



For Immediate Release

Media Contact:

Beth Cocchiarella

321.277.9630

SCHENKEL SHULTZ BEGINS CONSTRUCTION ON EASTPORT WELCOME CENTER

Orlando, FL – December 11, 2024 – Schenkel Shultz, a Central Florida architectural and interior design studio, announces construction is underway on the Welcome Center at Eastport in The Villages. Set to open in spring 2025, this new and vibrant center will serve as a welcoming hub for guests looking to learn more about The Villages community.

The \$35 million project draws inspiration from the fictitious story of the Eastman family and their boat-building legacy, built from the imagined ruins of the 1900s structures that once launched their illustrious business. Evoking the charm of a revitalized factory, the Welcome Center introduces visitors to The Villages and its amazing lifestyle possibilities.

Rooted in one of the brand's core values of hospitality, the experience begins on the ground floor, where guests are guided through a curated showcase of the beauty and active lifestyle that residents experience and enjoy. A cozy coffee house and immersive exhibits lead to a lakefront porch, offering views of the man-made lake, dragon boat racing and promenade.

Industrial-inspired corridors echo the texture and character of historic factories, complemented by modern design elements such as abundant natural light, flexible seating and indoor-outdoor connections. The upper levels will house essential administrative functions including offices, meeting rooms and over 6,000 square feet of conference space.

“The intention of the design behind the Welcome Center was to capture the essence of The Villages and the unique lifestyle it promotes for its residents,” said Ekta Desai, AIA, Design Lead/Partner at Schenkel Shultz. “Creating an inviting ambience was essential to encouraging engagement and synergy among visitors and residents of all ages.”

Situated at the heart of the development, the Welcome Center ensures easy access to the lively urban core. European-inspired streetscapes, pocket parks and walkable spaces encourage social interaction, leisure and spontaneity for both residents and guests.

About Schenkel Shultz Architecture

As a member of the Central Florida community for 40 years and headquartered in Downtown Orlando, Schenkel Shultz is committed to inspiring the community through impactful design. The architecture and interior design firm has built a legacy of success through a continued focus on design excellence that responds to the distinct needs of each client. Rooted in critical thinking, research, collaboration, and personal experiences, the firm is passionate about design and creating meaningful community partnerships.