, though some isolated areas show signs of compaction and thinning, suggesting a need for selective aeration and reseeded. Enhancements such as regular mulching, root zone care, and strategic pruning would significantly elevate the overall appearance and horticultural quality of the cemetery grounds.

To preserve and enhance the landscape character of Guaje Pines, the master plan recommends the development of a tree inventory and phased succession strategy. This plan should include care for healthy existing trees, strategic pruning, and the removal and replacement of compromised trees and plantings. The use of mulch collars, diverse understory plantings, and targeted shade canopy expansion will ensure long-term landscape health and beauty. Landscape improvements should be prioritized at key locations such as the main entrance, central gathering areas, and any future expansion zones, reinforcing the peaceful and reflective environment valued by the community.

### **Recommendations:**

- Conduct a full tree inventory and condition assessment.
- Remove declining or hazardous trees and implement a phased replacement program.
- Introduce mulch collars at the base of all young trees to protect root zones and prevent girdling.
- Establish a diverse planting strategy to enhance resilience and seasonal interest.
- Develop an understory planting palette that reinforces the site's native character and supports biodiversity.
- Expand shade canopy coverage in open areas and along high-use circulation routes.
- Improve screening of maintenance areas with plantings that are compatible with the overall landscape setting.

These steps will help preserve Guaje Pines' unique landscape identity while ensuring its continued function and beauty for future generations.



# Landscape & Trees

Guaje Pines' peaceful identity is rooted in its mature trees and open meadows. While many trees remain healthy, others show signs of stress or decline, and shrubbery is often overgrown. A tree inventory, phased replacements, and enhanced planting strategies will preserve the cemetery's natural beauty and shade canopy into the future.





## Cemetery Features

Guaje Pines Cemetery includes several distinctive built features that contribute to the functionality and visual identity of the site, although many remain minimal in design and could benefit from cohesive upgrades. At the heart of the cemetery lies a circular gathering area, prominently marked by a tall flagpole displaying the U.S. and New Mexico flags. This central circle is paved and edged by a low stone wall planter but is otherwise modestly landscaped. Its current condition reflects basic maintenance but presents an opportunity for enhancement as a formal focal point through more intentional planting, seating, or memorial elements.

A columbaria court anchors one end of the interior road loop, flanked by two memorial wall structures set within a small plaza. This space is enriched by a sculptural element, “Spirit Dance” by Sally Helper, which adds a contemporary artistic dimension and acts as a contemplative centerpiece. Surrounding plantings include ornamental grasses and perennial species, which add texture and seasonal variety.



Memorial benches are scattered throughout the cemetery grounds and along perimeter pathways. These benches vary significantly in style, color, and condition, ranging from painted metal to plastic-lumber composite to stone benches, creating a somewhat disjointed visual impression. While they provide necessary moments of pause and reflection, a unified bench design standard would enhance the overall cohesion of the cemetery’s furnishings.

Despite these built interventions, the cemetery’s most powerful and memorable feature remains its natural setting. Views to the surrounding foothills and wooded slopes frame the site and create a deeply tranquil atmosphere. This connection to nature, reinforced by mature trees, wide open lawns, and the absence of intrusive development, defines the cemetery’s character and offers an essential layer of solace and dignity.

**Recommendations:**

- Develop a consistent furnishings palette for benches, signage, and other small structures to strengthen visual identity.
  - As existing memorial benches become damaged or hazardous, replace them incrementally with a unified, durable design that aligns with the overall aesthetic of the cemetery.
- Enhance the central flagpole circle with additional landscaping, shade, or commemorative features to increase its presence as a gathering space.
- Continue maintenance and periodic refresh of the columbaria court plantings to retain seasonal interest and visual polish.
- Prioritize preservation of long views to natural features and use design interventions that are subtle, respectful, and integrated with the broader landscape context.



# Cemetery Features

Key features like the central flag circle and the columbaria court define the cemetery's formal spaces. These elements are currently modest but hold strong potential for enhancement. Adding commemorative plantings, artwork, or seating can elevate their role as focal points for gathering, ceremony, and remembrance.





# Cemetery Features: Memorial Benches

Memorial benches are placed throughout the cemetery; however, styles, materials, and conditions vary widely, creating a disjointed appearance. Replacing damaged or aging benches with a consistent, durable design will strengthen visual unity.



## Children's Burial Area

The Children's Burial Area at Guaje Pines Cemetery is a deeply meaningful and emotionally sensitive part of the site, dedicated to memorializing the lives of community members lost at a young age. This section is accessed via a modest pathway that leads to an oval-shaped clearing, bordered by evergreen trees and informal landscaping. While the existing setting provides a sense of enclosure and natural quiet, the area currently lacks visual prominence and could benefit from stronger design features to convey its special purpose and identity.

The original 1962 site plan reveals that the Children's Section was once envisioned as a distinct, circular area accessed by a clearly defined entry path, a geometry still partially visible today. This historic layout offers an opportunity to reestablish a formalized sense of place by drawing inspiration from the original design intent. Restoration of the circular form, coupled with landscape enhancements, would provide greater clarity and reverence to this important area.

Although the number of annual interments in the Children's Section has declined over time, with just 13 burials recorded since 2000 and five since 2010, this does not diminish the significance of the space. In a recent and compassionate policy shift, the County Council authorized free burial for residents under the age of six. This commendable, responsive policy supports grieving families during times of immense hardship and may lead to increased future use of the section.

Currently, the area lacks a focal point or unifying landscape treatment. A central memorial feature, such as a sculpture, planting bed, or ornamental tree, could serve as a visual anchor and enhance the spiritual character of the space. A public art initiative to support such a feature would likely be well received by the community. Additional landscaping, including flowering trees, native groundcovers, or sensory plantings, would further soften the area and help distinguish it from the broader cemetery grounds. At the same time, care should be taken to preserve open views and maintain passive-use areas for quiet reflection.

### **Recommendations:**

- Introduce a central commemorative element designed in collaboration with community stakeholders.
- Restore or reinforce the circular layout as originally envisioned to elevate legibility and historic continuity.
- Maintain the clear entrance path, possibly adding low-scale signage or wayfinding markers to denote this unique area.
- Long-term consider contemplative landscaping with color, texture, and seasonal interest.
- Monitor demand and capacity, given the recent policy change, to ensure adequate long-term space planning.

Together, these enhancements will preserve the dignity of the Children's Section, create a deeper sense of place, and honor the memory of those interred with compassion and respect.



# Children's Area

This special area honors young lives with quiet dignity but is currently diminished by overgrown plantings, aging turf, and a lack of clear definition. Plans call for refreshing the landscape, restoring the original circular layout, and introducing a central memorial feature to create a more intentional, comforting, and respectful space for grieving families.



## Visitor Experience, Signage, and Wayfinding

The visitor experience at Guaje Pines Cemetery is shaped by its tranquil setting, but the current signage and wayfinding infrastructure falls short of offering clear orientation and intuitive navigation. Entry signage at the cemetery, including the primary monument sign at the intersection of Range Road and Diamond Drive, is modest and partially obscured by vegetation and site grading. This makes the site difficult to locate, particularly for first-time visitors. Once inside the cemetery, the stone entry columns mark the formal entrance but provide no additional guidance or wayfinding support.

Internal navigation relies on a series of wooden section markers, which are inconsistent in appearance and legibility. Many of these markers are faded, weather-worn, or non-standard in placement and design. While metal survey pins are visible throughout the site, these serve a primarily administrative function and do not assist visitors in locating graves. There is no public-facing master map on-site, and no interpretive or directional signage guiding guests through the cemetery grounds.

The only regulatory signage observed includes utilitarian notices, such as the sign prohibiting dogs on the grounds, and temporary event announcements (e.g., cemetery cleanup days), which are often posted on laminated paper and affixed to stakes or trees. These lack the permanence, quality, and cohesion expected in a setting of reverence.

Although there is a digital resource available, a burial locator hosted online ([https://burialsearch.com/648/Guaje\\_Pines\\_Cemetery](https://burialsearch.com/648/Guaje_Pines_Cemetery)), its utility is limited to those with prior awareness and digital access. On-site connectivity and signage to promote this tool are absent, limiting its reach and usefulness.

Recommendations to enhance visitor orientation and support include:

- Develop and install a permanent, weather-resistant site map near the entrance and key internal nodes.
- Standardize section markers with consistent, durable materials and clearly legible fonts.
- Improve entry signage visibility through relocation, landscaping, or lighting enhancements.
- Introduce wayfinding kiosks or QR-code linked stations for digital access to the burial locator tool.
- Replace or formalize event signage with removable but professionally printed panels to preserve aesthetic integrity.
- Add interpretive and directional signage to guide pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

These improvements will contribute significantly to the overall visitor experience by reinforcing a sense of care, dignity, and accessibility at Guaje Pines Cemetery.



# Visitor Experience, Signage & Wayfinding

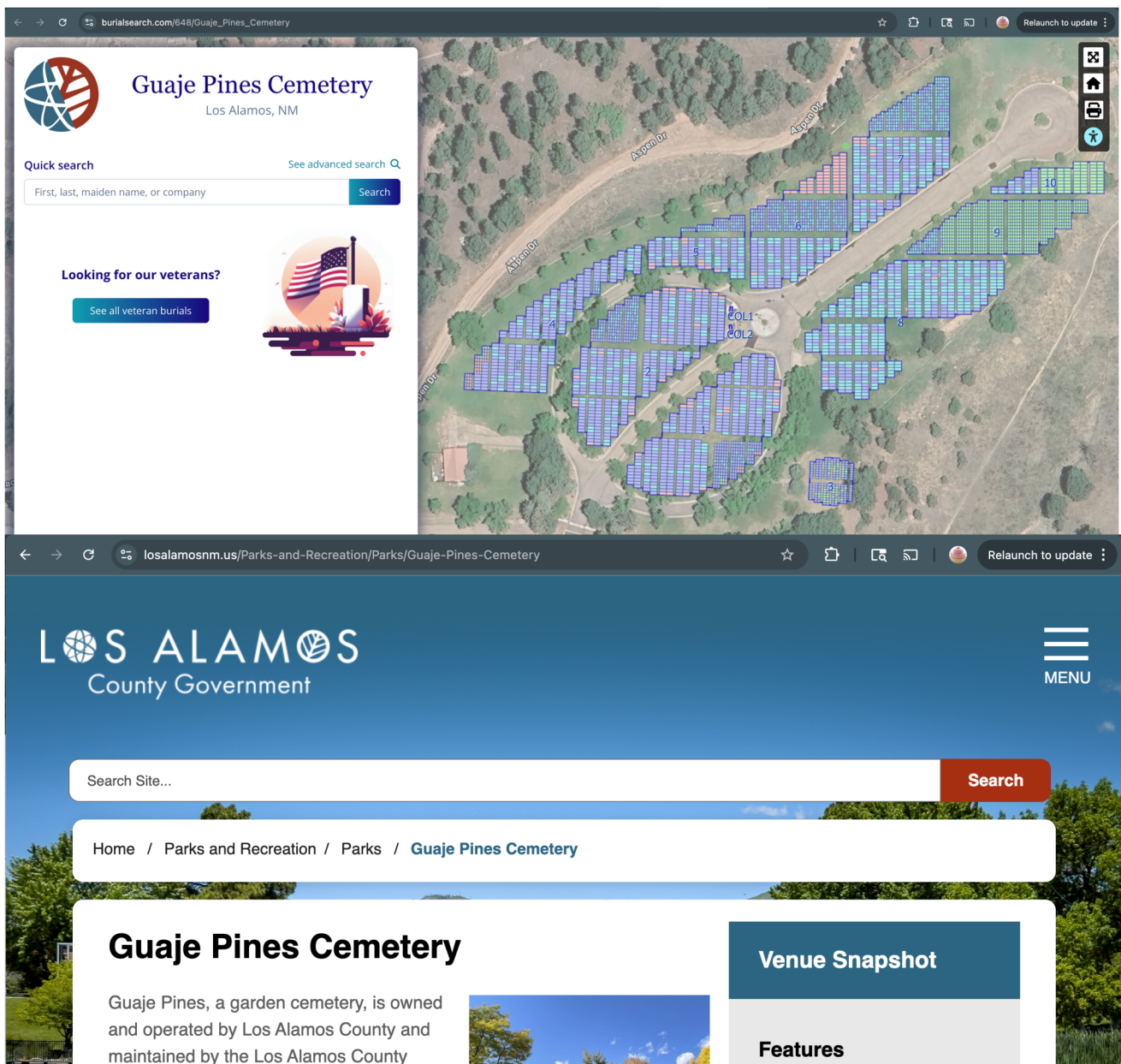
Wayfinding and signage at Guaje Pines are currently minimal and inconsistent. Improving entrance visibility, installing a master site map, and updating section markers will support orientation and reinforce the cemetery's civic and contemplative setting.





# Online Resources

The cemetery's online presence, including the Los Alamos County website and the Guaje Pines burial search tool, offers helpful background and grave locator services. However, these resources are underutilized due to limited visibility on-site. Linking to the burial search via QR codes, kiosks, or signage would improve accessibility for visitors and help integrate digital tools into the overall wayfinding system.



## Irrigation

The irrigation system at Guaje Pines Cemetery is generally well-functioning, with many zones receiving consistent and sufficient water to maintain healthy, vibrant turf. A looped two-inch mainline provides reliable pressure and volume across the site. In zones where consistent irrigation heads and spacing are used, the turf quality is notably strong. The system includes remote-controlled valves and wide easements throughout the cemetery, which allow irrigation lines to reach all currently developed burial sections efficiently.

There remain opportunities for improvement in specific areas. Some zones contain a mix of outdated Rain Bird brass impact heads and newer Hunter I-40 rotors operating on the same valve. These mismatched head types have different precipitation rates and spacing requirements, leading to irregular distribution. As a result, some turf areas are under-watered while others are saturated, with visible dry patches or pooling in certain locations. These zones currently fall below the industry-standard target of 80 percent distribution uniformity.

Additionally, as new burial sections are developed, the irrigation system has been extended accordingly. However, the undeveloped eastern portion of the site has not yet been connected to the irrigation system. This has created a noticeable contrast in turf conditions between irrigated and non-irrigated areas.

Aging infrastructure also contributes to operational inefficiencies. Several valve boxes are old cast iron units that are deteriorating and unmarked, making it difficult for new staff to locate and service irrigation components quickly and safely.

To optimize performance, ensure consistent coverage, and promote water efficiency, a coordinated set of irrigation upgrades is recommended. Standardizing sprinkler heads across zones, particularly replacing remaining impact heads with Hunter I-40 rotors, will improve pressure consistency and allow for matched precipitation. Head spacing and nozzle selection should also be reviewed to ensure alignment within each zone.

Introducing smart irrigation controllers that use real-time soil moisture sensors and weather data (including rainfall and evapotranspiration rates) will allow for zone-specific, adaptive watering schedules that reduce waste and improve turf health. Evapotranspiration-based run-time scheduling will allow staff to tailor watering to actual need, reducing both overwatering and drought stress.

Though no existing non-potable water connection point was observed at Guaje Pines, future infrastructure expansions should include provisions for utilizing non-potable water if it becomes available. Water harvesting techniques may also be considered in the long term, although they appear cost-prohibitive in the near term.

Replacing deteriorating valve boxes with commercial-grade plastic boxes and clearly labeling their function (e.g., through heat branding) will enhance long-term maintenance, staff training, and system management.

These improvements not only support healthy turf and operational efficiency but also align with Los Alamos County's Strategic Leadership Plan priorities for environmental stewardship and water conservation. Specifically, the plan calls for reducing the use of potable water for irrigation. By modernizing the irrigation system, through efficiency-focused upgrades like standardized sprinkler heads, smart controllers, and zone-specific scheduling, Guaje Pines Cemetery can help advance these County sustainability goals while preserving the site's visual quality and long-term ecological performance.

**Recommendations:**

- **Standardize Irrigation Heads:** Replace all remaining Rain Bird brass impact heads with Hunter I-40 rotors to ensure consistent precipitation rates and system compatibility.
- **Improve Zone Configuration:** Adjust nozzle selection and spacing to align with pressure availability and zone layout; group 360-degree, 180-degree, and 90-degree heads onto separate valves where feasible.
- **Adopt Smart Controller Technology:** Install a smart irrigation controller system capable of monitoring soil moisture and local weather data to dynamically adjust run times based on evapotranspiration.
- **Extend Irrigation Infrastructure:** Plan for phased irrigation expansion into the eastern undeveloped portion of the site to support future burial sections and eliminate visual turf disparities.
- **Upgrade Valve Boxes:** Replace outdated cast iron valve boxes with labeled commercial-grade plastic valve boxes to improve equipment protection, system visibility, and ease of maintenance.

These upgrades will strengthen the cemetery's irrigation infrastructure, promote healthy and consistent turf conditions, and reduce water waste. In doing so, they support both aesthetic and operational goals while advancing Los Alamos County's long-term commitments to sustainability and responsible landscape stewardship.



# Irrigation

Guaje Pines' irrigation system is in generally good condition, keeping most turf areas healthy and green. Targeted upgrades, like standardized sprinkler heads, nozzle adjustments, and fine-tuned run times, can further improve coverage and water efficiency.





# Needs Assessment & Program Development

## Demographic and Mortality Overview

Los Alamos County is a relatively small but affluent community in northern New Mexico, with an estimated population of 19,675 in 2024 according to the US Census Bureau. The county is characterized by high educational attainment, over 68% of residents aged 25 and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, and strong income levels, with a median household income of \$143,188 and per capita income of \$72,684, the highest among neighboring counties.

Approximately 18.5% of the population is aged 65 and older, and the county maintains high rates of internet access, computer ownership, and health insurance coverage. The majority of residents identify as White (79.6%), with 18.1% identifying as Hispanic or Latino.<sup>1</sup>

The overall population has been gradually increasing since 2010, reflecting steady regional growth. This demographic shift, paired with an aging population, underscores the need for long-term planning in cemetery services. In 2024, Los Alamos County recorded 144 deaths, corresponding to a crude death rate of approximately 0.80%.<sup>2</sup> While relatively low, this figure is expected to grow in coming years as residents continue to age.

Surrounding counties demonstrate distinct demographic and mortality trends.<sup>3</sup> For comparison:

County	Deaths (2024)	Population (2024)	Crude Death Rate (%)
Los Alamos	144	19,444	0.80%
Rio Arriba	528	39,876	1.33%
Taos	393	34,405	1.21%
Santa Fe	1,524	155,956	1.02%
Sandoval	1,457	155,936	0.94%

These surrounding counties have higher absolute mortality rates, with Santa Fe and Sandoval serving as regional hubs with large, aging populations and a broader array of burial options. Los Alamos' relatively low mortality numbers reflect both its smaller population and its younger age distribution when compared to neighboring rural communities.

From a planning perspective, while immediate burial needs in Los Alamos remain modest, the data suggests that demand will increase over time. Additionally, with limited available land the remaining areas need to be designed with thoughtful planning, enhanced visitor experience, and long-term capacity strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *QuickFacts: Los Alamos County, New Mexico*.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losalamoscountynewmexico/PST045223>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. (2025). *National Vital Statistics System, Provisional Mortality Statistics, 2018 through last week results*. CDC WONDER Online Database.

<https://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd-icd10-provisional.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

## Burial Trends and Capacity Analysis

### Current Activity: Burial and Unit Sales

Over the past decade, Guaje Pines Cemetery has recorded a steady volume of burials, shaped increasingly by evolving community preferences and the physical constraints of the site. From 2015 through 2024, a total of 577 burials were conducted, averaging approximately 58 per year. A clear and consistent shift toward cremation is evident: 64% of all burials during this period were cremation-based, either in columbaria or in-ground cremation inurnments. The other 35% were casketed in-ground burials.

In 2024 alone, 47 of 65 burials (72%) were cremation-based, underscoring the growing preference for cremation. This trend mirrors national and regional patterns driven by affordability, personal choice, and the availability of alternative interment options.

#### Annual Burial Data (2015–2024)

Year	Cremation	Casket	Total	Cremation %
2015	38	12	50	76%
2016	41	27	68	60%
2017	42	13	55	76%
2018	29	18	47	62%
2019	34	21	55	62%
2020	27	14	41	66%
2021	42	33	75	56%
2022	36	27	63	57%
2023	36	22	58	62%
2024	47	18	65	72%

While casket burials have held steady at just over 20 per year, cremation has steadily gained popularity. This is also reflected in cemetery unit sales, which serve as a proxy for both immediate and future burial planning. Unit sales occur on both an at-need, when a loss has occurred and a pre-need, in advance of need, basis. Between 2020 and 2024, cremation and casket units were sold in nearly equal volumes:

#### Annual Interment Unit Sales (2020–2024)

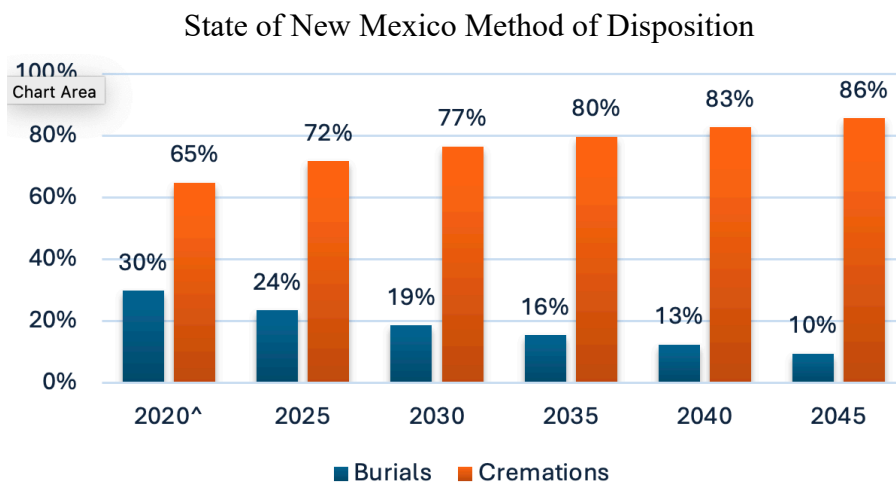
Year	Cremation Units	Casket Units	Cremation %
2020	24	28	46%
2021	31	38	45%
2022	32	27	54%
2023	39	44	47%
2024	64	60	52%

Year	Cremation Units	Casket Units	Cremation %
5-Year Avg	38.0	39.4	49%

This shift indicates that while many residents continue to choose casketed spaces, actual burial preferences increasingly favor cremation.

From a national perspective, cremation continues to rise as the most prevalent method of disposition across the United States. According to the *Cremation Association of North America (CANA) 2025 Annual Statistics Report*, cremation rates in the U.S. reached 61.8% in 2024 and are projected to rise to 67.9% by 2029. While the overall pace of growth is slowing, CANA predicts that national cremation rates will level off at around 80%, reflecting a mature stage of consumer preference and a broad cultural shift toward cremation as the new norm.<sup>4</sup>

New Mexico closely mirrors national cremation trends. The National Funeral Directors Association estimates that 70% of all dispositions in 2024 were cremations. This is only expected to increase as depicted in the following chart<sup>5</sup>:



This trend is increasingly visible at Guaje Pines Cemetery, where cremation services represent a growing share of interments. The County can expect this preference to become more pronounced in the coming years, reinforcing the need for investment in cremation-supportive infrastructure such as columbaria, scatter gardens, ossuaries, and cenotaphs.

Parallel to cremation’s rise, green or natural burial is also attracting growing public interest. In the Los Alamos Community Cemetery Survey, 20.38% of respondents expressed interest in green burial options, such as interment in a shroud, wicker casket, or other biodegradable container, without embalming fluids or concrete vaults. National data from the *2024 NFDA*

<sup>4</sup> Cremation Association of North America (CANA). “2025 Annual Cremation Statistics Report.” [CANA Website](#)

<sup>5</sup> National Funeral Directors Association. *2024 Cremation and Burial Report: Research, Statistics and Projections*. NFDA, 2024.



*Consumer Study* found that nearly 68% of U.S. consumers are open to exploring green funeral options.<sup>6</sup>

Although Guaje Pines may not have the available acreage for a large-scale green burial section, this trend warrants close monitoring. A future expansion site with suitable environmental conditions could be considered for a dedicated natural burial area. In the meantime, periodic public engagement and market analysis are recommended to ensure that the cemetery’s offerings evolve with community preferences.

In addition, County staff report that families frequently inquire about two options not currently offered at Guaje Pines: cremation scattering and cenotaphs. Cremation scattering involves the ceremonial dispersal of cremated remains within a designated, landscaped area of the cemetery, often paired with pathways, gardens, or shared memorial markers. This option allows families who do not wish to place remains in a burial plot or niche to still have a permanent location for remembrance. Cenotaphs, by contrast, are memorials dedicated to individuals whose remains are not interred at the monument, whether they are buried elsewhere, scattered offsite, placed in the cemetery’s scattering garden, or otherwise unavailable, and can take the form of plaques, monuments, or inscribed walls.

Introducing these options would broaden the range of services offered, respond to documented community interest, and strengthen Guaje Pines’ role as both a place of remembrance and a versatile public amenity.

## Burial Capacity

As of March 31, 2025, Guaje Pines Cemetery contains 874 developed interment spaces, including 16 columbaria niches, 729 in-ground cremation plots, 88 casket graves, and a dedicated children’s section of 41 plots. The following table summarizes the available inventory, excluding children’s graves, along with the projected useful life based on both 2024 sales rates and the five-year historical average (2020–2024).

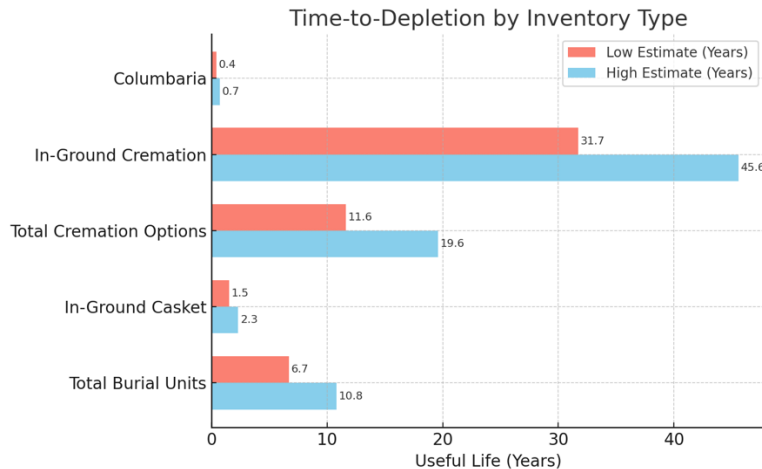
Inventory Type	Available Inventory (Units)	Useful Life Low*	Useful Life High**
Columbaria	16	0.4 years	0.7 years
In-Ground Cremation	729	31.7 years	45.6 years
<b>Total Cremation Options</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>11.6 years</b>	<b>19.6 years</b>
In-Ground Casket	88	1.5 years	2.3 years
<b>Total Burial Units</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>6.7 years</b>	<b>10.8 years</b>

\* Based on 2024 sales rate

\*\* Based on 5-year (2020–2024) average sales rate

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*



The most pressing capacity concern is with columbaria, where only 16 niches remain. At current demand levels, this inventory is projected to be exhausted this summer, creating a risk of a service gap if action is not taken promptly. The County has two additional columbarium units available for deployment once an appropriate site is identified, providing a near-term mitigation measure.

In-ground casket burial inventory is also critically constrained. At the five-year average rate of 39 interments per year, the 88 remaining spaces will be exhausted in just over two years. However, if demand matches the elevated 2024 rate of 60 burials, the available supply could be depleted in less than a year and a half. Given the cultural and personal significance of this interment type for many residents, proactive expansion planning is essential to maintain service continuity.

By contrast, in-ground cremation plots represent a long-term strength for the cemetery. With more than 700 available spaces and a projected lifespan of approximately 32 to 46 years, this category provides both immediate flexibility and strategic capacity to meet the growing demand for cremation.

The children's section contains 41 available spaces, with only 13 burials recorded since 2000. While demand has historically been low, this area remains an important community amenity. The County's policy of offering free interment for children under six may increase future use, making it prudent to preserve and maintain this capacity.

Understanding the historic allocation of space within the cemetery provides important context for today's capacity pressures. Historically, by proportion of inventory, approximately 34 percent has been devoted to in-ground casket burials, 30 percent to in-ground cremation, 2 percent to columbaria niches, and 2 percent to children's graves, with total cremation options representing about 32 percent overall. Measured by site area, in-ground casket burials occupy about 74 percent of the cemetery's developed footprint, compared with 22 percent for in-ground cremation, 1 percent for columbaria, and 3 percent for children's graves. Columbaria, a more recent addition to the product mix, accounts for only a small share of total space but is now the category facing the most immediate depletion. Casket burials, though a smaller share of the



overall inventory by unit count, consume the majority of available land and therefore experience faster constraints, while in-ground cremation retains the largest reserve capacity due to its smaller land requirements and slower rate of use.

### Historic Inventory Mix

	<b>In-Ground Casket</b>	<b>Cremation (In-Ground)</b>	<b>Cremation Niches</b>	<b>Total Cremation Options</b>	<b>Children</b>
Units	2218	1952	160	2112	165
% of Inventory	34%	30%	2%	32%	2%
% of square footage	74%	22%	1%	23%	3%

### Future Expansion

In addition to the developed interment areas, Guaje Pines Cemetery has approximately 1.8 acres remaining that are considered easily accessible for immediate development. 1.8 acres are considered easily accessible for immediate development. Applied to the historic allocation pattern, this acreage would yield approximately 1,300 in-ground casket spaces, 1,100 columbaria niches, and 160 in-ground cremation plots, for a total of about 2,560 burial units.

	<b>In-Ground Casket</b>	<b>Cremation Niches</b>	<b>Cremation (In-Ground)</b>	<b>Total Cremation Options</b>	<b>Total Burial Units</b>
Undeveloped Accessible Acres (Historic Mix)	1,300	160	1,100	1,260	2,560
Average Sales (2020- 2024)	39	16	22	38	77
Useful Life (years)	33	10	50	33	33

The master plan, however, recommends a more creative and nimble approach to maximizing available land, allocating portions of this area for memorial gardens, memorial features, and community amenities (seatings, pavilions, etc.), while still reserving capacity for in-ground burials. This balanced strategy responds to the community's growing preference for cremation and other alternative interment types, while also honoring the historic and cultural importance of ground burial. By planning for both, the cemetery can ensure that future inventory reflects evolving trends without losing sight of long-established needs.

Opportunities for additional capacity within the existing developed footprint are also explored such as opening the eastern (current backstage spoils area) to development by combining the two-maintenance area, exploring high density vertical columbarium development, and communal options such as ossuaries and memorial walls. Additionally, as the cemetery exhausts inventory it is recommended the in-fill projects be explored. This involves reclaiming the numerous pathways and easements in the cemetery for inventory options, in-ground burial and cremation as well as columbaria development. These concepts are explored in greater detail in the *Master Plan Design Concepts* section of this report.

Beyond the current cemetery boundaries, the County owns an additional 1.2 acres (approximately 52,000 square feet) of undeveloped land adjacent to the site. Depending on design, this property could yield roughly 960 in-ground burials, representing an additional 16 to 24 years of capacity, and may be well suited for the introduction of a natural burial section or other alternative memorial spaces.

Taken together, these potential expansions would significantly extend the cemetery's service life, an important consideration given the community's consistent death rate of about 145 residents annually. By emphasizing flexible, mixed-use burial types and aligning land use with shifting cremation trends, the County can sustain Guaje Pines as a dignified, adaptable, and community-responsive facility well into the future.

## Competitor Overview: Columbaria and Cemeteries in the Region

Guaje Pines Cemetery operates in a diverse memorial landscape that includes local parish columbaria and regional cemeteries offering a range of services, amenities, and pricing structures. A clear understanding of these competitors helps guide strategic planning and future investments.

### **Columbaria within Los Alamos (Parish-Based Options)**

Three church-affiliated columbaria provide cremation inurnment options within Los Alamos. These are typically smaller in scale and reserved for congregants or members of the community:

- Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church  
2390 North Road, Los Alamos, NM 87544
- Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church  
3900 Trinity Drive, Los Alamos, NM 87544
- The United Church of Los Alamos  
2525 Canyon Road, Los Alamos, NM 87544

These columbaria serve a niche audience seeking religious affiliation, convenience, and close-knit community spaces.

### **Regional Cemetery Competitors**

Regional cemetery competitors, primarily located in higher density areas such as Santa Fe and Albuquerque, represent broader regional competition, with some offering highly specialized services, extensive landscaping, or unique pricing models. The following are the key competitors identified in the surrounding area:

- Santa Fe National Cemetery  
501 North Guadalupe Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501  
Federally operated. Offers free burial for eligible veterans and their spouses, which makes it a highly attractive alternative for military families.

- **Rosario Cemetery**  
499 North Guadalupe Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501  
One of the oldest cemeteries in the area, offering a traditional Catholic setting with upright monuments and a long community history.
- **Santa Fe Memorial Gardens**  
417 Rodeo Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505  
A for-profit, manicured cemetery offering cremation niches, casket burials, and garden interment options in a landscaped memorial park.
- **Fairview Cemetery**  
1134 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505  
A non-profit cemetery offering casket burial in a modest, historic setting with limited recent upgrades.
- **Gate of Heaven Catholic Cemetery**  
7999 Wyoming Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Large-scale Catholic cemetery offering a range of upright and flat grave markers, columbaria, and dedicated family spaces.
- **Sandia Memory Gardens**  
9500 San Pedro Drive NE, Albuquerque, NM 87113  
A modern, privately managed cemetery offering cremation, casket burial, and memorial planning services.

The condition and character of cemetery grounds vary widely across the competitive landscape. Some sites, such as Santa Fe Memorial Gardens and Sandia Memory Gardens, feature manicured lawns, sculpted plantings, and well-maintained infrastructure. Others, including Fairview and portions of Rosario Cemetery, show signs of aging or minimal reinvestment in landscaping and site upkeep. This variation reflects differing funding structures, management models, and target markets; and it highlights the opportunity for Guaje Pines to distinguish itself through consistent care, long-term landscape stewardship, and a commitment to aesthetic quality.

#### Key Observations and Implications for Guaje Pines

- As a municipally owned and managed facility, Guaje Pines provides an essential public service, ensuring residents have a dignified, affordable, and locally accessible final resting place.
- Guaje Pines remains the only cemetery within Los Alamos, offering a natural landscape and easy access for residents. It is complemented by the three religious institutions that offer cremation niches for their parishioners.
- Santa Fe National Cemetery's free veteran burials represent a significant draw; Guaje Pines may explore commemorative features or partnerships to serve veteran families.
- The regional market reflects a wide range of service models, from modest non-profits to high-amenity private cemeteries, highlighting the importance of Guaje Pines clearly defining its own service identity, aesthetic goals, and value proposition.



## Operational Recommendations

### General Operations

Guaje Pines Cemetery, located at 901 Range Road in Los Alamos, is owned and operated by Los Alamos County. It is administered through the Parks and Open Space Division of the Community Services Department (CSD), which oversees all aspects of cemetery operations including plot sales, burial arrangements, interment services, and ongoing maintenance. In February 2024, the County consolidated the cemetery's administrative and operational functions under this division to improve efficiency and enhance customer service. This reorganization created a streamlined process that allows families to work with a single point of contact for all cemetery-related needs, from purchasing plots to coordinating burials.

The Parks and Open Space office, located at 101 Camino Entrada, Building 5, now serves as the main customer service hub for Guaje Pines Cemetery. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with after-hours appointments available for families and funeral providers by request. The office is located in the County complex and is moderately difficult to locate.

The primary staff responsible for cemetery operations include Wendy Parker, Parks Superintendent; Emmanuel "Manny" Abeyta, Assistant Parks Superintendent; and McKenzie Vaupel, Senior Office Specialist and primary family liaison. Cory Styron, Los Alamos' Community Services Director, oversees the department. The cemetery grounds are open to the public daily from sunrise to sunset, while the cemetery is open for memorial services Monday through Saturday from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

A significant update to the cemetery's ordinance was completed in 2024, marking the first major revision since 2018. Codified under Chapter 14, Article III of the Los Alamos County Code, the updated ordinance clarifies burial and disinterment procedures, distinguishes between legal code and internal policy, and authorizes the CSD Director to establish cemetery policies with approval from the County Manager. These changes modernize the cemetery's governance structure, enabling more adaptive and effective management while ensuring alignment with county-wide administrative standards.

The County also utilizes CIMS Cemetery Management Software as an asset management tool, which functions as a comprehensive inventory and genealogy database. It supports accurate plot and ownership tracking, streamlined scheduling of interments, improved customer service through searchable burial records, and proactive maintenance planning. In conjunction with the broader County GIS initiatives this also allows for enhanced mapping for both operational use and public wayfinding.

#### Recommendations:

- Maintain the current consolidated governance model, and periodically assess staff training needs in customer service, software use (e.g., CIMS), and burial logistics.
- Develop a short customer satisfaction survey to monitor service quality and responsiveness.

- Explore enhanced directional signage indicating the location of the Cemetery Office at the Comino Entrada County complex.

## Pricing / Fee Structure

The Guaje Pines Cemetery fee structure balances affordability with the long-term sustainability of cemetery operations. Fees are structured in two tiers, resident and non-resident, with the higher non-resident rates applying only to individuals residing outside the state of New Mexico. This policy ensures that the cemetery remains accessible and affordable for local and statewide residents, while also preserving finite inventory. Based on ownership records it appears that historically 75% of purchasers are from Los Alamos and 91% from New Mexico.

As of January 1, 2025, the current resident rates are as follows for core cemetery products and services:

- Adult burial plot: \$1,500
- Urn burial space: \$1,000
- Columbarium niche: \$1,000
- Burial service (in-ground): \$1,500
- Burial service (niche): \$600
- Grave opening fee: \$600
- Grave liner fee: \$450
- Marker setting fee: \$350

Notably, the County Council approved a compassionate policy in 2024 waiving all plot and burial fees for resident who have suffered the loss of a child under the age of six. This reflects a deeply responsive and community-centered approach, ensuring families experiencing loss are not burdened with burial costs during a time of grief.

We recommend that the County explore the implementation of discounted fees for veterans and County first responders as a gesture of appreciation for their service. Rather than creating exclusive burial sections, which may conflict with the egalitarian and spatial principles of the site, financial recognition can be incorporated through reduced plot prices or interment costs. This reinforces Guaje Pines' identity as a civic institution that recognizes and honors service both symbolically and practically. It also may increase the cemetery's relevance and accessibility to those who have dedicated their lives to public service for the community.

The non-resident pricing typically ranges 60-100% higher than resident fees; for example, the \$2,500 fee for an adult burial plot compared to the \$1,500 resident rate. These rates help preserve local access and are consistent with municipal norms, particularly given Guaje Pines' limited remaining inventory. In the intermediate term, as in-ground burial space becomes increasingly limited, it may be prudent to explore implementing three price tiers: Los Alamos Resident, New Mexico Resident, and Non-Resident Fees. This would ensure residents receive first access to the property.

We recommend that the County consider implementing modest annual increases in the price of burial plots. An annual adjustment of 3% to 5% would help keep pace with inflation while gradually aligning prices with regional benchmarks, maintaining Guaje Pines as an affordable, yet sustainable, option within the local burial market:

Adult Burial Property Potential Annual Increase (Rounded \$0's)

Annual Increase	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
2% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,530	\$1,560	\$1,590	\$1,620
<b>3% Annual Increase</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,540</b>	<b>\$1,590</b>	<b>\$1,640</b>	<b>\$1,690</b>
<b>4% Annual Increase</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,560</b>	<b>\$1,620</b>	<b>\$1,690</b>	<b>\$1,750</b>
<b>5% Annual Increase</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,580</b>	<b>\$1,650</b>	<b>\$1,740</b>	<b>\$1,820</b>
6% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,590	\$1,690	\$1,790	\$1,890
7% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,600	\$1,720	\$1,840	\$1,970
8% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,620	\$1,750	\$1,890	\$2,040
9% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,640	\$1,780	\$1,940	\$2,120
10% Annual Increase	\$1,500	\$1,650	\$1,820	\$2,000	\$2,200

We recommend reviewing and adjusting property and service fees on a regular schedule, at least every two years, to ensure they remain aligned with actual service delivery costs. All merchandise items such as vaults, niche plaques, and vases should be evaluated annually and adjusted as needed to reflect current material and labor costs.

While fee increases are never taken lightly, they are essential to support the cemetery's operating needs, capital improvements, and long-term planning. As space becomes increasingly limited, particularly for in-ground casket burials, periodic reassessment of pricing will be necessary to align with regional benchmarks and fund the growing maintenance demands of the site as well as ensure a dignified final resting place for generations of residents to come.

- Implement a modest, annual inflation-based adjustment (3%-5%) to property fees.
- Offer fee reductions for veterans and first responders as a civic recognition tool.
- Reassess all property and service fees at least biennially to ensure alignment with market rates and service costs. Merchandise fees should be reviewed annually.
- In the intermediate term, as in-ground burial space becomes increasingly limited, explore implementing three price tiers, Los Alamos Resident, New Mexico Resident, and Non-Resident, to ensure residents receive first access to the property.



### Guaje Pines Cemetery Fee Structure / Effective January 1, 2025

Guaje Pines Fees (Fees approved by County Council 11/12/2024)		Resident Fee	*Non-Resident Fee
SALE OF BURIAL AND NICHE SPACES			
SPACES	Adult Burial Plot	\$1,500	\$2,500
	Infant Burial Plot**	\$500	\$1,500
	Urn Burial Space	\$1,000	\$2,000
	Columbarium Niche	\$1,000	\$2,000
BURIAL SERVICE (PLACEMENT OF REMAINS/CREMAINS)			
BURIAL	In Ground: Adult, Infant**, Urn	\$1,500	\$2,500
	Columbarium Niche	\$600	\$1,600
DISINTERMENT FEES			
DISINTERMENT & REINTERMENT	Adult, Infant, Urn Burial Plot	\$600	\$600
	Columbarium Niche	\$300	\$300
MISCELLANEOUS FEES			
FEES	Grave Opening Only	\$600	\$600
	Grave Liner Only	\$450	\$450
	Marker Setting Fee	\$350	\$350
	Niche vase replacement	\$75	\$75
	2nd niche marker or replacement marker	\$350	\$350

\*Non-Resident Fee = Out of State purchase as outline in the Guaje Pines Cemetery Policy and Procedures

\*\*Infant plot/burial fee will be waived for infants under 6 years of age for residence.

## Policy / Ordinance

Guaje Pines Cemetery is governed under Chapter 14 *Article III – Cemeteries* of the County municipal code. This ordinance provides the framework for the County’s operation and long-term stewardship of the cemetery. It affirms the County’s responsibility to manage the facility, oversee interments and plot sales, maintain burial records, and set clear policies to ensure a respectful and orderly environment for families and visitors.

Under this ordinance, the County is empowered to establish a tiered fee structure for resident and non-resident interments, approve marker types and grave liners, and maintain site standards. The ordinance also regulates interment and disinterment procedures, defines permitted grave decorations, and prohibits unauthorized alterations, disruptive behavior, or damage to cemetery property. Notably, it includes a provision requiring the County to ensure the dignified burial or cremation of unclaimed or indigent individuals, in accordance with New Mexico state law, a compassionate and essential public service.

The ordinance also strictly defines grave sizes and capacities at Guaje Pines Cemetery to maintain order, consistency, and safety in the cemetery’s layout and operations. Adult grave spaces are required to measure 9 feet in length and 4 feet in width, with a minimum depth of 60 inches. Children's graves are smaller, measuring 4 feet by 3 feet and a minimum of 40 inches deep; however, any child over three feet in height must be buried in an adult-sized grave. It should be noted that the size of in-ground cremation graves is not currently dictated by the ordinance.

In terms of interment capacity, each adult grave may contain one full-body burial along with the cremated remains of one individual, or the cremated remains of two individuals. Under no circumstances may two full bodies be buried in a single grave. Columbarium niches are each sized at 12 inches on all sides and may accommodate up to two sets of cremated remains.

Grave memorial standards are equally well-defined to promote visual uniformity and long-term maintainability. All grave markers must be flush with the ground and constructed from bronze, granite, or marble, materials that are both durable and visually consistent.

Markers must be installed within three inches of the property line at the head of each grave, and vertical joints or upright monuments are not permitted. Dimensions vary by plot type:

<b>Grave Space Marker Size</b>	<b>Width of Grave Marker</b>	<b>Length of Grave Marker</b>
Single Adult Marker	24 inches (minimum)	12 inches (minimum)
	28 inches (maximum)	16 inches (maximum)
Double Adult Marker	36 inches (minimum)	14 inches (minimum)
	48 inches (maximum)	18 inches (maximum)
Baby Section Marker & Urns	8 inches (minimum)	12 inches (minimum)
	12 inches (maximum)	24 inches (maximum)
Columbarium	7" x 5"	7" x 5"

Each marker may include a single standard-size vase with a below-ground storage system. All markers must be installed by authorized personnel under the supervision of County staff. The plaques for the columbarium niches are provided exclusively by the County, reinforcing visual consistency and simplifying ongoing maintenance.

Complementing the ordinance is the Guaje Pines Cemetery Rules and Regulations, most recently adopted in December 2024. These regulations establish detailed operational procedures and guidelines for conduct, maintenance, and interments, further reinforcing the County’s commitment to respectful management and long-term care of the site.

Key elements of the rules and regulations include:

- **Governance and Oversight:** The Community Services Director (or designee) oversees policy implementation and cemetery operations. The Director has the authority to waive fees based on community need, including an automatic waiver for the burial of children under six years of age for Los Alamos and White Rock residents.

- Visitation and Conduct: The cemetery is open daily from sunrise to sunset, with office hours maintained on weekdays. Interments are not scheduled on County holidays. Visitors must adhere to rules that ensure respectful behavior, children under twelve must be accompanied by an adult, and activities such as unauthorized planting, advertising, or damage to graves are prohibited.
- Interment and Disinterment Procedures: Interment arrangements require at least two business days' notice, while disinterment requires five. Cremated remains may be mailed, hand-delivered, or couriered, and are typically placed within ten business days. The County is not liable for damage to containers during disinterment or reburial.
- Grave Markers and Memorials: All grave markers must comply with specific material and size standards and may only be installed or removed by authorized County personnel. Damaged or hazardous markers may be removed without prior notice. Temporary markers are not repaired or replaced by the County.

Together, the Cemetery Ordinance and the Cemetery Rules and Regulations form a comprehensive regulatory framework that balances legal compliance, operational clarity, safety, and community sensitivity.

There is a minor but meaningful inconsistency between the Los Alamos County ordinance governing Guaje Pines Cemetery and the cemetery's operational rules and regulations regarding the interment of non-human remains. Section 14-72 of the County Code clearly states that "each and every lot in the cemetery shall be used for the purpose of the burial of members of the human race, and no lot shall be used for any other purpose," suggesting a strict limitation to human interments. In contrast, the cemetery's rules and regulations provide a narrow and compassionate exception, permitting the interment of a domestic or pet animal's cremated remains, but only when placed concurrently with the human owner's remains in the same grave or columbarium niche.

While the operational rules handle this topic with sensitivity and respect, reflecting both the dignity of the site and the close bonds between individuals and their pets, their allowance appears to conflict with the broader restriction outlined in the ordinance. This inconsistency may warrant clarification to ensure alignment between official regulatory language and actual cemetery practice, particularly with regard to public understanding.

As Guaje Pines continues to evolve, these guiding documents ensure the cemetery remains a well-maintained, accessible, and dignified final resting place for the people of Los Alamos County. Periodic updates, especially to reflect new interment options or requirements, will help the regulations remain inclusive and relevant to future needs.

#### Recommendations:

- Update ordinance language to clarify the permissibility of interring cremated remains of domestic animals with human owners, aligning with actual practice and public expectations.
- Codify standard grave dimensions for cremated remains to ensure consistency within cremation inurnment sections



- Explore adopting a more flexible niche definition to accommodate diverse family needs: such as expanded 18” x 12” niches for up to three sets of cremated remains or double 24” x 12” niches for up to four sets cremated remains.
- Codify grave sizes for cremated remains to ensure consistency in cremation inurnment sections. Consider a more flexible niche definition to allow for the development that accommodate different family situations (expanded 18” x 12” niches that could accommodate three sets of remains or double 24” x 12” niches that could accommodate four sets of remains).

## Indigent Burial Program

Los Alamos County has established a framework to ensure the dignified burial or cremation of unclaimed and indigent individuals, as required by New Mexico state law. The County’s ordinance directs the County to “cause to be decently interred or cremated the body of any unclaimed decedent or indigent person in accordance with state law.” A broader framework is defined by New Mexico Statute 24-13-3, which requires counties to cover the cost, up to \$600, of burial or cremation for indigent or unclaimed individuals, using general funds or the county indigent hospital claims fund. If the decedent has assets, those must be used to offset the expense; if the individual’s residence is unknown, the county where the body is discovered assumes responsibility. Additionally, Statute 27-5-7.1 NMSA 1978 confirms that cremation and burial costs for indigent persons are an authorized use of county indigent funds.

The County’s commitment is carried out through the Health Care Assistance Program (HCAP) Policy and an Indigent Burial Determination Checklist, which define eligibility, application requirements, and burial protocols. Applications are reviewed to determine whether the decedent qualifies as indigent or unclaimed, with eligibility based on the absence of personal assets, family resources, or insurance coverage. If approved, cremation is the default method of disposition. County policy specifies that cremation will occur no later than thirty days from the eligibility determination, but no sooner than two weeks after death. Unclaimed remains are retained in a manner that ensures identification for a minimum of two years. After this period, the remains may be disposed of, provided that a permanent record of the place and manner of disposition is kept for at least five years.

Los Alamos County has taken important steps by codifying these requirements, but current policies could be made more widely available to the public online. In contrast, other counties have made their indigent burial processes more structured and accessible. Bernalillo County administers an Indigent Cremation Program with clear eligibility guidelines and an annual ceremony to honor unclaimed individuals. Torrance County offers an online application process with documented verification steps. Lea County integrates burial assistance into its Health Care Assistance Program, supported by gross receipts tax revenue. These examples demonstrate approaches that improve transparency, accessibility, and coordination with human services.

## Recommendations

Los Alamos County can strengthen its program by improving accessibility, visibility, and community engagement.

- Make HCAP Policy and application materials available on the County and Guaje Pines Cemetery websites.
- Provide clear online instructions, contact information, and downloadable forms.
- Potentially develop a distinct but respectful area within Guaje Pines Cemetery for indigent burials.
- Further partner with health, social service, and veterans' agencies to coordinate support.
- Host an annual remembrance ceremony for indigent and unclaimed individuals.
- Track and publish internal summaries of indigent burials to guide planning and resource allocation.

By formalizing and expanding this program, the County can continue to meet its obligations while ensuring that all residents, regardless of circumstance, are treated with dignity, respect, and care at life's end.

## Maintenance

Guaje Pines is widely recognized as one of the more attractive and well-maintained cemeteries in the region. Its mature trees, flush marker layout, and sweeping lawn vistas create a peaceful and dignified environment. However, maintaining that standard requires constant attention to detail and long-term planning. The master plan identifies a series of strategic and procedural enhancements to sustain and improve the quality of maintenance operations at the site.

### Lawn and Turf Care

Visual consistency in a flush-marker cemetery depends heavily on high-quality, well-maintained turf. Overall, Guaje Pines presents a strong landscape appearance, and the maintenance team appears to be making meaningful improvements. Recent burials are generally handled with care, with well-leveled markers and the installation of fresh sod to promote a consistent lawn surface. The team is also beginning to address persistent problem areas, including spots where water pools after irrigation or rainfall, an important step toward long-term turf health.

However, routine maintenance activities, especially grave preparation, lawn care, and service access, can result in turf damage in high-traffic areas. Areas adjacent to section access points and near the maintenance facility are especially prone to recurring turf damage due to repeated equipment use. These patterns of wear and compaction result in thinning grass, bare patches, and visible seams from frequent sod repairs.

To mitigate this, operational adjustments and minor capital improvements are recommended, including:

- Expand the access drive to the maintenance facility and incorporate curbing and protective plantings to reduce edge damage and improve vehicle maneuverability.
- Redirect equipment traffic to protect vulnerable turf areas. Existing curbs are low enough to permit careful entry; staff should vary vehicle paths when entering burial sections to minimize repeated stress on any single area.
- Over time, introduce rolling curbs or drive-over curb sections at strategic locations to provide durable, flexible access while maintaining a clean edge profile.

Continued investment in turf health is recommended through seasonal aeration, overseeding, soil amendments, and irrigation adjustments to promote deeper rooting and long-term resilience. Together, these measures will support both the visual integrity and the durability of the cemetery landscape.

### **Grave and Marker Maintenance**

Several labor-intensive but essential tasks, such as marker leveling, edging, vase resetting, and general clean-up around grave sites, require sustained attention. These activities are key to preserving both the appearance and reverence of the site. Recent burials areas should also be evaluated for settling and adjusted accordingly to maintain level and accessible turf sections. Establishing a quarterly rotation for edging, leveling, and other core tasks would help systematize this work and ensure consistent results over time.

### **Tree and Shrub Care**

The cemetery's tree canopy provides vital shade and character but faces growing threats from lawn equipment damage and aging plant stock. Several trees show evidence of girdling, decay, or partial dieback, particularly at the base, due to repeated mower or string trimmer damage. It is recommended that the County transition to mulch rings around tree trunks to prevent damage, paired with a phased replanting program to replace failing trees. Species selection should prioritize long-term resilience, biodiversity, and low-maintenance requirements.

Some shrubs show signs of neglect or overgrowth. Targeted removal of dead or underperforming plantings and replanting with climate-appropriate, low-maintenance species will support the cemetery's long-term visual coherence.

### **Maintenance Yard and Storage Improvements**

A proposed expansion and redesign of the maintenance and operations yard will allow for more efficient storage, tool organization, and separation of backstage functions. This is especially important for keeping operational clutter out of public view and improving the staff's ability to carry out daily duties effectively.

### **Planting and Replacement Cycles**

Finally, the cemetery should implement a systematic approach to planting maintenance, removing dead material, caring for young trees and shrubs, and setting expectations for new planting establishment. Proper irrigation, mulching, and seasonal attention to young plants will improve success rates and reduce the need for replacement.

Together, these maintenance recommendations aim to balance operational efficiency with the dignity, aesthetics, and reverence expected of a public memorial landscape. Investing in both daily attention and strategic improvements will help ensure that Guaje Pines remains a landscape of enduring quality and care.

### **Recommendations:**



- Improve turf and lawn care through seasonal aeration, overseeding, and irrigation adjustments, with added emphasis on soil health and durable sod installation following burials.
- Protect high-traffic turf zones by expanding the access drive to the maintenance yard, adding drive-over curbing, and rotating equipment access paths to minimize compaction.
- Enhance tree and shrub care by replacing turf rings with mulch rings, removing declining plantings, and implementing a phased replanting strategy using climate-appropriate species.
- Systematize grave and marker upkeep by establishing quarterly rotations for edging, leveling, vase resetting, and debris removal to preserve dignity and appearance across all sections. Recent burials should also be evaluated on a quarterly basis to assess sinking and turf establishment.
- Establish quarterly maintenance rotations for edging, leveling, vase resetting, and debris removal to ensure consistent dignity and appearance across all sections. Recent burials should also be inspected at least quarterly to monitor settling and confirm turf establishment.

Guaje Pines owes its well-regarded landscape and high standards to the dedication and attentiveness of the County’s maintenance team. The recommended improvements will build on this strong foundation, enhancing the visitor experience by reinforcing a lasting sense of care, dignity, and accessibility throughout the cemetery.

## Financial Framework

Guaje Pines Cemetery is financially sustained through a combination of operating revenues, budgeted General Fund expenditures, and a dedicated long-term perpetual care fund. In Fiscal Year 2024, the County recorded cemetery service revenues of \$64,638 as well as \$80,300 in Perpetual care services, both exceeding budget expectations<sup>7</sup>. Following temporary increases in revenue during the pandemic period due to a higher death rate, cemetery revenues have since stabilized and are now budgeted as follows<sup>8</sup>:

Revenue Category	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 (Adopted Budget)	FY2025 (Adopted Budget)
Cemetery Openings	\$ 97,898	\$ 62,051	\$ 61,105	\$ 61,716
Sales - Cemetery Lots (40%)	\$ 27,500	\$ 23,310	\$ 22,442	\$ 22,667
Sales - Cemetery Lots (60%)	\$ 41,250	\$ 34,965	\$ 35,704	\$ 36,061

Operating expenditures during fiscal year 2024 were \$33,981 comprised of \$14,702 for materials and supplies and \$19,279 for intrafund/interdepartmental services. This was under the budgeted

<sup>7</sup> Los Alamos County. (2024). *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024*. [https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative\\_services/budget\\_\\_finance/annual\\_comprehensive\\_financial\\_reports](https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative_services/budget__finance/annual_comprehensive_financial_reports)

<sup>8</sup> Los Alamos County. (2025). *2025–2026 Biennial Budget: FY 2025–Adopted, FY 2026–Projected*. Administrative Services Department: Finance Division. [https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative\\_services/finance/budget](https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative_services/finance/budget)

\$59,200. Some expenses are not allocated to the cemetery and instead sit within the broader parks and open space budget.

To provide context for expenditure trends, the table below summarizes actual and budgeted expenditures FY2022 through FY2026<sup>9</sup>:

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>FY2022 (Actual)</b>	<b>FY2023 (Actual)</b>	<b>FY2024 (Adopted Budget)</b>	<b>FY2025 (Adopted Budget)</b>	<b>FY2026 (Proposed Budget)</b>
Expenditures	\$ 24,884	\$ 31,883	\$ 59,200	\$ 35,066.	\$ 45,566

Looking ahead, the proposed FY 2026 cemetery expenditure budget is proposed to be \$45,566, representing a 30 percent increase over the FY2024 adopted budget. This \$10,500 increase reflects the County’s expectations of rising operational demands.

In addition to operating funds, the cemetery is financially anchored by a Perpetual Care Trust Fund, which established in 1996 is designed to ensure long-term maintenance of the cemetery once all burial plots are sold. Under County policy, forty percent of all cemetery revenue is allocated to this fund, which is treated as a permanent endowment. As of 2024, the trust held a balance exceeding \$1.5 million, managed professionally by the New Mexico State Investment Council.<sup>10</sup> Only the interest earnings from this account may be used for maintenance, ensuring that the principal is preserved. This structure ensures that maintenance obligations can be met in perpetuity, safeguarding the long-term integrity and appearance of the cemetery grounds for future generations.

Traditionally, for perpetual care funds, we recommend limiting annual distributions to no more than 4%. This threshold aligns with a conservative, long-term investment strategy in which returns exceed withdrawals, allowing the fund to continue compounding and preserving its principal over time. If the cemetery ceased active operations today, the following annual distributions could be supported based on a current fund balance of approximately \$1.5 million:

<b>Distribution Percentage</b>	<b>Distribution Amount</b>
2%	\$30,000
3%	\$45,000
4%	\$60,000

Given that the current budgeted operating cost for Guaje Pines Cemetery is \$45,566, the fund is nearing a level where it could support ongoing maintenance through its earnings alone. However, it is important to note that some cemetery-related costs are embedded within the broader Parks and Open Space Division budget. For this reason, we recommend the County continue its current practice of allocating 60% of lot sale revenues to the perpetual care fund to ensure long-term

<sup>9</sup> Incorporated County of Los Alamos. (2025). *Biennial Budget: FY2025 – Adopted, FY2026 – Proposed*. [https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative\\_services/budget\\_finance/biennial\\_budget](https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/administrative_services/budget_finance/biennial_budget)

<sup>10</sup> New Mexico State Investment Council. (2024). *Investment holdings report: August 31, 2024*. <https://www.sic.state.nm.us>

sustainability. Periodic financial reviews should be conducted to assess whether this contribution rate could be adjusted in the future, based on actual maintenance costs and fund performance.

#### Recommendations:

- **Maintain and Grow the Perpetual Care Trust Fund:** Continue the current practice of allocating 60% of lot sale revenue to the Perpetual Care Trust Fund. This ensures the fund continues to grow and can eventually cover the full cost of long-term maintenance through interest alone. The County has a multi-decade runway to reach this goal, but sustained contributions are essential.
- **Conduct Periodic Financial Reviews:** Schedule biennial reviews of the perpetual care contribution policy and overall cost structure to ensure alignment with actual maintenance demands and fund performance. This will help determine whether adjustments to the contribution rate or investment strategy are needed.
- **Clarify Full Operational Costs:** Some cemetery-related expenses are currently embedded within the broader Parks and Open Space Division budget. The County should develop a more detailed cost accounting model to fully capture the cemetery's operational costs and understand the true funding gap that the trust fund must eventually support.
- **Plan for Modest Fee Increases:** Adopt an annual inflation-adjusted increase (3-5%) in plot and interment-related fees to maintain affordability while keeping pace with rising costs. These adjustments will reduce the burden on general fund subsidies and help preserve the value of perpetual care contributions.
- **Consider establish a Capital Reserve for Improvements:** In addition to operational and trust fund planning, consider setting aside a portion of annual revenues or pursuing grant opportunities to establish a capital reserve fund. This would support non-routine improvements (e.g., road repairs, irrigation upgrades, equipment purchases) outside of ongoing maintenance obligations.

## Programming

Guaje Pines Cemetery sits within a unique and serene landscape that reflects the rich natural and cultural heritage of Los Alamos. As the County considers how the cemetery can serve future generations, there is a compelling opportunity to expand the role of the site as a place for environmental education, historical interpretation, and quiet reflection on the region's evolving story.

While active recreation is not considered appropriate within the cemetery, the opportunity for passive educational engagement is substantial. The site's existing environmental assets, mature tree cover, varied terrain, native plants, and its proximity to a well-established network of trails, lend themselves well to outdoor learning experiences and nature appreciation.

### *Existing Events & Activities*

Guaje Pines Cemetery currently serves as the setting for a small number of meaningful annual events that foster remembrance and civic connection. These gatherings, while limited in number,



reflect the community's deep commitment to honoring military service and maintaining the sacred grounds.

One of the most prominent events is the Memorial Day Ceremony, organized by American Legion Post 90 in coordination with VFW Post 8874 and other local groups. In 2025, the event featured remarks by LTC Todd Kontny, a formal remembrance program, and a community luncheon. Each December, Guaje Pines also hosts Wreaths Across America, part of a nationwide tribute to honor veterans. Sponsored locally by the Legion Riders and American Legion Post 90, the ceremony begins with a wreath escort from Santa Fe and concludes with a morning service at the cemetery.

In addition to ceremonial events, volunteer clean-up days offer another way for residents to engage. In March 2025, the County's Parks and Open Space Division organized a Cemetery Cleanup Day, during which families, veterans, and other volunteers helped improve the grounds.

Together, these thoughtfully organized efforts create a rhythm of remembrance and shared responsibility that sustains Guaje Pines Cemetery as both a place of rest and community reflection.

### *Living Landscape & Arboretum Potential*

The diversity of trees and woody plant species at Guaje Pines offers the potential to establish the cemetery as a certified arboretum. Tree identification signage, curated walking paths, and interpretive plantings could help bring the landscape to life as a living classroom. There are multiple paths to becoming an accredited arboretum. The ArbNet Accreditation Program, provided by the Morton Arboretum, is one of the more robust options, with a clear path to recognition, beginning with an arboretum plan and a minimum of 25 labeled species, and progressing through levels of educational and conservation engagement. The cemetery currently appears to meet several basic criteria for Level I accreditation and could pursue higher tiers in the future with support from staff and volunteers.<sup>11</sup>

Collaboration with local partners such as the Pajarito Environmental Education Center, the Los Alamos Nature Center, or area schools could enrich programming at Guaje Pines.

### *Interpretive Opportunities: History, Art, and Wildlife*

Guaje Pines is more than a burial ground; it is a biography of Los Alamos. The lives remembered here, scientists, teachers, veterans, and generations of community members, speak to the evolution of the town itself. With modest enhancements, the cemetery could incorporate historical interpretation, including signage or QR-linked digital resources that help contextualize people, traditions, and landscape change over time.

In addition, cemeteries have traditionally served as evolving repositories of funerary art and monumentation, reflecting cultural values and personal histories over time. As a memorial park

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<sup>11</sup> ArbNet. *Arboretum Accreditation Program*. The Morton Arboretum, [www.arbnet.org/arboretum-accreditation-program](http://www.arbnet.org/arboretum-accreditation-program).

with predominantly lawn-level markers, Guaje Pines offers a more subdued visual character and currently lacks the sculptural or architectural features found in older, monument-style cemeteries. The thoughtful and selective integration of public art could enhance the site's visual and cultural richness. This effort could be part of a broader artistic and interpretive plan that highlights personal stories, memorial traditions, and artistic expressions present throughout the cemetery, enriching the visitor experience while honoring its purpose.

Wildlife observation, particularly birdwatching, is another avenue for gentle programming. The cemetery's vegetative richness and quiet setting are an ideal for birds and other wildlife. The occasional guided walks or citizen science events in partnership with local groups could foster deeper appreciation and engagement with the grounds.

### *Educational Programming and Events*

Future programs could include:

- Nature-focused walking tours in partnership with local guides or educators.
- Curriculum-linked school visits integrating science, history, and art.
- Tree planting or conservation days with local volunteers.
- Art and photography exhibits inspired by the cemetery setting.

These activities could be scaled gradually based on staff availability and community interest. Initial efforts may focus on simple signage, downloadable materials, and occasional guided walks. As capacity grows, more robust offerings could be considered.

### *Partnerships and Implementation Considerations*

As the cemetery develops its programming identity, partnerships will be essential. Local schools, cultural organizations, and County departments can help bring expertise, creativity, and momentum to these efforts. Given that Los Alamos County must balance many competing priorities across its departments and services, the successful implementation of programs at Guaje Pines will depend heavily on collaboration. In particular, working with partners who have experience in content development, interpretation, and curation will be key to delivering meaningful outcomes without overextending staff capacity.

Pursuing arboretum accreditation is one tangible way to establish a structured, recognized framework for programming, while also reinforcing the cemetery's ecological and educational value. We recognize that implementation will depend on available staff and resources. For that reason, the proposed ideas are intentionally designed to be flexible and scalable, enhancing the cemetery's role as a more inclusive, educational, and reflective part of community life, while honoring its core function as a place of rest and remembrance.

Recommendations:

- Pursue Arboretum Accreditation: Begin the process of Level I ArbNet certification by identifying, labeling, and cataloging at least 25 tree and woody plant species. This

designation would support a living landscape framework and encourage conservation-based programming.

- **Expand Passive Programming:** Develop nature-based and historical engagement offerings such as tree identification walks, seasonal guided tours, downloadable educational content, and quiet interpretive installations. These can be scaled to match staff and volunteer capacity.
- **Enhance Interpretive and Artistic Features:** Incorporate modest public art, historical signage, and QR-linked biographies to connect visitors to the lives, service, and community legacies represented at Guaje Pines. These elements should remain understated and appropriate to the site's contemplative setting.
- **Strengthen Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with groups like the Pajarito Environmental Education Center, Los Alamos Public Schools, and local veterans' organizations to co-develop events and educational programming. Partnering enables cost-effective and high-impact programming without overstressing County staff.
- **Formalize Volunteer and Remembrance Events:** Continue and grow existing events such as Wreaths Across America, Memorial Day ceremonies, and cemetery cleanup days. Consider hosting an annual remembrance for indigent interments and creating more structured volunteer opportunities tied to planting, conservation, or storytelling.

These initiatives align with Los Alamos County's goal to manage and enhance open spaces while fostering inclusion, access, and belonging for all residents. Developing arboretum features, interpretive elements, and volunteer programs will expand opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience nature, history, and community connection in a welcoming setting.

## ADA Accessibility

In 2021, the County commissioned an accessibility evaluation of Guaje Pines Cemetery to review the site's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and to guide improvements as site enhancements occur. The evaluation, conducted by the WT Group, identified a number of non-compliant elements across the site, with recommendations provided for each. While most of these items can be addressed as part of future upgrades, several key findings require prioritization due to their direct impact on public access.

The cemetery currently lacks any striped parking and as such does not have any ADA-compliant parking spaces. This is a fundamental accessibility requirement under the ADA. A viable and practical improvement would be the addition of an accessible parking space adjacent to the existing restroom structure. This location would minimize travel distance to both the restroom and central site features, improving accessibility for mobility-impaired visitors. Proper signage, surface striping, and slope compliance will be necessary to meet standards.

Restroom access also requires immediate attention. The restroom door currently closes too quickly, creating a barrier for individuals with limited mobility. In addition, the mounted hand sanitizer dispenser exceeds allowable reach ranges for those in wheelchairs. These issues can be resolved through simple hardware adjustments and repositioning.



Numerous walkways and curb transitions throughout the cemetery exceed allowable slopes or contain surface disruptions greater than ¼” to ½”, such as gaps between paving slabs or transitions from asphalt to concrete. These pose tripping hazards and restrict wheelchair navigation. We would prioritize access to the restroom. Other areas include the walkways leading to the flagpole and entry points to the children’s burial area. These will be addressed in the near term with site improvements outlined in the plan. Cross-path transitions across the main drives and core access points to burial sections can be addressed as well.

Directional signage was another area of concern. The primary informational sign at the entrance sited in the survey lacks an accessible route and does not meet visual accessibility standards in terms of font size, contrast, and tactile elements. This signage has subsequently been removed. As signage upgrades occur, these features should be incorporated to assist all visitors, particularly those with visual impairments.

While several benches near the maintenance area are flagged as non-compliant due to the lack of accessible routes, these were donated as family memorials and are not intended as public amenities. As such, it is our opinion that these elements need not be made accessible under ADA public-use criteria. They are viewed as commemorative features and may remain in place as-is with ADA improvements and with appropriate interpretive clarification.

Additional findings address picnic areas and maintenance access, which may be appropriate for phased improvements over time rather than immediate upgrades.

### **Prioritized Action Summary**

<i>Priority Level</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action Needed</i>
High	Restroom door and dispenser	Adjust door closer; reposition sanitizer
High	Excessive slope and surface gaps	Regrade or patch walkways and curbs at key transition points, particularly near the restroom
Medium	No accessible parking	Add striped, signed ADA stall near restroom
Low	Maintenance/picnic areas	Consider longer-term phased improvements

The findings reflect a range of practical site improvements. Most are low-cost and can be addressed incrementally, though some, like walkway grading and restroom fixtures, should have higher priority. We consider access a critical concern and will incorporate accessibility considerations into all phases of the master plan to ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment for all visitors.

### **Recommendations:**

- Add a striped, ADA-compliant parking space near the restroom with proper slope and signage.
- Adjust restroom door closer and reposition sanitizer dispenser to meet reach standards.
- Regrade or repair walkways at key locations, including near the restroom and children's area, to eliminate tripping hazards.
- Incorporate accessible design features such as tactile signage and compliant routes into all new signage and site upgrades.
- Integrate ADA considerations into all future phases of site improvement to ensure long-term compliance.

## Honoring Legacy: Drawing Inspiration from the Los Alamos Memorial Rose Garden

Long before Guaje Pines Cemetery was established, the people of Los Alamos found meaningful ways to honor their loved ones within the community landscape. One of the most cherished early tributes was the creation of the Los Alamos Memorial Rose Garden near Fuller Lodge, a public space that evolved from a simple flowerbed into a living memorial and beloved civic destination. During the 1950s, when Los Alamos was still under federal management and lacked a public cemetery, families who lost loved ones began donating rose bushes in their memory. The Garden Club carefully tended these tributes, eventually outgrowing their original plot and, in 1958, establishing the formal Memorial Rose Garden with the support of the Atomic Energy Commission and professional landscape designers.

The Rose Garden became a powerful symbol of collective remembrance, a place where personal grief was transformed into public beauty. It hosted everything from quiet reflection to community celebrations, all while honoring those who had shaped the early identity of Los Alamos. The garden's records, still preserved by the Garden Club and Historical Society, offer a living archive of remembrance and community connection.

As Guaje Pines Cemetery matures, it draws direct inspiration from this legacy. The design language of the Memorial Rose Garden, with its structured plantings, symbolic blooms, and thoughtful spatial organization, can inform future development across the site. Opportunities include garden-style inventory areas, sculptural and commemorative public art, and even graphic elements such as the cemetery's logo and signage. By integrating the aesthetics and emotional resonance of the Rose Garden into Guaje Pines, the cemetery affirms its role as a place of dignity, memory, and enduring beauty, rooted in the traditions of Los Alamos and blossoming into its future.

Potential Logo Concepts:





# Master Plan Design Concepts

## Overall Site Plan

The master plan for Guaje Pines Cemetery establishes a long-term framework to expand capacity, enhance amenities, and adapt to evolving community needs while preserving the site's character and open space. A central goal is to extend the functional life of the cemetery by introducing higher-density cremation options, such as columbaria, memorial walls, and ossuaries, while maintaining a meaningful allocation for in-ground casket burials.

The plan provides a balanced and diverse inventory mix to ensure that as many community members as possible can choose Guaje Pines as their final resting place for generations to come. Recommended development areas, their associated capacities, and projected useful life based on average sales from 2020–2024 are summarized below:

Development Area	In-Ground Casket	Columbaria	In-Ground Cremation	Total Cremation Options	Total Burial Units
North Lawn Expansion	260	-	-	-	260
Western Inventory Development	260	700	270	970	1227
Eastern Inventory Development	400	700	550	1250	1650
In-fill	400	1,000	800	1,800	2,250
<b>Total by Type (Units)</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>4,020</b>	<b>5,340</b>
Average Sales (2020-2024)	39	22	16	38	77
<b>Useful Life (years)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>69</b>

Planned amenities such as memorial walls, ossuaries, and scattering gardens are not included in these unit counts but will provide additional memorialization options. These features will allow more residents to choose Guaje Pines and extend the cemetery's service life well beyond the projections shown.

The layout is intentionally flexible, enabling the County to respond to evolving disposition preferences over time. Phased construction of new inventory development to respond to three to seven years of demand, ensures that land is optimized for current needs, while maintaining the ability to shift the product mix if demand changes. This adaptability will be particularly important if burial preferences continue to move toward cremation, or if new practices, such as green burial, natural organic reduction, or alkaline hydrolysis, gain traction in the community.

Demographic projections show that burial and cremation demand will remain elevated for the next two decades as the Baby Boomer generation reaches peak mortality. Deaths are expected to climb steadily through the late 2020s and 2030s, with the highest pressure between now and 2040. Acting now will ensure that the County can meet this demand, prevent service gaps, and keep Guaje Pines accessible and dignified well into the future.

In addition to capacity-focused improvements, the plan includes circulation upgrades, enhanced plantings, and new gathering spaces to strengthen Guaje Pines’ role as a respectful, well-maintained, and community-centered public amenity.

## Time-to-Depletion Scenarios

Today, Guaje Pines Cemetery is operating with a very limited supply of developed inventory. At present demand levels, the remaining columbaria niches will be gone in less than a year, and in-ground casket graves could be depleted within two years. With only so much land available, proceeding thoughtfully to ensure that space is used wisely is critical.

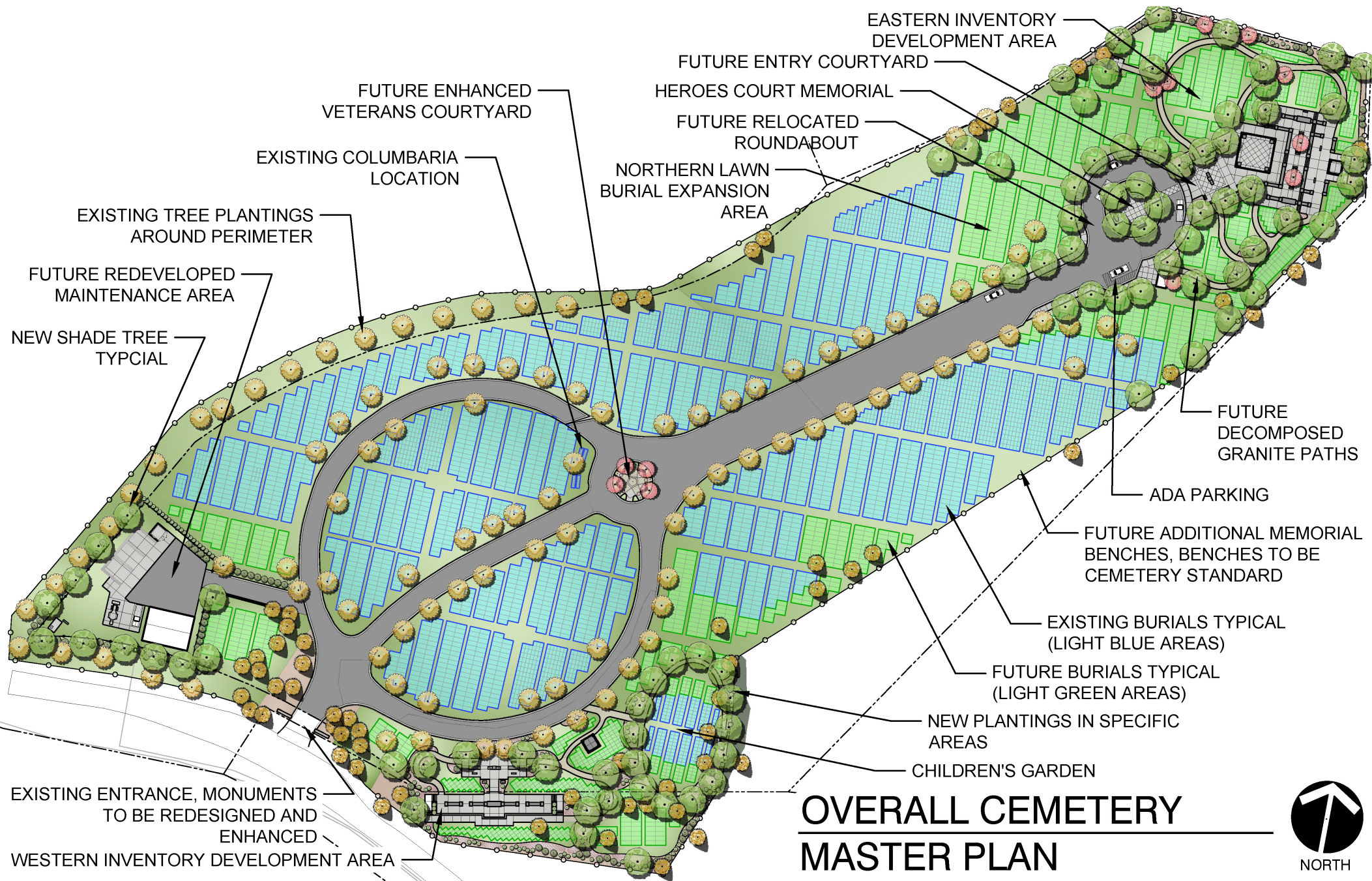
One option would be to develop the readily available land following the same historic mix of burial types used in the past. This business-as-usual approach could extend casket capacity to approximately 33 years, in-ground cremation to 50 years. While this would buy time, it would also lock the cemetery into a product mix that may not match the community’s shifting preferences toward cremation and alternative memorialization options.

The master plan offers a strategic path forward by addressing immediate shortages and creating a balanced, adaptable inventory. It maintains the casket burial capacity of the business-as-usual approach (33 years) while extending cremation capacity to 106 years, resulting in an overall service life of 69 years. Additional memorial options, such as cenotaphs, ossuaries, and scattering gardens, are not included in the unit counts but will further extend capacity and choice. The plan also incorporates community amenities, including pavilions and memorial walks, enhancing both function and visitor experience.

**Time to Depletion Table**

Scenario	Category	In-Ground Casket	Columbaria	In-Ground Cremation	Total Cremation Options	Total Burial Units
Current Developed Inventory	Units	88	16	729	745	833
	Useful Life	2.3	0.7	45.6	19.6	10.8
Readily Developable Land (Historic Mix)	Units	1,300	160	1,100	1,260	2,560
	Useful Life	33.3	10.0	50.0	33.2	33.2
Master Plan Recommendations	Units	1,320	2,400	1,620	4,020	5,340
	Useful Life	33.8	109.1	101.3	105.8	69.4

By implementing the master plan, the County will maximize land use during the peak demand period, safeguard service continuity, and position Guaje Pines to serve future generations.





## Overview of planning zones

The Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan is organized around eight primary planning zones, each focused on a key area of improvement, expansion, or commemoration:

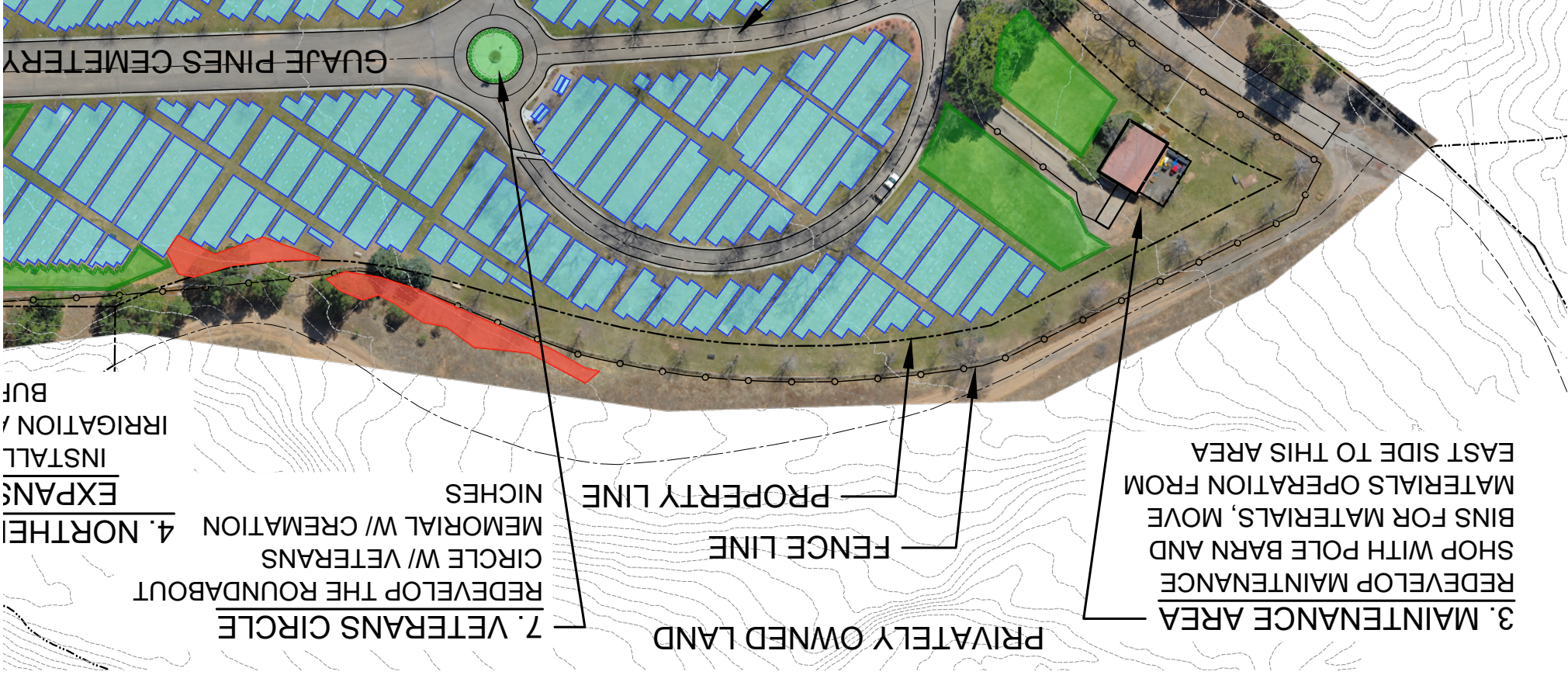
1. Front Entrance Enhancements
2. Roadway and Circulation Improvements
3. Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements
4. North Lawn Burial Expansion Area
5. Western Inventory Development Area (Memorial Promenade and Cremation Gardens)
6. Children's Area
7. Honor Court Circles
8. Eastern Inventory Development Area

These zones reflect the cemetery's dual mission: to provide respectful, functional interment space and to serve as a civic landscape that honors the community's values and history, while accentuating the natural splendor of the site. Prioritized through a combination of community input, site analysis, and operational needs, these zones form the foundation for phased development that balances tradition with adaptability.

The most significant physical improvements and expansions are concentrated in three areas: the western garden expansion, which introduces substantial cremation capacity and new commemorative features; the eastern development area, which offers long-term flexibility for cremation or casketed burials; and the central casket burial area, which meets immediate demand for in-ground casket interments. Supporting improvements include enhancements to roadways and circulation, the children's area, and a reconfiguration of the maintenance and operations zone. Two honor court circles, dedicated to veterans and first responders, will anchor the site's symbolic and civic identity.

Together, these zones ensure that Guaje Pines Cemetery continues to evolve as a place of dignity, memory, and natural beauty, while remaining responsive to the community's changing needs and honoring the individuals who shape it.

PLAN - DEVELOPMENT AREAS



PLAN - DEVELOPMENT AREAS

## Front Entrance Enhancements

The proposed redevelopment of the Guaje Pines Cemetery main entrance is designed to create a clear, dignified, and welcoming arrival experience that reflects the site's solemnity and civic importance. The new gateway will integrate enhanced signage, native landscaping, and symbolic architectural elements, establishing both a functional and commemorative point of entry.

Materials and forms have been selected to align with the cemetery's established design vocabulary, ensuring visual continuity across the site. These include stone veneer pilasters, low accent walls, timber fencing, and weathering steel gates, each chosen for durability, aesthetic quality, and symbolic resonance.

The project will replace the existing modest stone wall and basic gate with a more prominent and purposeful structure. The arrangement of hardscape, signage, and plantings will create a visually distinct and easily recognizable entrance, improving visibility from approach roads and aiding visitor wayfinding.

By combining upgraded materials, symbolic features, and coordinated landscaping, the new gateway will function not only as an entry but also as a landmark, embodying the values of remembrance, respect, and permanence that define Guaje Pines Cemetery.

While the redesigned main gateway will greatly improve the arrival experience for visitors who have already reached Range Road, the master plan also recognizes the need to guide people more effectively from key approach routes. This primarily, includes addressing wayfinding at the point where most visitors first encounter the cemetery's location, the major arterial intersection of Range Road and Diamond Drive. Here, the existing directional and identity signage is undersized, set below grade, and lacks the visibility needed for drivers traveling at high speeds, resulting in frequent missed turns and confusion.

The planned redevelopment of Los Alamos Fire Station #4, located at 4401 Diamond Drive, presents a timely opportunity to address this issue. The Guaje Pines signage is located directly at the southern corner of the fire station site, and conceptual plans shared at the March 6, 2025, open house indicate this key corner remains available for integrated signage improvements.<sup>12</sup>

We recommend incorporating the new Guaje Pines sign into the overall landscape and site design of the fire station. Doing so would strengthen the civic presence of both the cemetery and fire station, offering a unified and dignified visual identity for these two essential public institutions.

Key entrance and signage redevelopment considerations include:

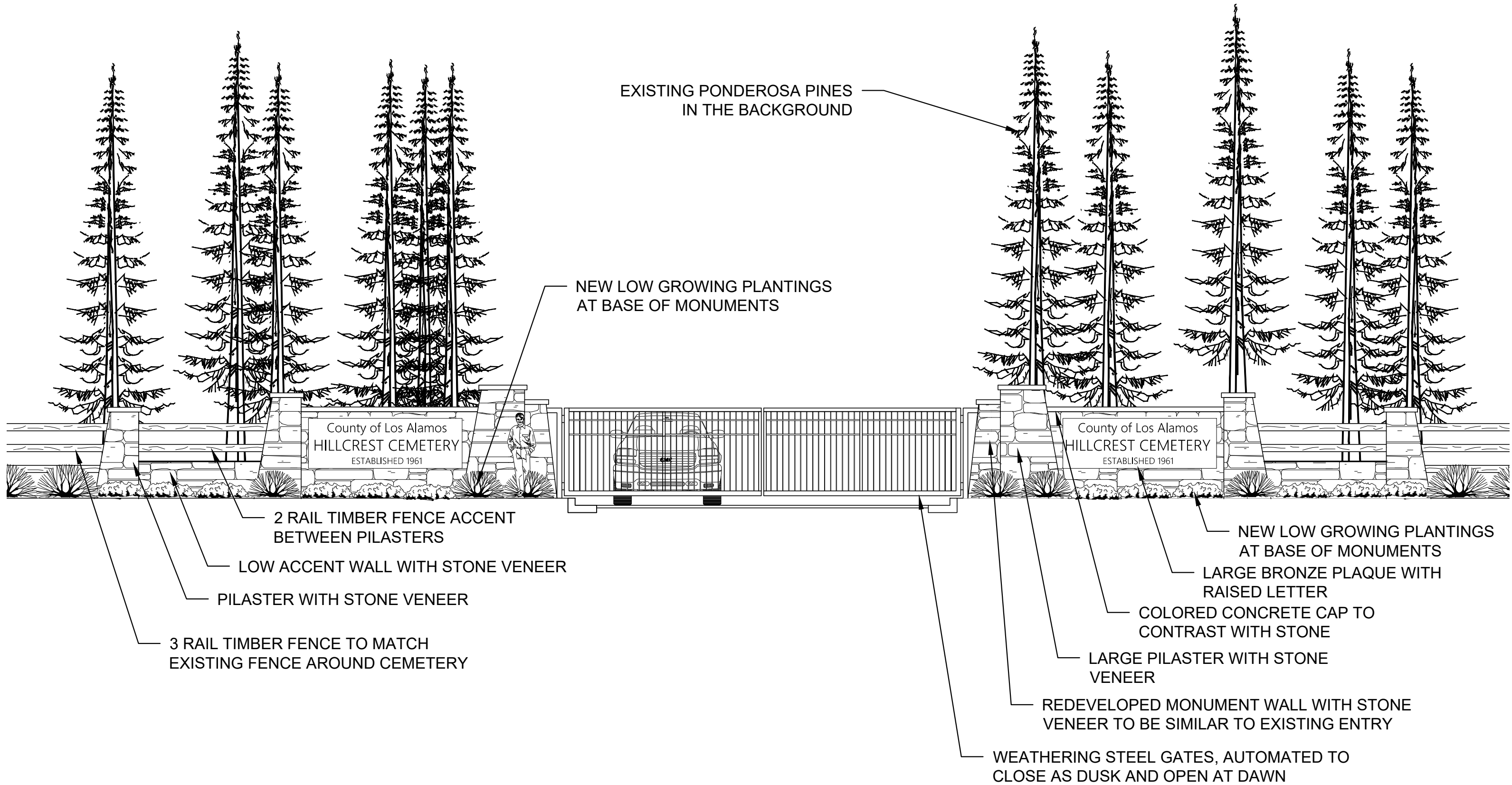
- **Improve Wayfinding:** Replace undersized, low-visibility signs at Diamond Drive/Range Road to aid navigation.

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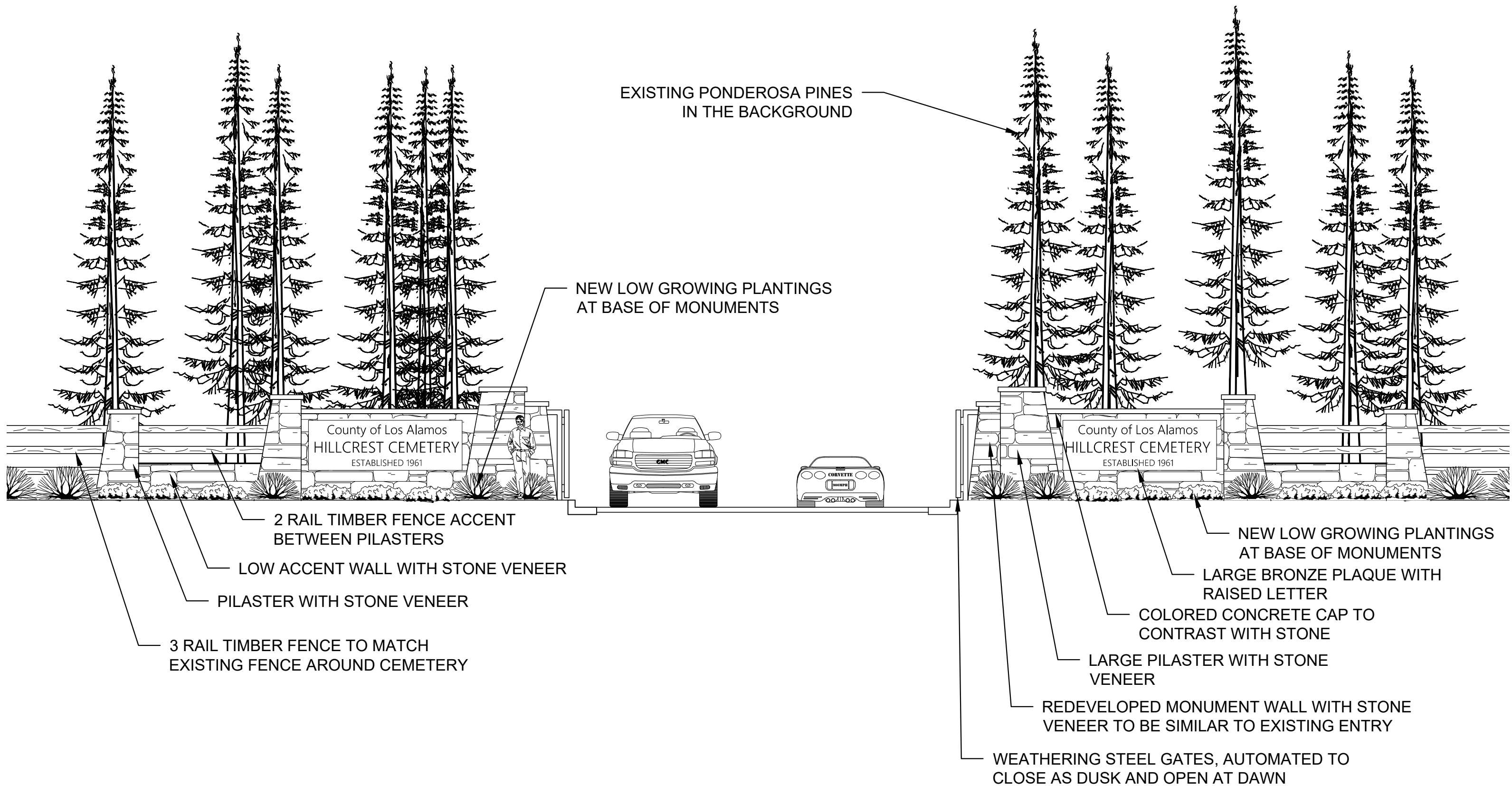
<sup>12</sup> Los Alamos County. Fire Station 4 Replacement: Design. Los Alamos County, 2025, <https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Fire-Station-4-Replacement-Design>.



- Coordinate with Fire Station #4: Integrate new Guaje Pines signage into the fire station's site design for a unified civic presence.
  - Enhance Visibility: Increase sign height, scale, and legibility for high-speed traffic.
  - Contextual Landscaping: Frame signage with native, low-maintenance plantings.
- Main Entrance Upgrade: Install a prominent gateway with durable materials, coordinated landscaping, and symbolic features to reflect the cemetery's civic importance.
- Unified Design Language: Select materials and forms consistent with the cemetery's established aesthetic to ensure visual continuity, durability, and symbolic resonance.



## ELEVATION 1 - MAIN ENTRANCE



## ELEVATION 2 - MAIN ENTRANCE



## Roadway and Circulation Improvements

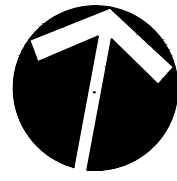
The master plan includes targeted improvements to enhance circulation, safety, and visual clarity throughout the cemetery. The existing loop road system is retained and reinforced, as it successfully supports both visitor access and cemetery operations. Vehicular travel is planned to remain low speed, with posted limits of 10 miles per hour to promote safety and respect for the cemetery environment. Informal roadside parking is preserved, and the plan includes striping a designated ADA-accessible space near the public restroom to improve accessibility.

All burial areas will continue to be located within 150 feet of roadway access, ensuring ease of interment and efficient service operations. It is recommended that the County adopt a long-term roadway maintenance strategy, incorporating resurfacing, spot patching, and as needed drainage improvements. As existing curbs age or deteriorate, selective replacement with drive-over curb types is advised. This approach will allow controlled equipment access to burial sections while still guiding vehicle traffic and preserving lawn integrity.

The eastern roundabout is proposed to be shifted slightly east and the interior of the circle developed as an Honor Court. This would be a focal commemorative space honoring first responders who have served the community. To mark entry into the eastern expansion area and the future memorial promenade, the plan introduces a subtle narrowing of the approach road. This design cue creates a clear sense of arrival while reinforcing the transition from functional circulation to a more reflective, ceremonial landscape. An ADA-accessible parking space is also planned adjacent to the restroom for visitor convenience.

We recommend that the County maintain an easement to the land south of the site. This will preserve potential future access to County and U.S. Forest Service lands, which could serve as an expansion source. Specifically, we propose a 30-foot easement from the children's section northward to the burial area, as well as a similar easement near the restroom on the eastern side of the cemetery. These easements would safeguard long-term flexibility; if expansion is later deemed nonviable, they could instead be used for burial space. While there are no immediate plans to expand, the adjacent land possesses characteristics that make it suitable for cemetery use should future demand require it.

# ROADS CONCEPT PLAN



NORTH

SHADED OVERLAY INDICATES  
EXISTING ROAD WITH CURB  
AND GUTTER TO BE REMOVED

EXISTING CEMETERY ROAD  
TO REMAIN IN PLACE

EXISTING CEMETERY

NEW CEMETERY  
ROAD

FUTURE ROAD  
RIGHT-OF-WAY

FOREST SERVICE  
LAND

FUTURE ROAD  
RIGHT-OF-WAY

COUNTY OWNED  
LAND



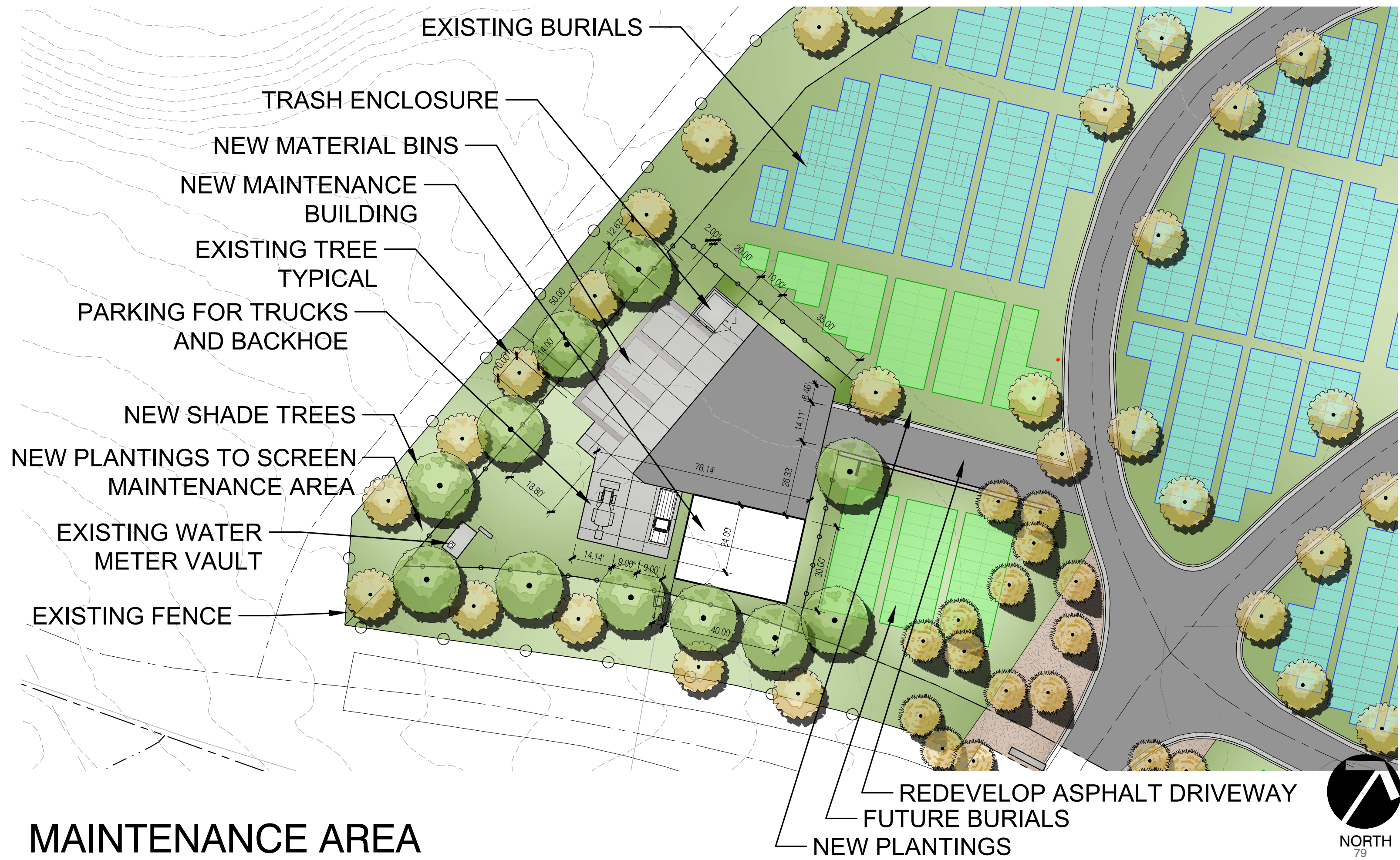
## Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements

The proposed improvements to the maintenance area at Guaje Pines Cemetery consolidate and enhance the site's operational infrastructure into a single discreet location. By combining the current western maintenance zone and the eastern spoils staging area, the plan establishes a unified backstage area that meets long-term operational needs while remaining visually separate from the public-facing portions of the cemetery.

The reconfigured area includes three material bins for grave spoils, topsoil, and similar needs, as well as a clearly defined staging area for vaults, memorials, and equipment. The existing maintenance building, though aging, remains serviceable for the next few years. When it reaches the end of its useful life, it will be replaced with a cost-effective, durable prefabricated metal structure that supports cemetery operations while minimizing visual impact. The new building will offer sufficient workspace, storage, and shelter for daily equipment needs, while aligning with the quiet, low-impact character of cemetery operations. Larger heavy equipment, such as backhoes, will continue to be housed off-site and brought in as needed.

A widened asphalt driveway allows for easier maneuvering of trailers and utility vehicles, and new curbing with protective plantings ensures turf areas adjacent to burials remain undisturbed. Robust screening, via new fencing, shade trees, and vegetative buffers, will enclose the area fully, shielding it from view and reducing visual impact from visitor zones. Importantly, relocating the spoils area from the eastern edge of the cemetery opens up that land for future interment or alternative uses, helping maximize burial capacity within the existing footprint of the cemetery. Together, these improvements establish a true backstage workspace that is functional, efficient, and appropriately concealed within the serene setting of Guaje Pines.





## North Lawn Burial Expansion Area

The next phase of casketed burials at Guaje Pines Cemetery is recommend to be in the area directly north of the current active burial section, just across the main drive from the roundabout and entry courtyard. This location supports a logical expansion of the cemetery's layout, utilizing gently sloped, well-vegetated land while maintaining visual continuity with the existing grounds.

To support this expansion, irrigation infrastructure will need to be extended to ensure turf health and planting success. Planning for utility improvements will be coordinated with layout and access enhancements to ensure operational efficiency and long-term stewardship. The area also preserves the access easement to the south, which will be needed for future development and service circulation as the cemetery grows.

The designated section includes approximately 260 casket plots. At the current annual sales rate of 60 units, this represents about 4.3 years of capacity. Based on the five-year average of 39 casket burials per year, the estimated capacity extends to approximately 6.7 years. Monumentation in this area will continue the cemetery's established memorial park tradition, requiring all markers to be set flush with the lawn for a unified and dignified appearance.

The County plans to maintain its current next-in-line sales policy in this new section. This approach supports orderly development, simplifies inventory management, and preserves the visual rhythm and integrity of the site as it continues to serve the community.



## Western Inventory Development Area

The proposed Memorial Promenade at Guaje Pines Cemetery introduces a thoughtfully designed and visually rich area that both honors the past and accommodates future needs, particularly for cremation inurnment. This area is envisioned as the first phase of new development due to its favorable site conditions; level topography, existing mature trees, and high visibility from the internal loop road and Range Road entering the cemetery. Its design focuses on creating an inviting, respectful, and flexible space that blends memorialization with landscape beauty and public art.

The garden court will serve as the focal point for the initial phase of development, establishing a welcoming and contemplative environment at the forefront of the western inventory area. This space will be anchored by four columbarium units, two already owned by the County and two to be added as a second phase, providing inurnment options for families seeking permanent memorialization. Other features in the garden court will include:

- Ossuary: A dignified communal vessel for the placement of cremated remains, ideal for those who do not wish to maintain an individual urn or who prefer a more economical interment option.
- Memorial (Cenotaph) Wall: A memorial wall to honor individuals whose remains are interred elsewhere, providing a symbolic and permanent place for remembrance.
- Granite Benches: to enhance visitor comfort and encourage lingering reflection

Additionally, in this area, to respond to community demand for scattering cremated remains, a scattering garden will be integrated into the development. The garden takes the form of a meandering path leading to a secluded, landscaped enclave, enhanced with plantings to create privacy and a sense of sanctuary. This location will allow for quiet reflection.

Together, the columbarium units, ossuary, cenotaph, and scattering garden will diversify the burial and memorialization options available to residents. This integrated approach not only meets current and emerging preferences for cremation but also strengthens the cemetery's role as a place of community memory. By balancing functional memorial capacity with an emotionally resonant design, the garden court will provide both practical service expansion and a meaningful visitor experience from day one.

The second zone of the expansion envisions a more ambitious build-out anchored by a prominent memorial promenade. This linear space will feature a tiered arrangement of columbaria and memorial walls, which also serve as functional retaining walls, seamlessly integrating structure with landscape. A decomposed granite path will guide visitors through layered plantings and past large commemorative elements, creating a sequence of moments for reflection.

The promenade will culminate in a striking focal point, currently conceptualized as a stylized granite rose, which may serve as a cenotaph or stand-alone sculptural landmark. The granite rose motif draws inspiration from the historic significance of rose bushes in remembrance and monumentation within Los Alamos, offering a powerful link between past and present. This



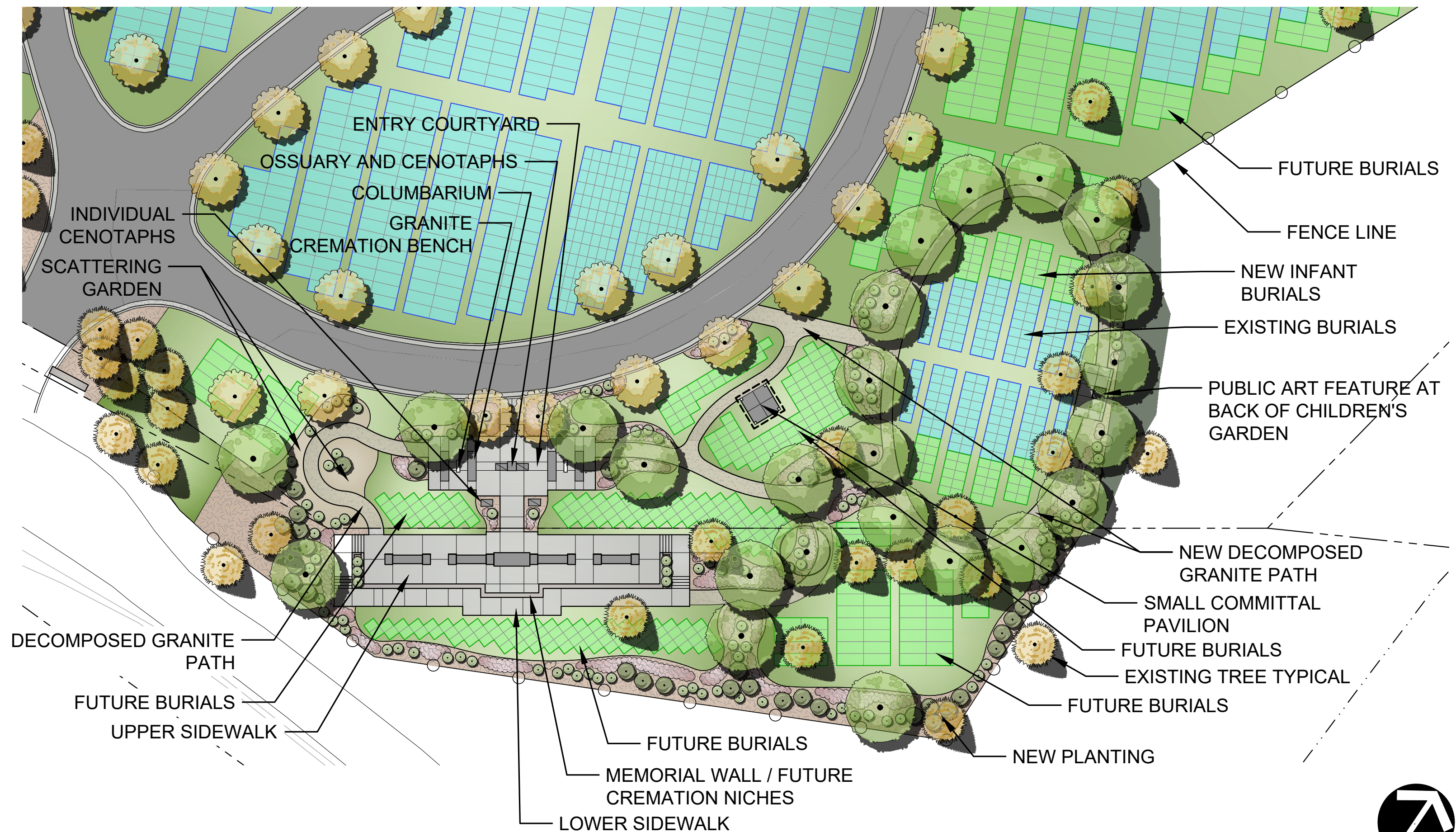
design element may be repeated throughout the promenade to create visual cohesion and symbolic resonance.

This area will provide substantial additional cremation and memorial inventory in a setting that is both accessible and visually meaningful. The design intentionally integrates multiple levels, allowing the site to respond gracefully to topography while creating distinctive spatial zones. Mature existing trees will provide immediate shade and establish a tranquil character from the outset.

In addition to its physical form, the space offers an opportunity for community engagement, with its final name to be determined through public input. Together, these features will establish the promenade as a signature destination within the expansion, blending memorial function, artistic expression, and cultural identity.

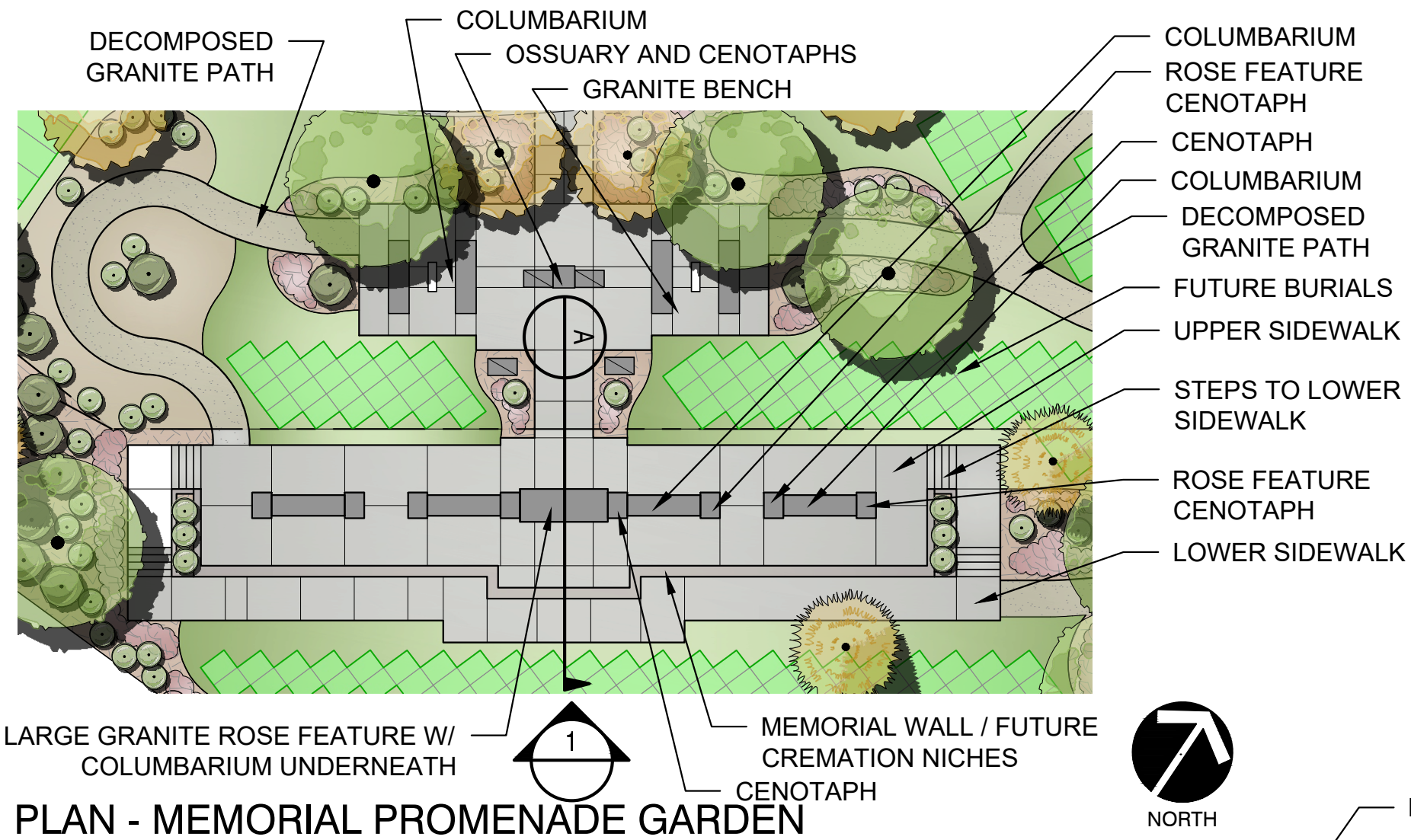
Due to its central location, flexibility, and strong design potential, this zone is strongly recommended as the first phase of cremation expansion. The garden court can be developed first. The area balances operational functionality, aesthetic enhancement, and community engagement, making it a critical investment in the future of Guaje Pines Cemetery. Given its location, the promenade will also be visible upon approach to Guaje Pines, serving as both an announcement and a defining sense of place.



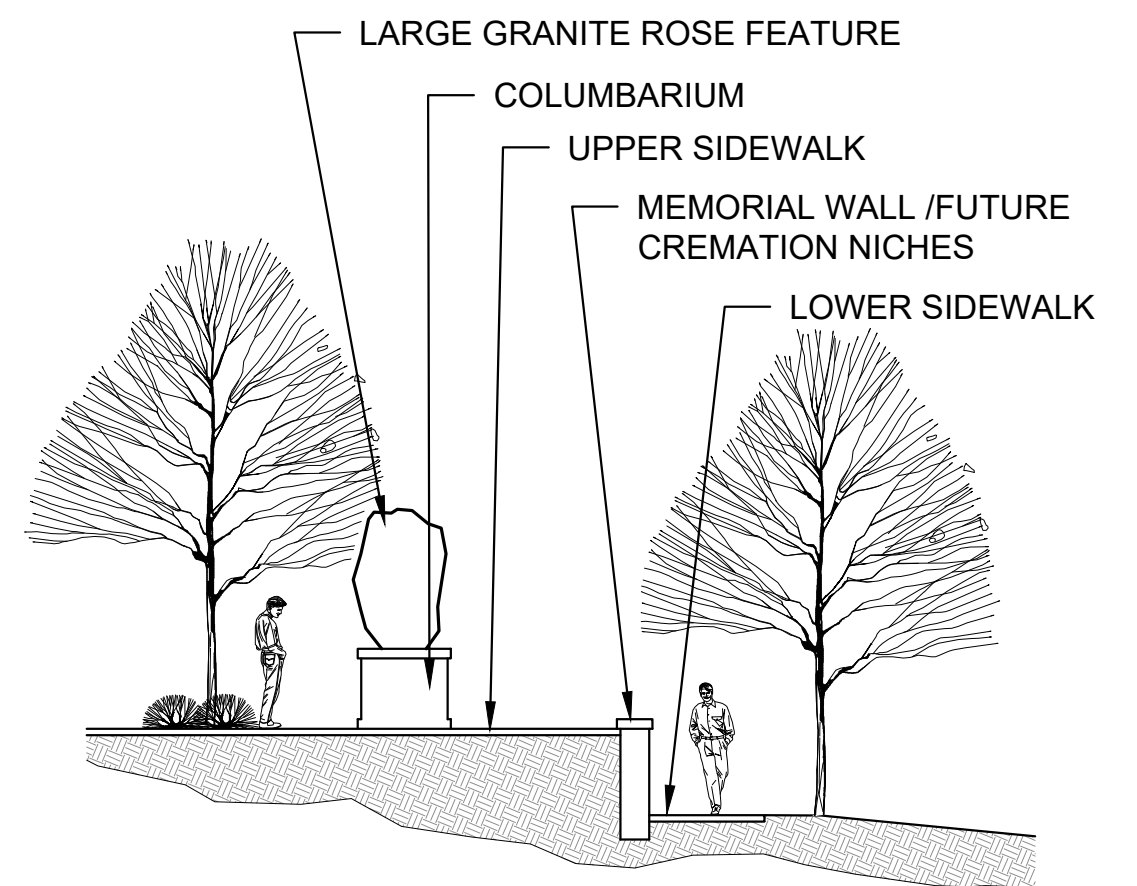


# PLAN - WESTERN INVENTORY DEVELOPMENT AREA

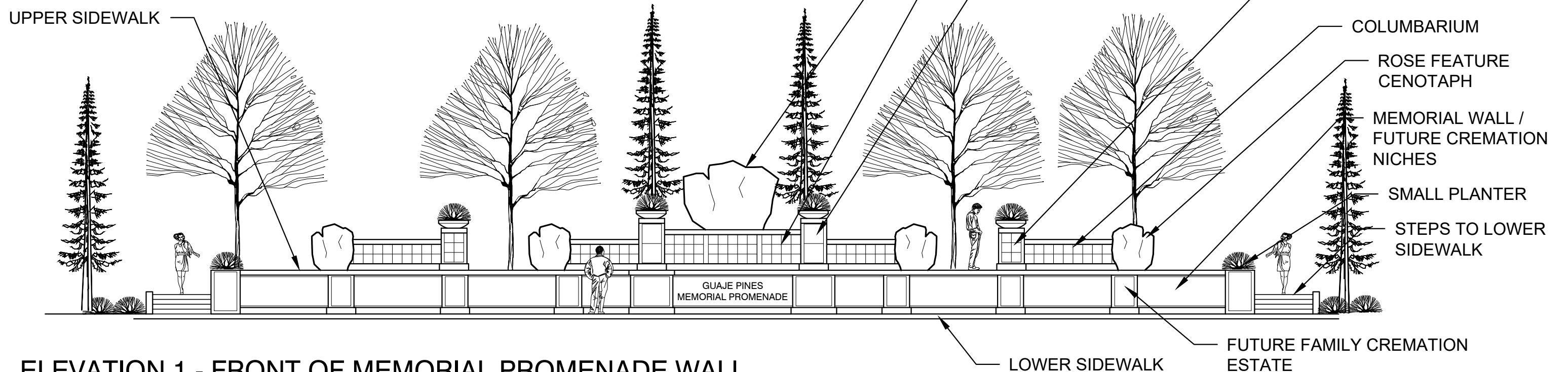




PLAN - MEMORIAL PROMENADE GARDEN



SECTION A - MEMORIAL PROMENADE GARDEN



ELEVATION 1 - FRONT OF MEMORIAL PROMENADE WALL



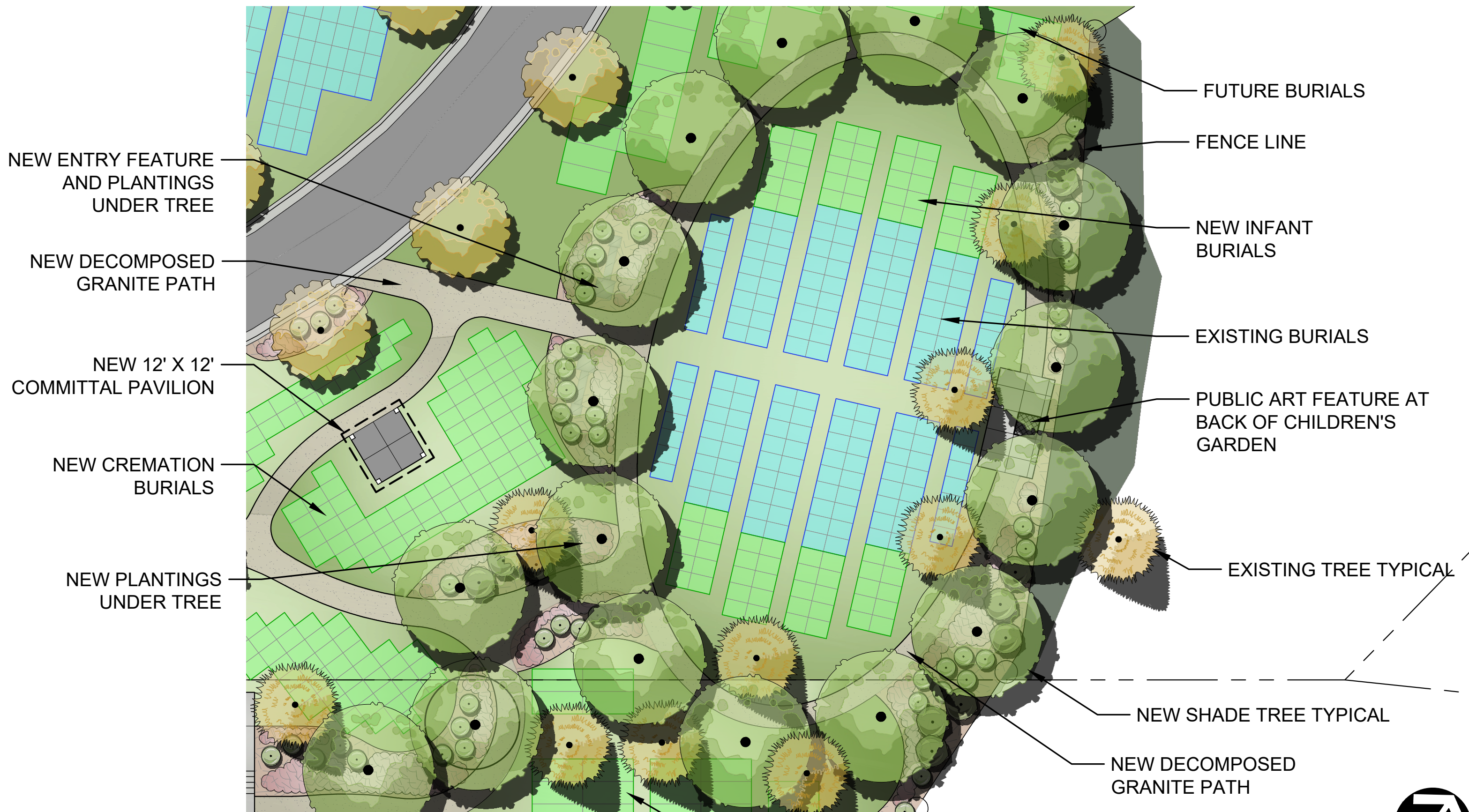
## Children's Area

The Children's Section at Guaje Pines Cemetery holds profound emotional and symbolic weight, and its thoughtful enhancement is a key priority within the master plan. The design proposes transforming this area into a more distinct and meaningful space, set apart by a refined landscape and memorial framework that honors young lives taken too soon.

A gently defined elliptical layout, framed by a ringed memorial walk, is designed to bring structure, clarity, and beauty to the site. This path not only reinforces the original spatial intent of the area but also establishes a serene place for family members and visitors to pause, reflect, and grieve. Within the ring, capacity will be expanded to accommodate future infant and child burials, using the standard children's grave dimensions (four feet by three feet). This additional capacity ensures the County remains prepared to serve this unique need in the decades to come.

The Children's Garden will feature enhanced planting treatments to soften the space and add seasonal and sensory richness. Colorful flowering species, varied foliage textures, and shaded seating areas will create an atmosphere of comfort and tranquility. New shade trees along the ringed pathway will provide both privacy and relief from the sun. At the rear of the section, the plan reserves space for a public art feature, envisioned as a commemorative piece that respectfully honors the memory of those interred too soon.

Importantly, this section is physically and symbolically connected to the larger proposed memorial promenade and pathways. The intertwining of these spaces reflects a holistic approach to cemetery design, where individual loss is held within a shared, nurturing community landscape. This area will also be directly connected to the small memorial pavilion along the new granite path system. The pavilion provides shelter from sun, wind, and snow, creating a place of solace and protection for visitors year-round. This integrated design will allow the Children's Section to remain a private, meaningful part of the broader memorial promenade, offering comfort to families while honoring the memory of those interred with grace and reverence.



# PLAN - CHILDREN'S GARDEN





## Honor Court Circles

The master plan proposes transforming the two existing circular roadway features at Guaje Pines Cemetery into formalized Honor Courts, distinct commemorative spaces that celebrate individuals who have preserved the community's way of life through service and sacrifice. The western circle is envisioned as a Veterans Memorial, while the eastern circle is dedicated to First Responders. These spaces will not only serve as visual focal points in the cemetery layout but also function as venues for ceremonies, moments of reflection, and civic remembrance.

The Veteran's Memorial is designed to honor those who have served in the United States Armed Forces. A central flagpole will display the U.S. flag, surrounded by additional poles for each military branch. Large bronze medallions and memorial walls will provide interpretive and commemorative elements, while curved seatwalls beneath shade trees offer places for rest and reflection. The plaza will incorporate both standard and exposed aggregate decorative concrete to define ceremonial space, and perimeter plantings will frame the memorial with seasonal interest. This composition blends symbolism, dignity, and accessibility, creating a meaningful setting for both private reflection and public gatherings.

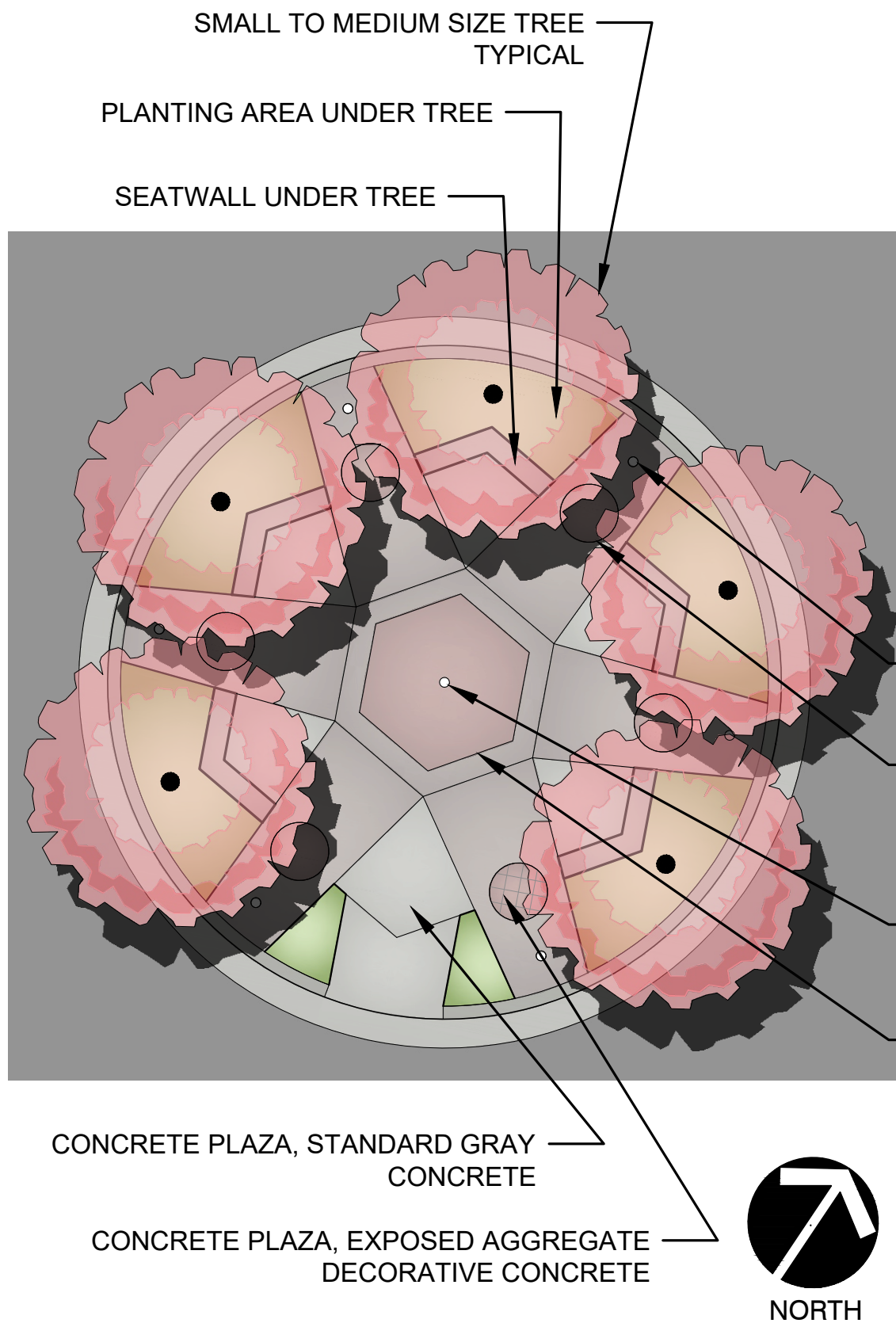
The Honor or Heroes Court is proposed as a tribute to first responders whose dedication has safeguarded and shaped Los Alamos. A central flagpole will feature the New Mexico State Flag, with opportunities for additional banners or symbolic elements representing police, fire, emergency medical services, and other appropriate groups. Memorial walls and monumental art will anchor the space, offering opportunities to share stories of local service through plaques, inscriptions, or rotating interpretive panels. Generous shade trees with understory plantings, along with a defined central plaza and exposed aggregate paving, will create a ceremonial atmosphere while encouraging daily visitor engagement.

Engagement with key community partners will be essential to refine these concepts. Local chapters of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, firefighter, EMS, and police unions, fraternal organizations, civic organizations, and residents should be consulted in shaping the narrative, selecting art, and finalizing the commemorative language. Their involvement will ensure that these spaces resonate authentically and respectfully with the individuals they aim to honor. These Honor Courts will stand as permanent testaments to the community's gratitude and shared values.

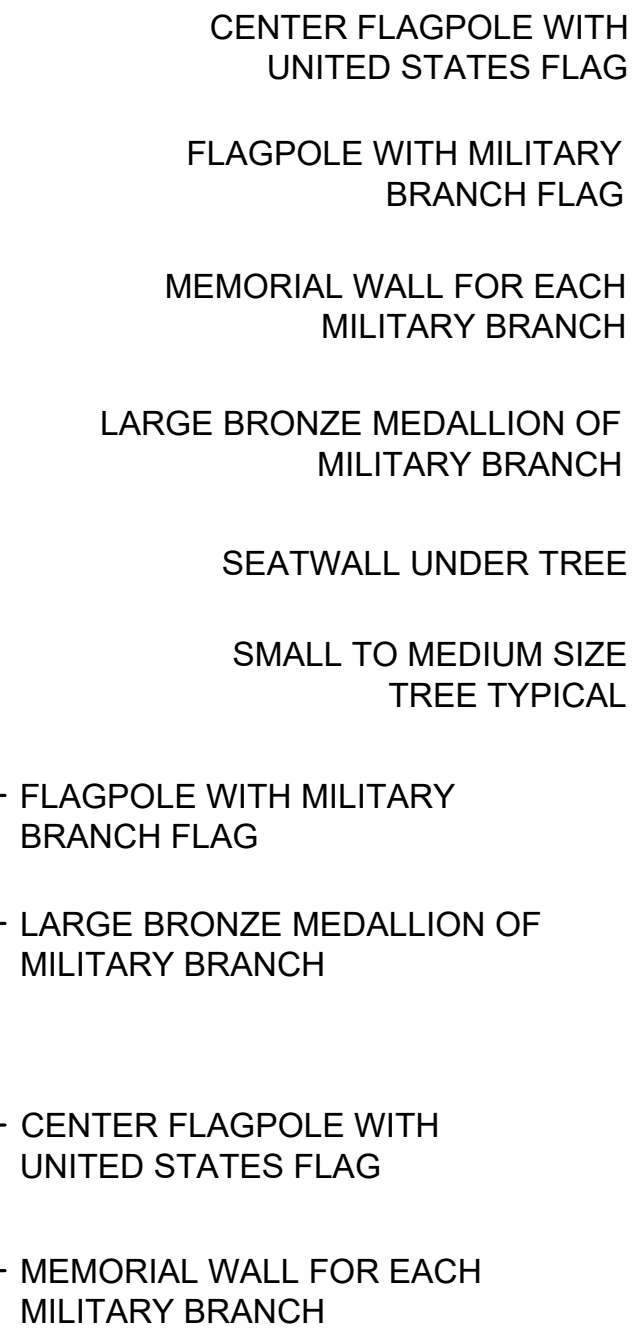
In addition to physical design, the plan recommends exploring pricing policies that honor veterans and first responders. Given the cemetery's limited land and egalitarian layout, designated exclusive burial areas are not recommended. Instead, offering reduced interment fees, niche pricing, or lot costs for these groups will provide a meaningful gesture of gratitude while maintaining inclusive cemetery access. This may also be a wonderful opportunity to pair public art with meaningful fundraising, inviting support from the aforementioned groups and other community minded individuals or foundations who wish to contribute to these tribute areas.

The combination of thoughtful design, interpretive storytelling, and financial recognition policies will reinforce Guaje Pines Cemetery's role as a shared civic space. These Honor Courts will stand as lasting testaments to Los Alamos' values, celebrating service and sacrifice.





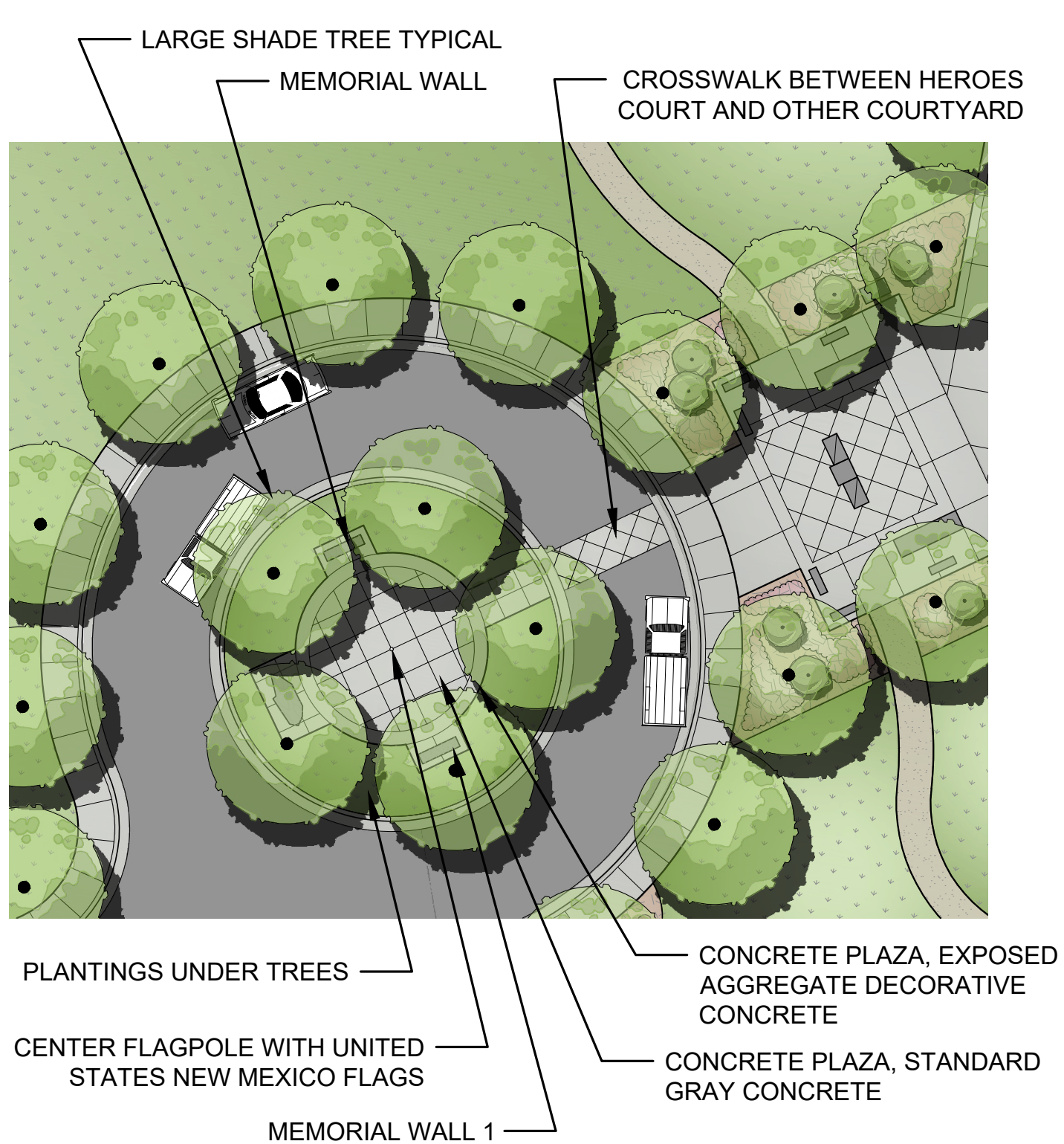
PLAN



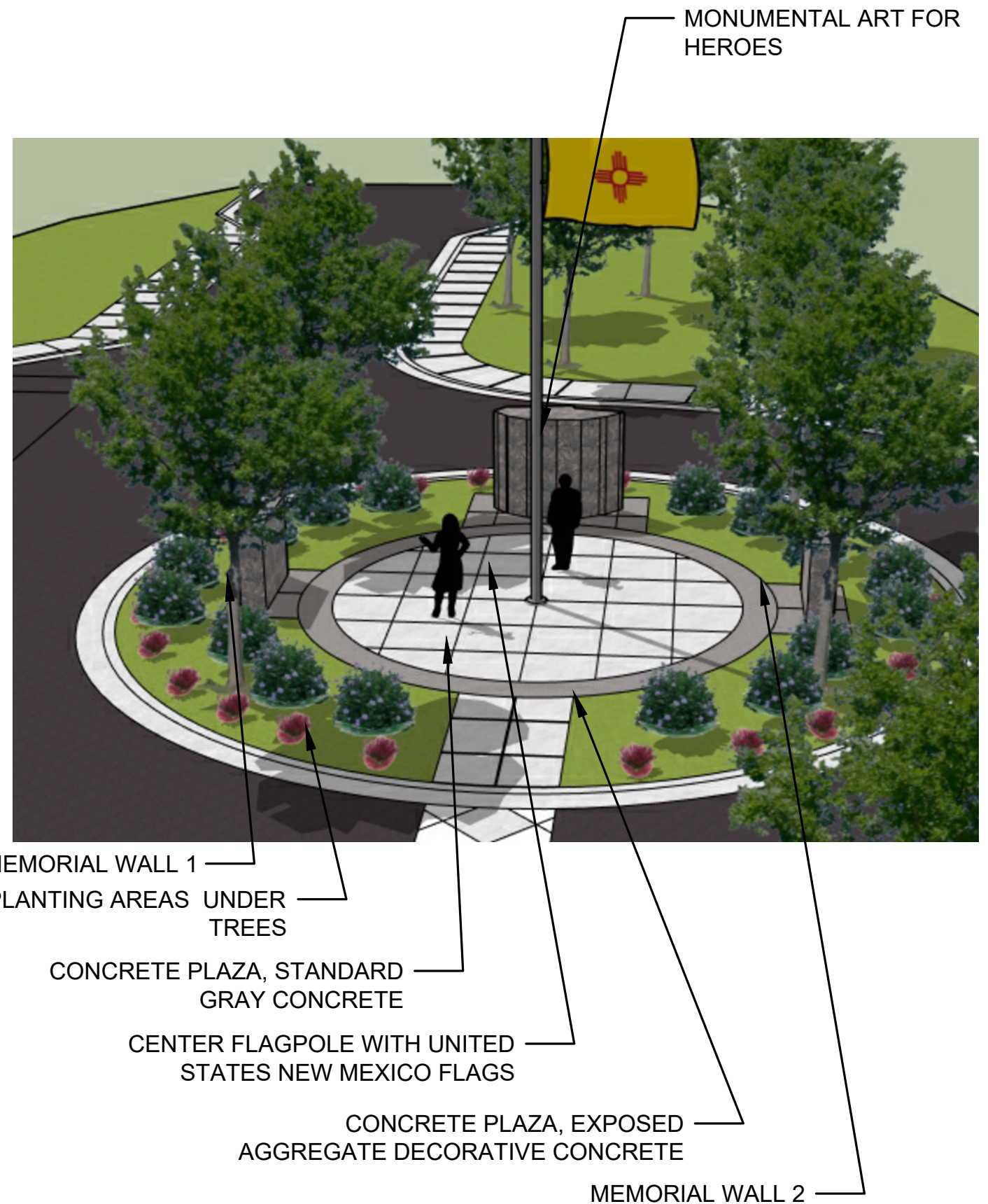
PERSPECTIVE

# VETERANS MEMORIAL





PLAN



PERSPECTIVE

# HEROES COURT MEMORIAL

## Eastern Inventory Development Area

The eastern area of Guaje Pines Cemetery represents a transformative opportunity to increase capacity and broaden interment choices while creating a serene, contemporary setting for remembrance. This portion of the site offers significant new inventory and flexibility, with plots designed to accommodate either cremation burials or casketed burials. This adaptable layout allows the County to scale the space in response to evolving community preferences and burial trends.

A key feature of the expansion is a contemplative scattering garden located at a high point of the site. Adjacent to a small pavilion and seating area, this space will serve as a peaceful, dignified location for cremated remains to be scattered. A cenotaph wall is also proposed nearby to record the names of those interred in this way, preserving a permanent biographical link between individuals and the community they helped shape. The plan recommends the activation of this area be the first phase of this design including the development on meandering memorial paths that are ADA accessible up to the scattering garden.

At the center of the plan is a committal pavilion, envisioned as a year-round gathering space for services, family events, and moments of reflection. The pavilion may integrate cremation niche columns along its perimeter, offering both functional inurnment options into a practical design element. Winding decomposed granite pathways will weave through the expansion area, guiding visitors through a lush landscape enhanced by new shade trees and curated plantings.

Public art opportunities are integrated throughout, including a potential large-scale sculpture anchoring the upper plaza and secondary artistic elements placed along the walks and memorial spaces. Additional features such as an ossuary, cremation niche walls, cenotaphs and benches may be phased in over time, guided by future demand and sales trends derived from the western expansion area.

Overall, the eastern expansion is designed to elevate both function and meaning, providing increased capacity, diverse interment options, and a thoughtfully composed environment that serves both the practical and emotional needs of the community.





# PLAN - EASTERN INVENTORY DEVELOPMENT AREA - ALT.

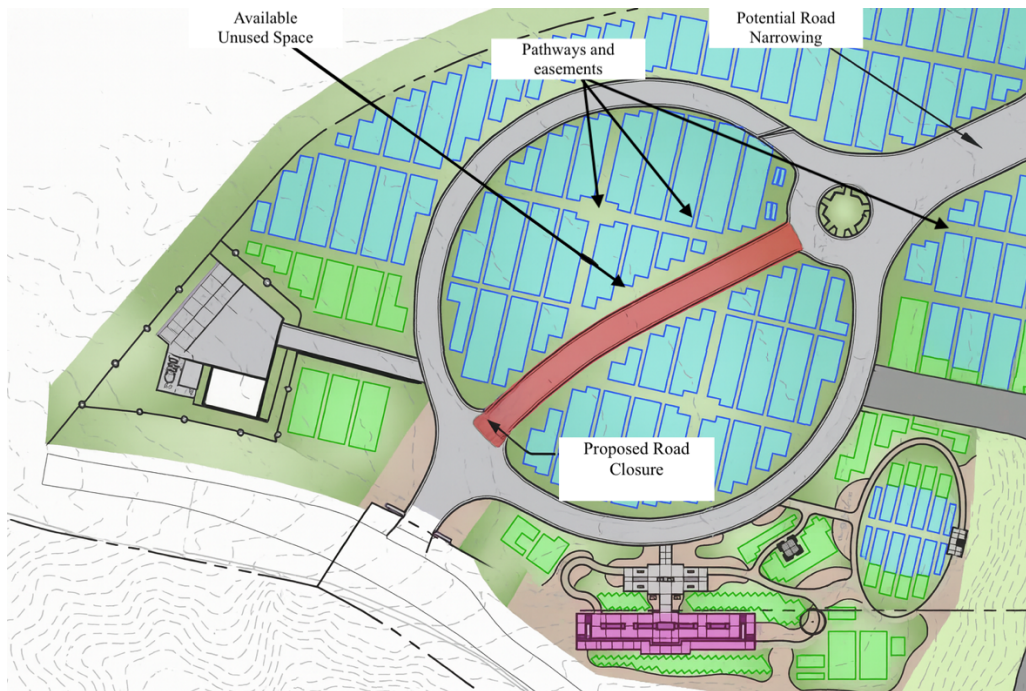


## In-Fill Development Opportunities

As the cemetery approaches the end of its useful life and available inventory becomes increasingly constrained, targeted in-fill development offers an effective strategy for extending capacity. This approach involves reclaiming underutilized spaces within the existing grounds, including oversized pathways, easements, and select internal road segments, for new interment options.

Large pathways, often at least eight feet wide, can be converted to accommodate in-ground burials, cremation plots, or columbaria, while smaller three-foot-wide pathways may also yield additional cremation capacity. In some locations, small pockets of unused ground, where burials have not previously occurred, present further opportunities for expansion. Finally, portions of internal roads, such as the central pathway, could be reclaimed for burial use while retaining the outer perimeter roads for complete access.

### Long-Term Potential In-fill opportunities



If fully implemented, these in-fill initiatives are projected to yield approximately 400 in-ground casket spaces, 1,000 columbaria niches, and 800 in-ground cremation plots (1,800 total cremation units) and 2,200 burial units overall. This strategic reuse of existing space would significantly extend the cemetery's operational life without requiring major land acquisition or site expansion.

# Capital Planning and Cost Estimates

## Overview of Framework

The capital planning framework for the Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan is organized primarily by major development areas, each of which was conceptually designed to a point where its construction values could be quantified. Estimates were prepared at a budget-level suitable for early-stage capital planning. Major program elements include:

- Eastern and Western Inventory Development: Multi-phase work encompassing roadways, grading, landscaping, turf installation, irrigation, columbaria, and memorial walls.
- Memorial Features: Veterans Memorial, Heroes Court Memorial, Children’s Garden, and Ossuary installations.
- Maintenance Area Upgrades: New access drives, paving, curbing, utility connections, and equipment storage facilities.
- Entrance Enhancements: Monument entry, gates, signage, and associated landscaping.

## Opinion of Probable Cost: External Delivery

An initial opinion of probable cost was developed to establish a baseline understanding of the full potential investment required for implementation. This baseline assumed that all work would be delivered by external contractors, with full mobilization, permitting, and contingency allowances included. These costs represent a “maximum exposure” scenario based on standard commercial rates and industry-standard delivery methods.

Detailed breakdowns for each phase and project area are provided in Appendix: Opinion of Probable Cost – External Delivery.

## Practical and Actionable Phasing

Building on the external delivery baseline, a refined capital phasing plan was created to align with County resources, operational capacity, and project priorities. The phasing is divided into:

- Immediate (1–3 years): Highest priority projects that address urgent operational needs, visibility, and early community benefit.
- Intermediate (4–10 years): Improvements to expand site capacity, enhance aesthetics, and introduce new program elements during the secondary phase of development.
- Long-Term (10+ years): Large-scale improvements and expansions that require substantial investment or coordination with other major capital initiatives, as well as lower-priority projects that can be deferred until future phases.

Cost estimates are provided in a range. The range between low and high estimates is necessarily broad given the early point in the design process, particularly regarding material selection, construction detailing, and project scale. The low end of the range assumes significant use of County internal labor and expertise, along with more cost-effective material and design treatments, while still meeting the intended aesthetic and functional standards. The high



estimates reflect full external delivery and, in some cases, more robust interpretations of design concepts, such as increased numbers of niches, higher-quality materials, and expanded planting.

It should be noted that a 30% to 40% premium has been applied to all cost estimates to account for the unique challenges of building in Los Alamos, where the remote location, limited contractor availability, and complex logistics make sourcing materials and completing construction significantly more difficult and costly “on the Hill.”

## Capital Phasing Summary

The following table summarizes the estimated capital costs for each major development area, presented as a range from low to high to reflect variations in delivery method, material selection, and project scope:

Phase	Major Project Areas	Low Estimate	High Estimate
<b>Immediate</b> (1–3 yrs)	North Lawn Burial Expansion; Children’s Area Enhancements; Western Inventory Forecourt; Maintenance Area Upgrades; Tree Work & Survey; Irrigation Improvements, Directional Signage, Tree Work	\$528,000	\$1,057,000
<b>Intermediate</b> (4–10 yrs)	Honor Court Improvements; Entrance Landscaping; Children’s Public Art; Eastern & Western Expansion; Scattering Garden; Tree & Landscape Improvements	\$966,000	\$2,054,000
<b>Long-Term</b> (10+ yrs)	Maintenance Building & Landscape; Entrance Reconstruction; Western In-Fill; Eastern Forecourt, Pavilion, Memorial Wall & Niches; Sidewalk Expansion	\$1,834,000	\$3,419,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,328,000</b>	<b>\$6,530,000</b>

## Costs by Major Development Area

The table below outlines estimated costs for each major development area, showing low and high values to reflect differences in delivery approach, material specifications, and project scale:

Development Area	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Eastern Inventory Development Area	\$ 1,190,000	\$ 2,340,000
Western Inventory Development Area	\$ 885,000	\$ 1,816,000
General	\$ 357,000	\$ 664,000
Honor Court Circles	\$ 252,000	\$ 585,000
Entrance Improvement	\$ 217,000	\$ 377,000
Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements	\$ 357,000	\$ 566,000
Children’s Area Enhancements	\$ 56,000	\$ 143,000
North Lawn Burial Expansion Area	\$ 14,000	\$ 39,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,328,000</b>	<b>\$ 6,530,000</b>

## Implementation Approach

This plan is intended to provide an achievable framework with a clear, phased roadmap. Implementation is structured to proceed in a phased manner, allowing the County to:

- Leverage in-house capacity where feasible to reduce costs.
- Prioritize high-visibility and operationally essential projects early in the timeline.
- Coordinate improvements with other civic infrastructure projects to maximize impact.
- Adapt design treatments and material selections over time in response to available funding, community input, and operational experience.

Collectively, these capital improvements will enhance Guaje Pines Cemetery's ability to meet the community's most pressing need, expanded burial space, while preserving and elevating the site's visual quality and sense of place. In addition to meeting operational demands, the improvements will add meaningful community amenities. These enhancements will strengthen the cemetery's role as both a place of remembrance and a valued public asset.

**Guaje Pines Master Plan**  
**Master Plan: Major Capital Projects**

**Action Plan**

**Immediate (1-3 Years)**

Area	Description	Los Alamos	
		Low	High
Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements	Expand Maintenance Area, site work, addition of material bins, access road expansion and curbing, expanded paved backstage area, relocate spoils area)	\$ 147,000	\$ 241,000
North Lawn Burial Expansion Area	Expand Irrigation, Pin ~250 Graves	\$ 14,000	\$ 39,000
Children's Area Enhancements	Install Memorial Walk around section, improve entry walk, New Trees and plantings, Pin additional children's graves	\$ 28,000	\$ 65,000
Western Inventory Development Area	Forecourt development, plaza with two columbaria County owns, 2-4 benches, ossuary, memorial cenotaph	\$ 185,000	\$ 386,000
General	Tree Survey	\$ 21,000	\$ 33,000
General	Tree Removals, planting, and mulching	\$ 42,000	\$ 65,000
General	Wayfinding Nodes	\$ 28,000	\$ 52,000
Entrance Improvement	Enhance directional signage at Forestation #4	\$ 35,000	\$ 78,000
General	Irrigation System Improvements (smart controller, system improvement)	\$ 28,000	\$ 98,000
<b>Total Immediate</b>		<b>\$ 528,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,057,000</b>

**Intermediate (4-10 Years)**

Area	Description	Low		High	
Honor Court Circles	Veteran's Court Improvements	\$	140,000	\$	325,000
Entrance Improvement	Landscape and plant trees at entrance	\$	14,000	\$	65,000
Children's Area Enhancements	Public Art and Enhancements	\$	28,000	\$	78,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	graves, Grading and Site Work in former soils area, partial irrigation expansion, pin ~200	\$	70,000	\$	195,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Restroom Screening (trees and plantings)	\$	14,000	\$	26,000
Western Inventory Development Area	Memorial Promenade (niches, memorial wall) and memorial path, small pavilion	\$	560,000	\$	1,040,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Scattering Garden, small pavilion and minimal trail access	\$	70,000	\$	195,000
General	Trees and Landscaping Improvements (tree removals, shade trees, native plantings, etc.)	\$	70,000	\$	130,000
<b>Total Intermediate</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>966,000</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,054,000</b>

**Long-Term (10+ years)**

Area	Description	Low		High	
Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements	Prefabricated Building, Utilities, site work, break room and storage supplies, Landscape enhancements	\$	210,000	\$	325,000
Entrance Improvement	Rebuild entrance signage, fence, gate, landscaping	\$	168,000	\$	234,000
Western Inventory Development Area	Inventory in-fill and planting improvements	\$	140,000	\$	390,000
General	Extend towards eastern expansion area, introduce side walk, Trees and Landscaping Improvements (tree removals, shade trees, native plantings, etc.)	\$	98,000	\$	156,000
General	Los Alamos honor court (first responders), seating, flag, tribute areas, plantings	\$	70,000	\$	130,000
Honor Court Circles	Memorial pathways	\$	112,000	\$	260,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Memorial pathways	\$	56,000	\$	104,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Forecourt (cremation inventory and seating)	\$	210,000	\$	260,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Plaza and pavilion area	\$	350,000	\$	650,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Memorial wall and niches	\$	280,000	\$	520,000
Eastern Inventory Development Area	Inventory in-fill and planting improvements	\$	140,000	\$	390,000
<b>Total Long Term</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>1,834,000</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,419,000</b>
<b>Total Master Plan Projects</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>3,328,000</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>6,530,000</b>



**Guaje Pines Master Plan**  
**Master Plan: Major Capital Projects**

**Total By Category**

Eastern Inventory Development Area	\$	1,190,000	\$	2,340,000
Western Inventory Development Area	\$	885,000	\$	1,816,000
General	\$	357,000	\$	664,000
Honor Court Circles	\$	252,000	\$	585,000
Entrance Improvement	\$	217,000	\$	377,000
Maintenance and Operations Area Improvements	\$	357,000	\$	566,000
Children's Area Enhancements	\$	56,000	\$	143,000
North Lawn Burial Expansion Area	\$	14,000	\$	39,000
Total	\$	<b>3,328,000</b>	\$	<b>6,530,000</b>

## Funding Strategy

Securing funding for cemetery improvements often requires creativity and persistence, as cemeteries typically receive limited public or philanthropic attention unless individuals have a direct, personal connection or planned use. This is particularly relevant for Guaje Pines Cemetery, where the existing revenue stream, primarily from lot sales and services, is modest and generally directed toward ongoing operations and long-term care obligations. As a result, there is little surplus available for major capital improvements, infrastructure upgrades, or enhancement projects.

To advance the vision outlined in this master plan, Los Alamos County will need to explore a variety of complementary funding mechanisms. Other municipal cemetery systems have funded projects through the use of allocations from the County's General Fund, the potential use of Gross Receipts Tax revenue for eligible capital improvements, and or the issuance of revenue bonds for projects that have a dedicated funding stream to support repayment. These tools can provide structured, predictable funding for high-priority infrastructure projects such as road repairs, new columbarium development, or upgraded maintenance facilities.

At the state level, New Mexico offers grants and funding pathways that may support cemetery related projects when they intersect with public health, historic preservation, open space management, or community development. In some cases, legislative capital outlay requests can be submitted for site-specific improvements.

In addition, there are federal grant opportunities that the County could pursue in coordination with specific project goals:

- U.S. Forest Service: As Guaje Pines is adjacent to the Santa Fe National Forest, funding related to wildland-urban interface, fire mitigation, and forest edge management may be available to support tree maintenance, buffer enhancements, and native landscaping projects. Forest Service programs also frequently support workforce development efforts, which could provide funding or training resources related to arboriculture, vegetation management, and tree care services. These opportunities offer the dual benefit of improving the cemetery's landscape while building local capacity in land stewardship and green infrastructure.
- Veterans Administration (VA): Although Guaje Pines is not a designated veterans cemetery, federal funding through the VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program could be explored if portions of the cemetery are designated for veterans or if the site includes elements that honor military service. Local veterans' organizations may also serve as valuable partners in developing commemorative spaces or securing support.
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): These agencies offer grants for interpretive programming, commemorative public art, and educational installations, especially those that connect to cultural heritage or local storytelling. The integration of art and interpretation into Guaje Pines' landscape could qualify for such support.

- Federal Historic Preservation Grants: If any part of the cemetery is or becomes eligible for listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places, it may qualify for preservation planning, signage, or conservation landscape funding.

The phased capital improvement plan outlined in this master plan can be supported through a combination of funding sources, including state and federal grants, County allocations, and targeted community fundraising. Leveraging the talents and generosity of the local community through donor programs, both in-kind and monetary, along with commemorative giving and partnerships with local nonprofits, can make priority projects more financially feasible. These efforts also help reinforce the cemetery's role as a shared civic and cultural space. Establishing a "Friends of Guaje Pines" group or organizing project-based fundraising campaigns could offer a structured path for community involvement, particularly for visible enhancements such as gardens, public art, and memorial installations. In parallel, actively pursuing available state and federal grants will be essential to supporting more substantial improvements and long-term infrastructure needs.

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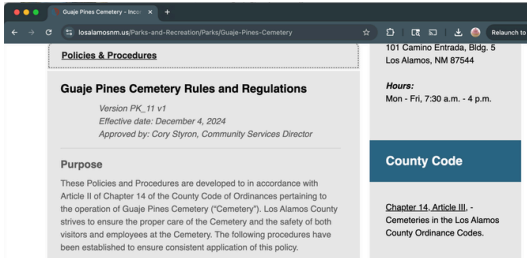


# Appendix

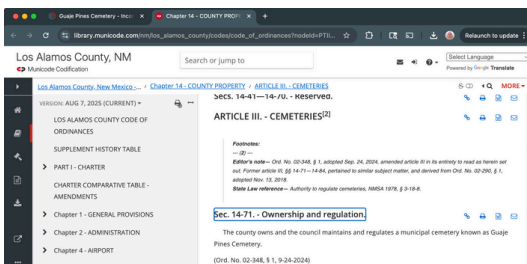


# County Resources

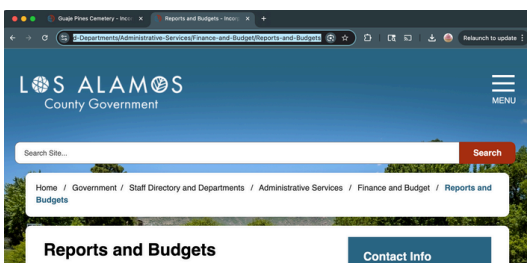
The following links are too important county resources includes the Cemetery's Rules and Regulatoins, Los Alamos County Ordinance, and Financial Reports and Budgets.



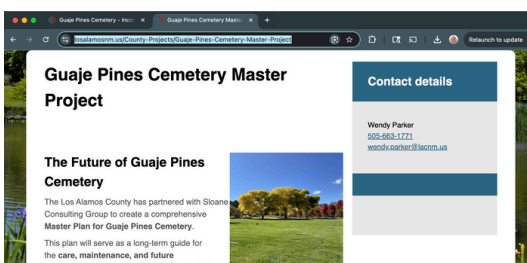
**Guaje Pines Rules and Regulations**  
<https://www.losalamosnm.us/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks/Guaje-Pines-Cemetery>



**County Cemetery Ordinance:**  
[https://library.municode.com/nm/los\\_alamos\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR\\_CH14COPR\\_ARTIIIICE](https://library.municode.com/nm/los_alamos_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH14COPR_ARTIIIICE)



**Los Alamos County Reports and Budgets**  
<https://www.losalamosnm.us/Government/Staff-Directory-and-Departments/Administrative-Services/Finance-and-Budget/Reports-and-Budgets>

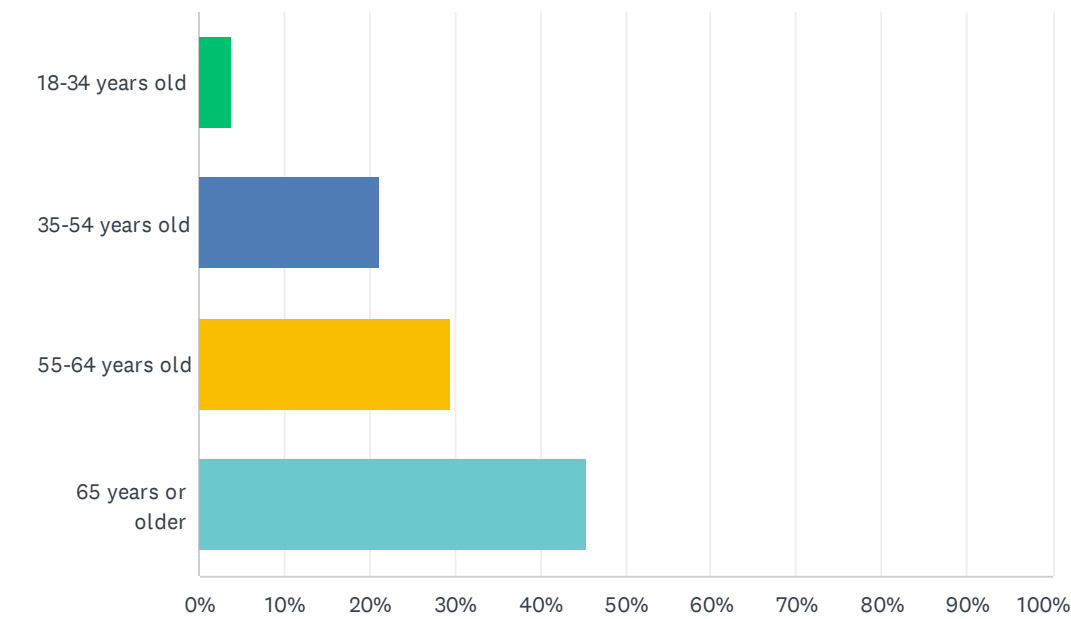


**Guaje Pines Cemetery Master Plan Project Page**  
<https://www.losalamosnm.us/County-Projects/Guaje-Pines-Cemetery-Master-Project>

# Appendix: Community Survey Results

## Q1 Which age best describes you?

Answered: 156    Skipped: 2

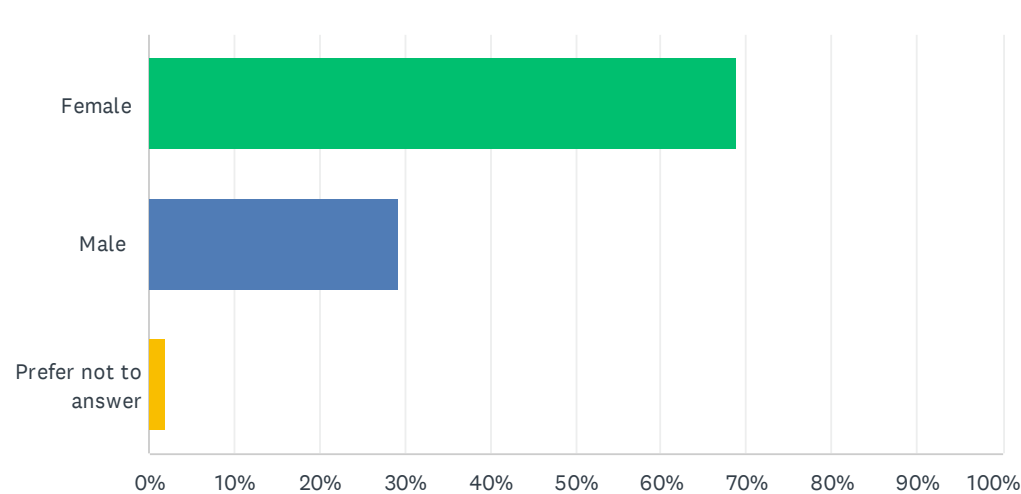


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
18-34 years old	3.85%	6
35-54 years old	21.15%	33
55-64 years old	29.49%	46
65 years or older	45.51%	71
TOTAL		156



## Q2 What is your gender?

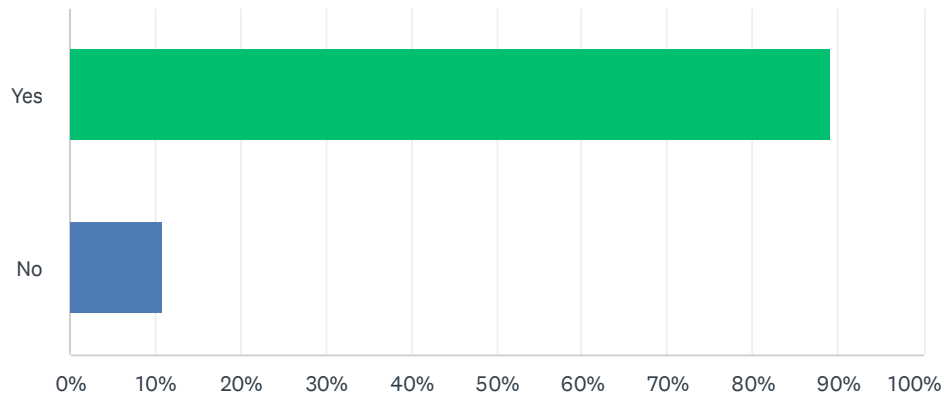
Answered: 157    Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	68.79%	108
Male	29.30%	46
Prefer not to answer	1.91%	3
TOTAL		157

### Q3 Are you a resident of the Couty of Los Alamos?

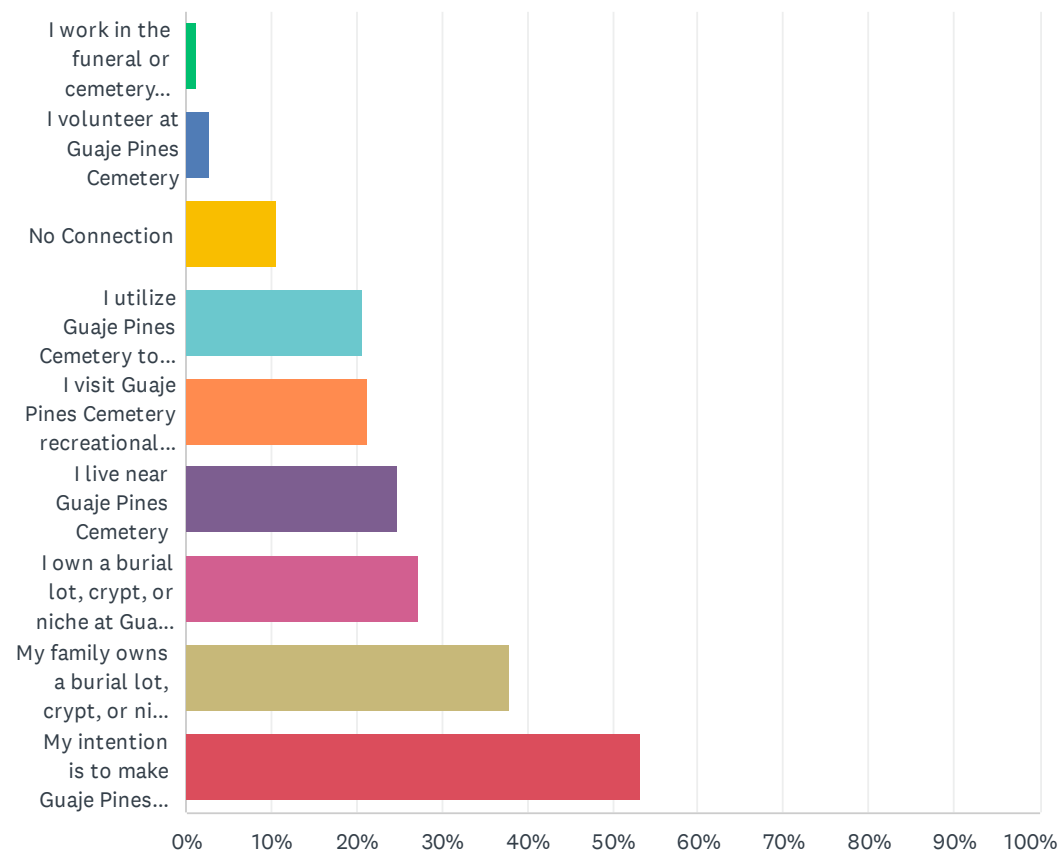
Answered: 155 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89.03%	138
No	10.97%	17
TOTAL		155

## Q4 How do you engage with Guaje Pines Cemetery (choose all that apply)

Answered: 150 Skipped: 8

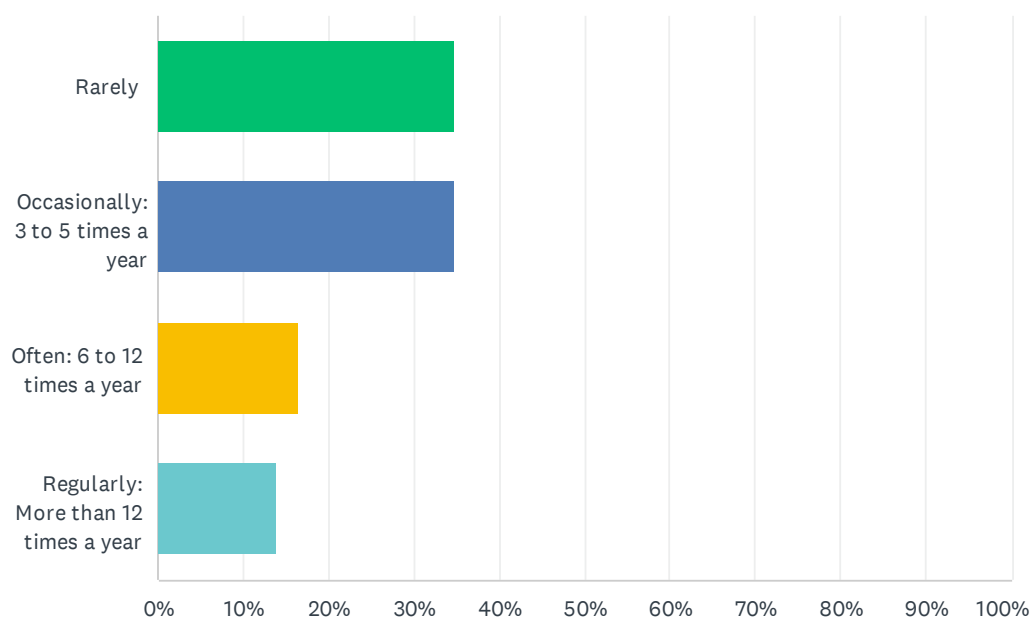


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I work in the funeral or cemetery industry	1.33%	2
I volunteer at Guaje Pines Cemetery	2.67%	4
No Connection	10.67%	16
I utilize Guaje Pines Cemetery to connect to the trail system	20.67%	31
I visit Guaje Pines Cemetery recreationally (to walk, bird watch, etc.)	21.33%	32
I live near Guaje Pines Cemetery	24.67%	37
I own a burial lot, crypt, or niche at Guaje Pines Cemetery	27.33%	41
My family owns a burial lot, crypt, or niche at Guaje Pines Cemetery	38.00%	57
My intention is to make Guaje Pines Cemetery my final resting place	53.33%	80
Total Respondents: 150		



## Q5 How often do you visit the cemetery?

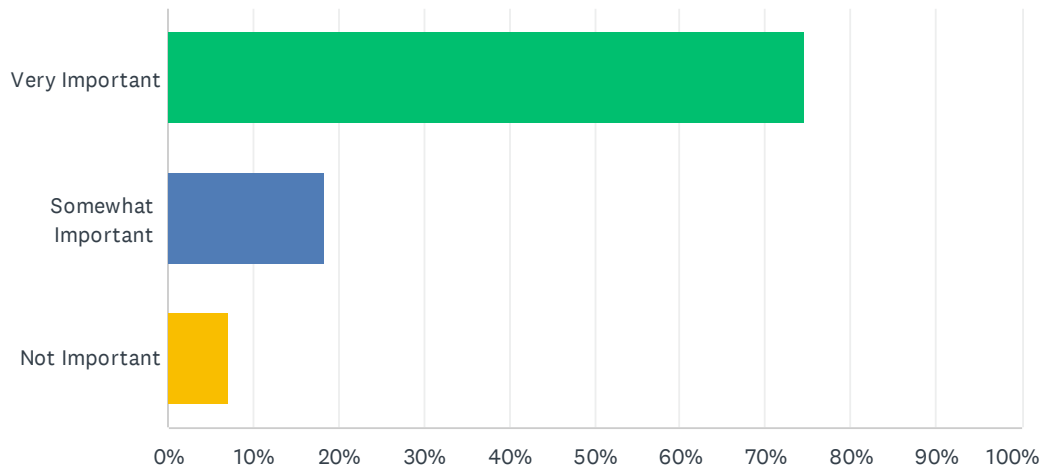
Answered: 158 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Rarely	34.81%	55
Occasionally: 3 to 5 times a year	34.81%	55
Often: 6 to 12 times a year	16.46%	26
Regularly: More than 12 times a year	13.92%	22
TOTAL		158

## Q6 How important is it for the city to continue to offer burial space for sale at the cemetery?

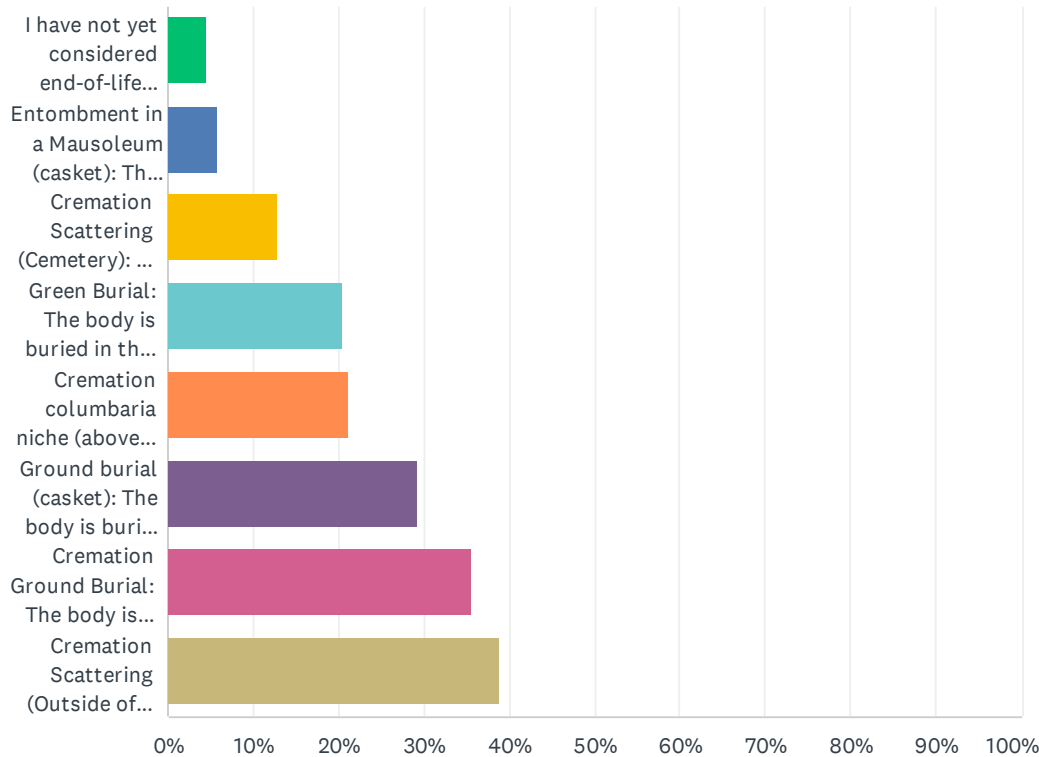
Answered: 158 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Important	74.68%	118
Somewhat Important	18.35%	29
Not Important	6.96%	11
TOTAL		158

## Q7 If you have thought about your own options for end-of-life, which of these are of interest to you? (choose all the apply)

Answered: 157 Skipped: 1

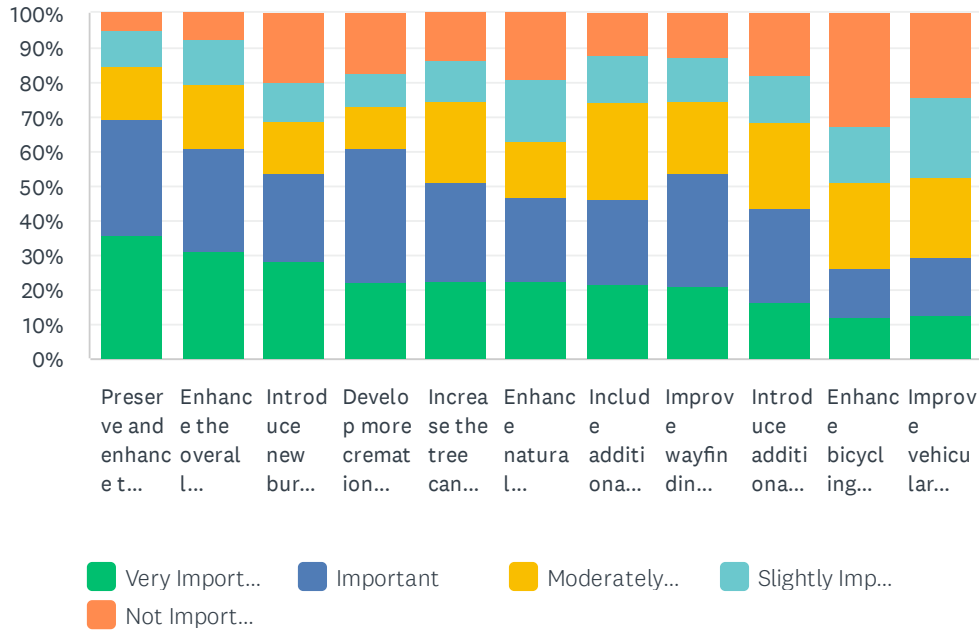


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I have not yet considered end-of-life options	4.46%	7
Entombment in a Mausoleum (casket): The body is buried is placed in a crypt (above ground), in a traditional casket.	5.73%	9
Cremation Scattering (Cemetery): The body is cremated, and the cremated remains are scattered in a cemetery	12.74%	20
Green Burial: The body is buried in the ground, in a shroud, wicker casket, or other natural container (This is known as Natural or Green Burial)	20.38%	32
Cremation columbaria niche (above ground): The body is cremated, and the cremated remains are a columbarium niche (above ground)	21.02%	33
Ground burial (casket): The body is buried in the ground, in a traditional casket	29.30%	46
Cremation Ground Burial: The body is cremated, and the cremated remains are buried in the ground	35.67%	56
Cremation Scattering (Outside of Cemetery): The body is cremated, and the cremated remains are scattered in a favorite place, outside of a cemetery	38.85%	61
Total Respondents: 157		



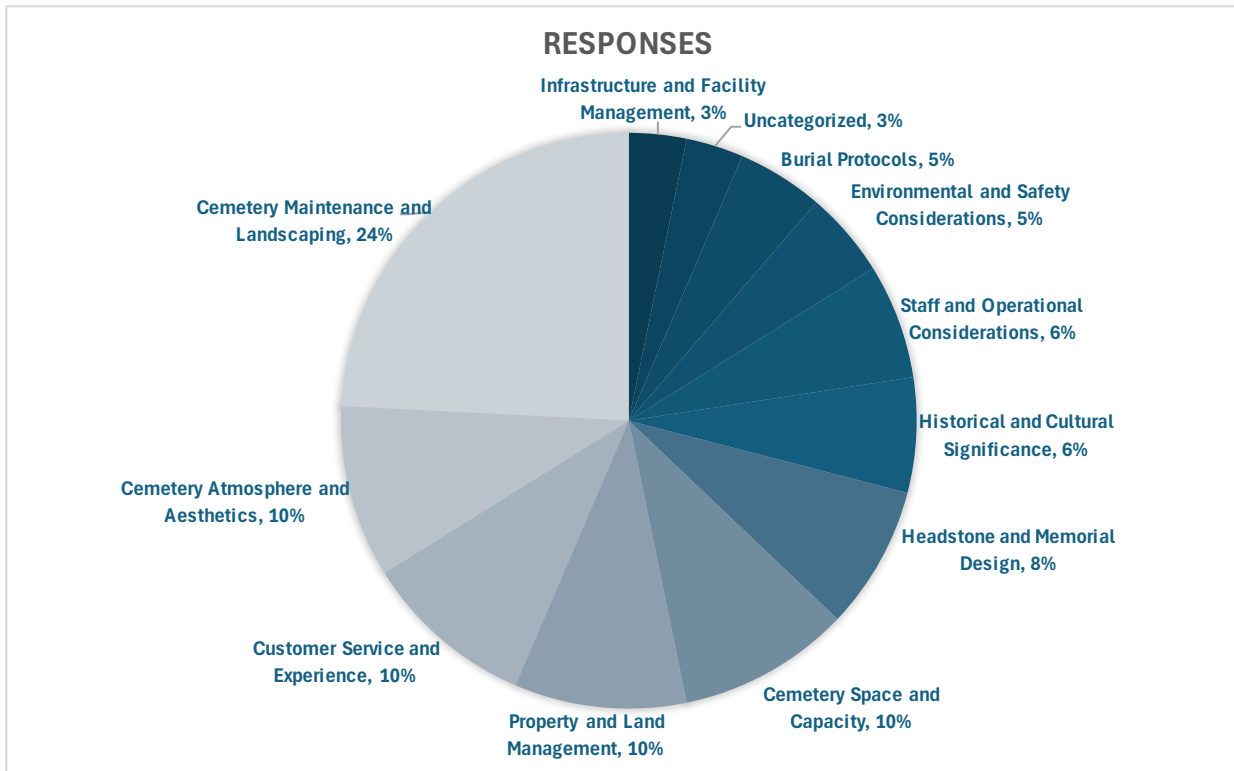
## Q8 Please help us prioritize the following goals and objectives for the cemetery by indicating the importance of each item:

Answered: 158 Skipped: 0



	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Preserve and enhance the Cemetery's historic features	36.00% 54	33.33% 50	15.33% 23	10.67% 16	4.67% 7	150
Enhance the overall aesthetics of the cemetery	31.29% 46	29.93% 44	18.37% 27	12.93% 19	7.48% 11	147
Introduce new burial offerings	28.48% 43	25.17% 38	15.23% 23	11.26% 17	19.87% 30	151
Develop more cremation burial options	22.37% 34	38.82% 59	11.84% 18	9.87% 15	17.11% 26	152
Increase the tree canopy at the Cemetery	22.82% 34	28.19% 42	23.49% 35	12.08% 18	13.42% 20	149
Enhance natural resources and habitat for wildlife	22.45% 33	24.49% 36	16.33% 24	17.69% 26	19.05% 28	147
Include additional seating and rest areas	21.77% 32	24.49% 36	27.89% 41	13.61% 20	12.24% 18	147
Improve wayfinding (informational kiosks, maps, publicly available mapping)	20.81% 31	32.89% 49	20.81% 31	12.75% 19	12.75% 19	149
Introduce additional memorial and tribute offerings	16.55% 24	26.90% 39	24.83% 36	13.79% 20	17.93% 26	145
Enhance bicycling and walking infrastructure (connect to trail system)	12.24% 18	14.29% 21	24.49% 36	16.33% 24	32.65% 48	147
Improve vehicular circulation (roads and parking) and condition in the Cemetery	12.41% 18	17.24% 25	22.76% 33	23.45% 34	24.14% 35	145

## Do you have any other comments or suggestions regarding Guaje Pines Cemetery?



### Theme

Infrastructure and Facility Management  
 Uncategorized  
 Burial Protocols  
 Environmental and Safety Considerations  
 Staff and Operational Considerations  
 Historical and Cultural Significance  
 Headstone and Memorial Design  
 Cemetery Space and Capacity  
 Property and Land Management  
 Customer Service and Experience  
 Cemetery Atmosphere and Aesthetics  
 Cemetery Maintenance and Landscaping

### Responses

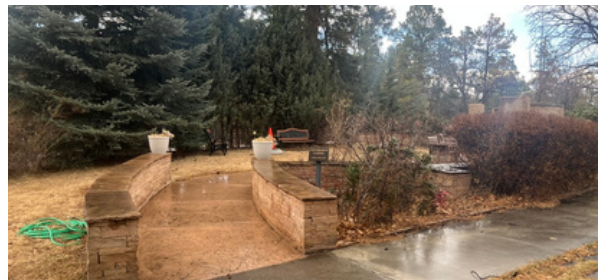
2  
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# Los Alamos Columbaria

## The United Church of Los Alamos

2525 Canyon Rd

Los Alamos, NM 87544





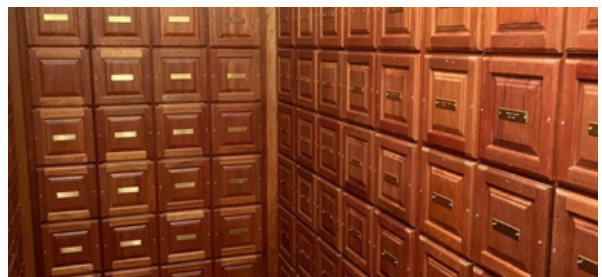
# Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church

2390 N Rd  
Los Alamos, NM 87544



# Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church

2390 N Rd  
Los Alamos, NM 87544



# Significant Cemeteries in the Region

## Santa Fe National Cemetery

501 N Guadalupe St  
Santa Fe, NM 87501





# Sante Fe Memorial Gardens

417 Rodeo Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87505



# Fairview Cemetery

1134 Cerrillos Rd  
Santa Fe, NM 87505





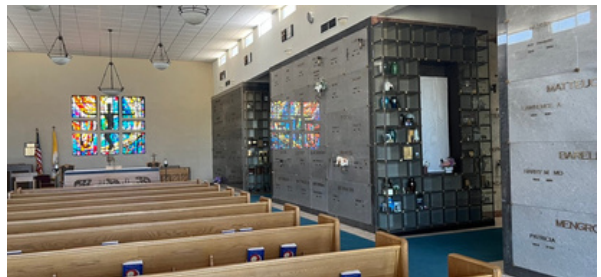
# Rosario Cemetery

499 N Guadalupe St  
Santa Fe, NM 87501



# Gate of Heaven Catholic Cemetery

7999 Wyoming Blvd NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109





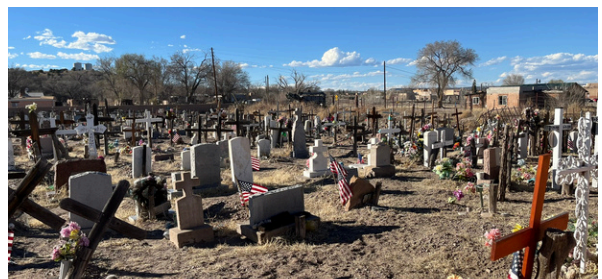
# Sandia Memory Gardens

9500 San Pedro Dr NE,  
Albuquerque, NM 87113



# Santa Clara Pueblo Church

Kee St  
Española, NM 87532





## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
1.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Eastern Inventory Development</u></b>				
	<b>Phase 1 - Includes road, curb and gutter, lawn burials, paths, scattering garden</b>				
1.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$5,000.00	5,000.00
1.1.2	Staking	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
1.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
1.1.4	Demo	20,000	SF	1.00	20,000.00
1.1.5	Clear and Grub	2	ACRS	3,000.00	4,500.00
1.1.6	Grading - Cut	2,500	CY	10.00	25,000.00
1.1.8	Grading - Fill	2,500	CY	8.50	21,250.00
1.1.9	L Curb and Gutter	620	LF	25.00	15,500.00
1.1.10	Concrete Mow Curb	750	LF	15.00	11,250.00
1.1.19	Concrete Paving	2,550	SF	10.00	25,500.00
1.1.22	ADA Curb Ramp	1	EA	2,000.00	2,000.00
1.1.24	Asphalt Paving (including base and prep)	6,200	SF	5.00	31,000.00
1.1.25	Pavement Marking	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
1.1.26	Paths	3,700	SF	3.00	11,100.00
1.1.27	Bollards	2	EA	1,000.00	2,000.00
1.1.28	Turf	52,000	LS	1.50	78,000.00
1.1.29	Trees	60	EA	450.00	27,000.00
1.1.30	Shrubs	100	EA	55.00	5,500.00
1.1.31	Mulch	5,600	SF	1.00	5,600.00
1.1.32	Irrigation	58,000	EA	2.00	116,000.00
1.1.33	Fine Grading	58,000	SF	0.30	17,400.00
1.1.34	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
1.1.35	Small Pavilion	1	LS	45,000.00	45,000.00
1.1.36	Granite Boulders	30	EA	300.00	9,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		127,525.00

**640,000.00**

### Phase 2 - Forecourt paving, plantings, and granite

1.2.1	Permits	1	LS	\$2,500.00	2,500.00
1.2.2	Staking	1	LS	2,000.00	2,000.00
1.2.3	Mobilization	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
1.2.4	Demo	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
1.2.5	Clear and Grub	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00





## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
1.2.6	Grading - Cut	100	CY	10.00	1,000.00
1.2.7	Grading - Fill	100	CY	8.50	850.00
1.2.8	Concrete Paving	825	SF	10.00	8,250.00
1.2.9	Specialty Paving	1,225	SF	20.00	24,500.00
1.2.10	Paths - Repair	1	LS	3,000.00	3,000.00
1.2.11	Bollards	6	EA	1,000.00	6,000.00
1.2.12	Turf - Repair	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
1.2.13	Trees	6	EA	450.00	2,700.00
1.2.14	Shrubs	30	EA	55.00	1,650.00
1.2.15	Mulch	1,300	SF	1.00	1,300.00
1.2.16	Irrigation	1,300	EA	2.00	2,600.00
1.2.17	Fine Grading	1,300	SF	0.30	390.00
1.2.18	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	750.00	750.00
1.2.19	Small Pavilion	1	LS	-	-
1.2.20	Granite Boulders	6	EA	300.00	1,800.00
1.2.21	Granite Memorials	1	LS	150,000.00	150,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		55,822.50

280,000.00

### Phase 3 - Backcourt and Pavilion

1.3.1	Permits	1	LS	\$2,500.00	2,500.00
1.3.2	Staking	1	LS	2,000.00	2,000.00
1.3.3	Mobilization	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
1.3.4	Demo	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
1.3.5	Clear and Grub	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
1.3.6	Grading - Cut	30	CY	10.00	300.00
1.3.7	Grading - Fill	30	CY	8.50	255.00
1.3.8	Concrete Paving	2,700	SF	10.00	27,000.00
1.3.9	Specialty Paving	800	SF	20.00	16,000.00
1.3.10	Paths - Repair	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
1.3.11	Turf - Repair	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
1.3.12	Trees	4	EA	450.00	1,800.00
1.3.13	Shrubs	25	EA	55.00	1,375.00
1.3.14	Mulch	2,000	SF	1.00	2,000.00
1.3.15	Irrigation	2,000	EA	2.00	4,000.00
1.3.16	Fine Grading	2,000	SF	0.30	600.00
1.3.17	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	750.00	750.00
1.3.18	Large Committal Pavilion	1	LS	120,000.00	120,000.00



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
1.3.19	Granite Niche Columns	4	EA	30,000.00	120,000.00
1.3.20	Granite Boulders	10	EA	300.00	3,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		79,520.00
					<u>400,000.00</u>

#### Phase 4 - Memorial Wall

1.3.1	Permits	1	LS	\$2,500.00	2,500.00
1.3.2	Staking	1	LS	1,000.00	1,000.00
1.3.3	Mobilization	1	LS	3,000.00	3,000.00
1.3.4	Demo	1	LS	4,000.00	4,000.00
1.3.5	Grading - Cut	30	CY	10.00	300.00
1.3.6	Grading - Fill	30	CY	8.50	255.00
1.3.7	Concrete Paving	500	SF	10.00	5,000.00
1.3.8	Granite Memorial Wall with Columbaria Niches (100 linear ft.)	1	EA	300,000.00	300,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		79,013.75
					<u>400,000.00</u>

Grand Total of all 4 Phases (1.85 Acres)

1,720,000.00



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

### Veterans Memorial

### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
2.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Veterans Memorial</u></b>				
2.1.1	Grading Permit	1	LS	\$2,000.00	2,000.00
2.1.2	Construction Staking	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
2.1.3	Construction Materials Testing	1	LS	2,000.00	2,000.00
2.1.4	Mobilization	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
2.1.5	Demolition - Concrete and curb and gutter	1,100	SF	10.00	11,000.00
2.1.6	Military Medallions	6	EA	2,000.00	12,000.00
2.1.7	Flagpoles	7	Ea	10,000.00	70,000.00
2.1.8	Monument Walls	1	LS	50,000.00	50,000.00
2.1.9	L Curb and Gutter	604	LF	35.00	21,140.00
2.1.10	ADA curb ramp with detectable warning w/ base & prep	1	EA	1,950.00	1,950.00
2.1.11	Concrete Pavement	150	SF	12.00	1,800.00
2.1.12	Concrete Specialty Pavement	382	SF	24.00	9,168.00
2.1.13	Asphalt patch	343	SF	3.50	1,200.50
2.1.14	Irrigation	253	SF	4.00	1,012.00
2.1.15	Steel Bollards with paint, concrete fill, and concrete footing	2	EA	750.00	1,500.00
2.1.16	Shrubs / Ground Covers - 1 gallon plants	22	EA	29.00	638.00
2.1.17	Shrubs / Ground Covers - 5 gallon plants	20	EA	55.00	1,100.00
2.1.18	Tree - 2" caliper	4	EA	430.00	1,720.00
2.1.19	Bark mulch	253	SF	2.00	506.00
2.1.20	Fertilizers	1	LS	500.00	500.00
2.1.21	Soil Amendments	1	LS	500.00	500.00
2.1.22	Fine grading for turf and planting	253	SF	0.40	101.20
2.1.23	Landscape Maintenance	1	LS	3,000.00	3,000.00
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		49,833.93
					<u>250,000.00</u>





## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

### Veterans Memorial

### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
3.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Heroes Court Memorial</u></b>				
3.1.1	Grading Permit	1	LS	\$2,000.00	2,000.00
3.1.2	Construction Staking	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
3.1.3	Construction Materials Testing	1	LS	2,000.00	2,000.00
3.1.4	Mobilization	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
3.1.5	Clear and Grub	2,000	SF	2.00	4,000.00
3.1.6	Monumental Art	1	EA	30,000.00	30,000.00
3.1.7	Flagpoles	1	Ea	10,000.00	10,000.00
3.1.8	Monument Walls	2	EA	15,000.00	30,000.00
3.1.9	L Curb and Gutter	160	LF	35.00	5,600.00
3.1.10	ADA curb ramp with detectable warning w/ base & prep	1	EA	1,950.00	1,950.00
3.1.11	Concrete Pavement	700	SF	12.00	8,400.00
3.1.12	Concrete Specialty Pavement	200	SF	24.00	4,800.00
3.1.13	Asphalt patch	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
3.1.14	Irrigation	1,100	SF	2.50	2,750.00
3.1.15	Steel Bollards with paint, concrete fill, and concrete footing	2	EA	750.00	1,500.00
3.1.16	Shrubs / Ground Covers - 1 gallon plants	20	EA	29.00	580.00
3.1.17	Shrubs / Ground Covers - 5 gallon plants	10	EA	55.00	550.00
3.1.18	Tree - 2" caliper	4	EA	430.00	1,720.00
3.1.19	Bark mulch	1,100	SF	2.00	2,200.00
3.1.20	Fertilizers	1	LS	500.00	500.00
3.1.21	Soil Amendments	1	LS	500.00	500.00
3.1.22	Fine grading for turf and planting	1,100	SF	0.40	440.00
3.1.23	Landscape Maintenance	1	LS	3,000.00	3,000.00
	25% Contingency	1	LS		30,122.50
					<u><u>160,000.00</u></u>



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
4.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Maintenance Area</u></b>				
	Phase 1 - Includes driveway, curb and gutter, asphalt and concrete paving, concrete material bins, fence, plantings, and turf areas				
4.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$3,000.00	3,000.00
4.1.2	Staking	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
4.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
4.1.4	Demo	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
4.1.5	Clear and Grub	1	ACRS	3,000.00	3,000.00
4.1.6	Grading - Cut	100	CY	10.00	1,000.00
4.1.7	Grading - Fill	100	CY	8.50	850.00
4.1.8	L Curb and Gutter	100	LF	25.00	2,500.00
4.1.9	Concrete Mow Curb	400	LF	15.00	6,000.00
4.1.10	Concrete Paving	2,900	SF	10.00	29,000.00
4.1.11	Asphalt Paving (including base and prep)	4,100	SF	5.00	20,500.00
4.1.12	Pavement Marking	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
4.1.13	Bollards	2	EA	1,000.00	2,000.00
4.1.14	Turf	15,200	LS	1.50	22,800.00
4.1.15	Trees	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00
4.1.16	Shrubs	100	EA	55.00	5,500.00
4.1.17	Mulch	8,900	SF	1.00	8,900.00
4.1.18	Irrigation	24,000	EA	2.00	48,000.00
4.1.19	Fine Grading	24,000	SF	0.30	7,200.00
4.1.20	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
4.1.21	Concrete Material Bins	1	LS	40,000.00	40,000.00
4.1.22	Protect existing masonry wall along driveway	1	LS	8,000.00	8,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		61,937.50
					<u>310,000.00</u>

	Phase 2 - Includes driveway, curb and gutter, asphalt and concrete paving, concrete material bins, fence, plantings, and turf areas				
4.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$1,500.00	1,500.00
4.1.2	Staking	1	LS	1,000.00	1,000.00
4.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
4.1.4	Demo	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
4.1.5	Clear and Grub	2,000	SF	3.00	6,000.00
4.1.6	Grading - Cut	50	CY	10.00	500.00



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
4.1.7	Grading - Fill	50	CY	8.50	425.00
4.1.8	L Curb and Gutter	-	LF	25.00	-
4.1.9	Concrete Mow Curb	-	LF	15.00	-
4.1.10	Concrete Paving	50	SF	10.00	500.00
4.1.11	Asphalt Paving (including base and prep)	200	SF	5.00	1,000.00
4.1.12	Pavement Marking	-	LS	2,500.00	-
4.1.13	Bollards	-	EA	1,000.00	-
4.1.14	Turf	500	LS	1.50	750.00
4.1.15	Trees	6	EA	450.00	2,700.00
4.1.16	Shrubs	50	EA	55.00	2,750.00
4.1.17	Mulch	2,000	SF	1.00	2,000.00
4.1.18	Irrigation	2,500	EA	2.00	5,000.00
4.1.19	Fine Grading	2,500	SF	0.30	750.00
4.1.20	Prefab Building	1	LS	75,000.00	75,000.00
4.1.21	Concrete Foundation and Pad	1	LS	2,000.00	2,000.00
4.1.22	Utilities	1	LS	25,000.00	25,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		35,468.75

180,000.00





**Guaje Pines Cemetery**  
**Master Plan Level**  
**List of Probable Costs**

**List of Probable  
Construction Costs**

8/7/25

No.	Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
1						
2	5.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Childrens Garden</u></b>				
3		Single Phase - ADA walkway to children's garden, paths, art feature, turf, plantings, irrigation, and other appurtenances				
4	5.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$5,000.00	5,000.00
5	5.1.2	Staking	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6	5.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
7	5.1.4	Demo	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
8	5.1.5	Clear and Grub	13,800	SF	1.00	13,800.00
9	5.1.6	Grading - Cut	200	CY	10.00	2,000.00
11	5.1.7	Grading - Fill	200	CY	8.50	1,700.00
12	5.1.8	L Curb and Gutter	30	LF	25.00	750.00
13	5.1.9	Concrete Mow Curb	400	LF	15.00	6,000.00
22	5.1.10	Concrete Paving	200	SF	10.00	2,000.00
25	5.1.11	ADA Curb Ramp	1	EA	2,000.00	2,000.00
27	5.1.12	Asphalt Patch (including base and prep)	250	SF	10.00	2,500.00
29	5.1.13	Paths	1,550	SF	4.00	6,200.00
30	5.1.14	Bollards	2	EA	1,000.00	2,000.00
31	5.1.15	Turf	8,700	LS	1.50	13,050.00
32	5.1.16	Trees	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00
33	5.1.17	Shrubs	50	EA	55.00	2,750.00
34	5.1.18	Mulch	1,350	SF	1.00	1,350.00
35	5.1.19	Irrigation	10,000	EA	2.00	20,000.00
36	5.1.20	Fine Grading	10,000	SF	0.30	3,000.00
37	5.1.21	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
38	5.1.22	Entry Feature	1	LS	20,000.00	20,000.00
39	5.1.23	Pinning	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
97						-
						-
		25% Contingency	1	LS		37,150.00
						190,000.00



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
6.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Western Inventory Development Area</u></b>				
	Phase 1 - ADA walkway to children's garden, paths, art feature, turf, plantings, irrigation, and other appurtenances				
6.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$5,000.00	5,000.00
6.1.2	Staking	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
6.1.4	Demo	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6.1.5	Clear and Grub	8,700	SF	1.00	8,700.00
6.1.6	Grading - Cut	400	CY	10.00	4,000.00
6.1.7	Grading - Fill	400	CY	8.50	3,400.00
6.1.8	L Curb and Gutter	90	LF	25.00	2,250.00
6.1.9	Concrete Mow Curb	400	LF	15.00	6,000.00
6.1.10	Concrete Paving	1,200	SF	10.00	12,000.00
6.1.11	ADA Curb Ramp	1	EA	2,000.00	2,000.00
6.1.12	Asphalt Patch (including base and prep)	300	SF	10.00	3,000.00
6.1.13	Paths	900	SF	4.00	3,600.00
6.1.14	Bollards	3	EA	1,000.00	3,000.00
6.1.15	Turf	3,900	SF	1.50	5,850.00
6.1.16	Trees	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00
6.1.17	Shrubs	150	EA	55.00	8,250.00
6.1.18	Mulch	1,650	SF	1.00	1,650.00
6.1.19	Irrigation	5,500	EA	2.00	11,000.00
6.1.20	Fine Grading	5,500	SF	0.30	1,650.00
6.1.21	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
6.1.22	Pinning	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6.1.23	Granite Memorials	1	LS	80,000.00	80,000.00
6.1.24	Ossuahry	1	LS	8,000.00	8,000.00
6.1.25	Pinning	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		54,087.50

280,000.00

	Phase 2 - Promenade, memorial wall, and turf burials				
6.2.1	Permits	1	LS	\$5,000.00	5,000.00
6.2.2	Staking	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6.2.3	Mobilization	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
6.2.4	Demo	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00



## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
6.2.5	Clear and Grub	18,300	SF	1.00	18,300.00
6.2.6	Grading - Cut	1,000	CY	10.00	10,000.00
6.2.7	Grading - Fill	1,000	CY	8.50	8,500.00
6.2.8	L Curb and Gutter	50	LF	25.00	1,250.00
6.2.9	Concrete Mow Curb	500	LF	15.00	7,500.00
6.2.10	Concrete Paving	2,700	SF	10.00	27,000.00
6.2.11	Concrete Stairs	100	SF	12.00	1,200.00
6.2.12	Asphalt Patch (including base and prep)	150	SF	10.00	1,500.00
6.2.13	Paths	750	SF	4.00	3,000.00
6.2.14	Bollards	4	EA	1,000.00	4,000.00
6.2.15	Turf	7,100	SF	1.50	10,650.00
6.2.16	Trees	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00
6.2.17	Shrubs	200	EA	55.00	11,000.00
6.2.18	Mulch	5,300	SF	1.00	5,300.00
6.2.19	Irrigation	12,400	EA	2.00	24,800.00
6.2.20	Fine Grading	12,400	SF	0.30	3,720.00
6.2.21	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
6.2.22	Pinning	1	LS	5,000.00	5,000.00
6.2.23	Granite Memorial Walls and Columbarium	1	LS	500,000.00	500,000.00
6.2.24	Pinning	1	LS	15,000.00	15,000.00
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		173,680.00

**870,000.00**





## Guaje Pines Cemetery

### Master Plan Level

#### List of Probable Costs

8/7/25

## List of Probable Construction Costs

Item	Description	Qty.	Unit	Unit Price 2025	Sub Total
7.1.0	<b><u>Cemetery Construction - Monument Entry</u></b>				
	Single Phase - Includes entry monuments, gates, signage, planting, and irrigatoin				
7.1.1	Permits	1	LS	\$2,500.00	2,500.00
7.1.2	Staking	1	LS	2,500.00	2,500.00
7.1.3	Mobilization	1	LS	7,500.00	7,500.00
7.1.4	Demo	1	LS	10,000.00	10,000.00
7.1.5	Clear and Grub	2,000	SF	1.00	2,000.00
7.1.6	Grading - Cut	50	CY	10.00	500.00
7.1.7	Grading - Fill	50	CY	8.50	425.00
7.1.8	L Curb and Gutter	40	LF	25.00	1,000.00
7.1.9	Concrete Mow Curb	150	LF	15.00	2,250.00
7.1.10	Concrete Paving	100	SF	10.00	1,000.00
7.1.11	Asphalt Patch (including base and prep)	300	SF	10.00	3,000.00
7.1.12	Turf	500	SF	1.50	750.00
7.1.13	Trees	10	EA	450.00	4,500.00
7.1.14	Shrubs	150	EA	55.00	8,250.00
7.1.15	Mulch	2,000	SF	1.00	2,000.00
7.1.16	Irrigation	2,500	EA	2.00	5,000.00
7.1.17	Fine Grading	2,500	SF	0.30	750.00
7.1.18	Fertilizers and Amendments	1	LS	1,500.00	1,500.00
7.1.19	Monuments	1	LS	120,000.00	120,000.00
7.1.20	Steel Gate	1	LS	50,000.00	50,000.00
7.1.21	Signage	1	LS	30,000.00	20,000.00
			LS		-
					-
					-
	25% Contingency	1	LS		61,356.25
					<u><u>310,000.00</u></u>

# Contact Us For More Information

Sloane Consulting was founded in 1981 and has worked in 43 states and multiple countries with well over 500 clients, specializing in the operation and evaluation of cemeteries and funeral homes. We believe deeply in the role that these institutions play in our society and communities, and we work with all our clients to ensure they can be both accessible and sustainable for generations to come.

From direct management to strategic or master planning to evaluations and appraisals we are capable of providing innovative and actionable steps to help drive your organization forward. In addition to our traditional consulting, we serve as the chief operating officer of numerous organizations. This allows our clients to have an experienced, expert manager, generally at a lower cost while delivering best practices from across the industry to each individual organization.



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