

A large, multi-story house with a swimming pool and outdoor patio at night. The house has a dark roof, light-colored siding, and numerous windows, many of which are illuminated from within. A large covered patio area is visible on the left, and a swimming pool is in the foreground. The house is surrounded by trees and landscaping, with some outdoor lighting visible. The text "Shoreline Terrace" is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font, and "NARI MINNESOTA" is overlaid in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it.

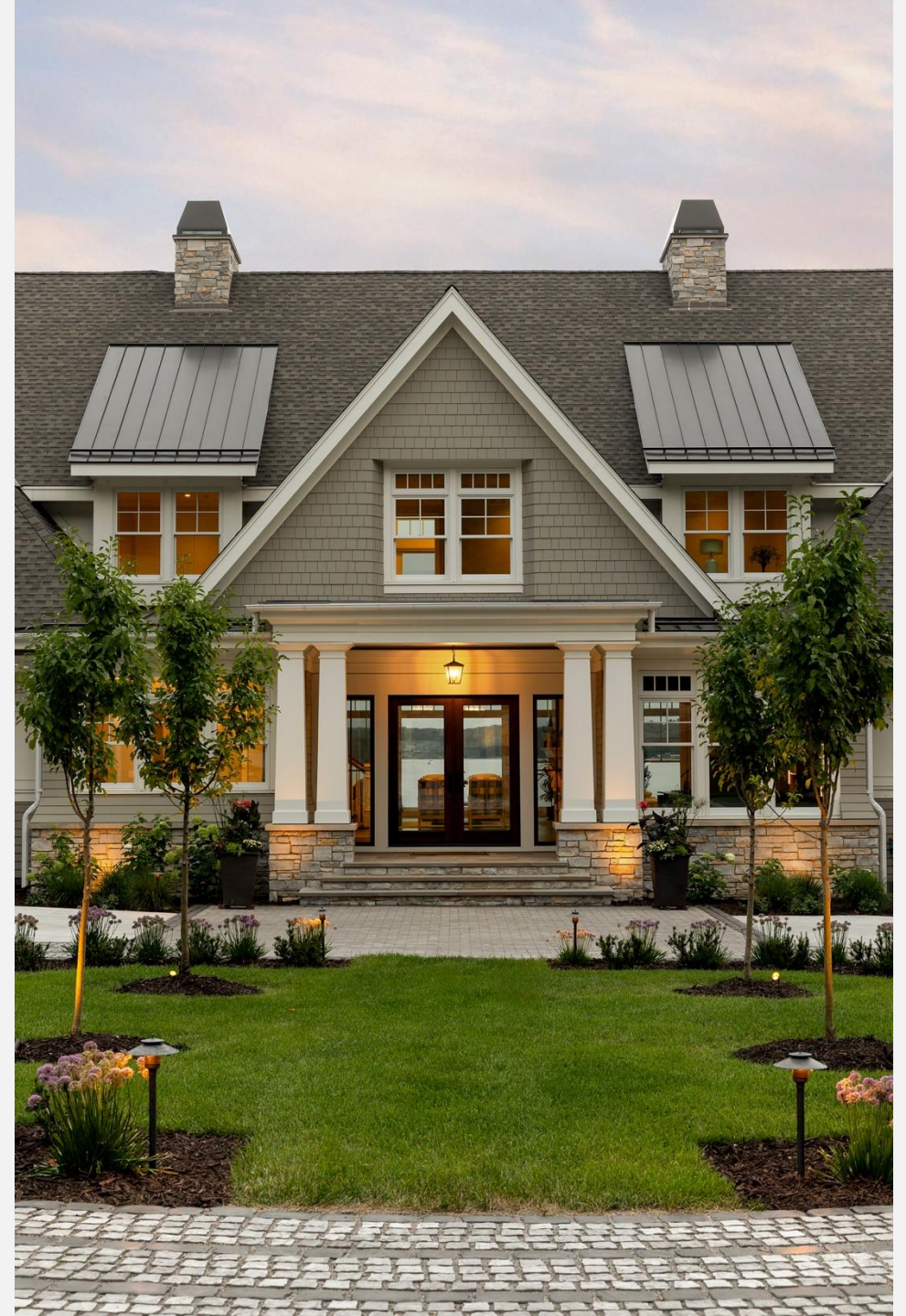
Shoreline Terrace

NARI MINNESOTA

Shoreline Terrace transforms an underused Lake Minnetonka lot into a true outdoor destination. Careful grading gives the pool an infinity-edge feel that seems to spill into the lake, while a long cedar pergola organizes lounging, dining, and a lakeside swing bed for effortless everyday use or large-scale entertaining. A sunken hot tub, arced firepit patio, and neutral natural palette tie the space together in classic Minnesota lake style. Behind the beauty, thoughtful engineering solved real challenges — privacy screening from a close neighbor, an elaborate drainage system, and a circular driveway built for hosting — proving form and function in perfect balance.

Residential Landscape Design/Outdoor Living Over \$250,000

Shoreline Terrace Overview



Project Goals

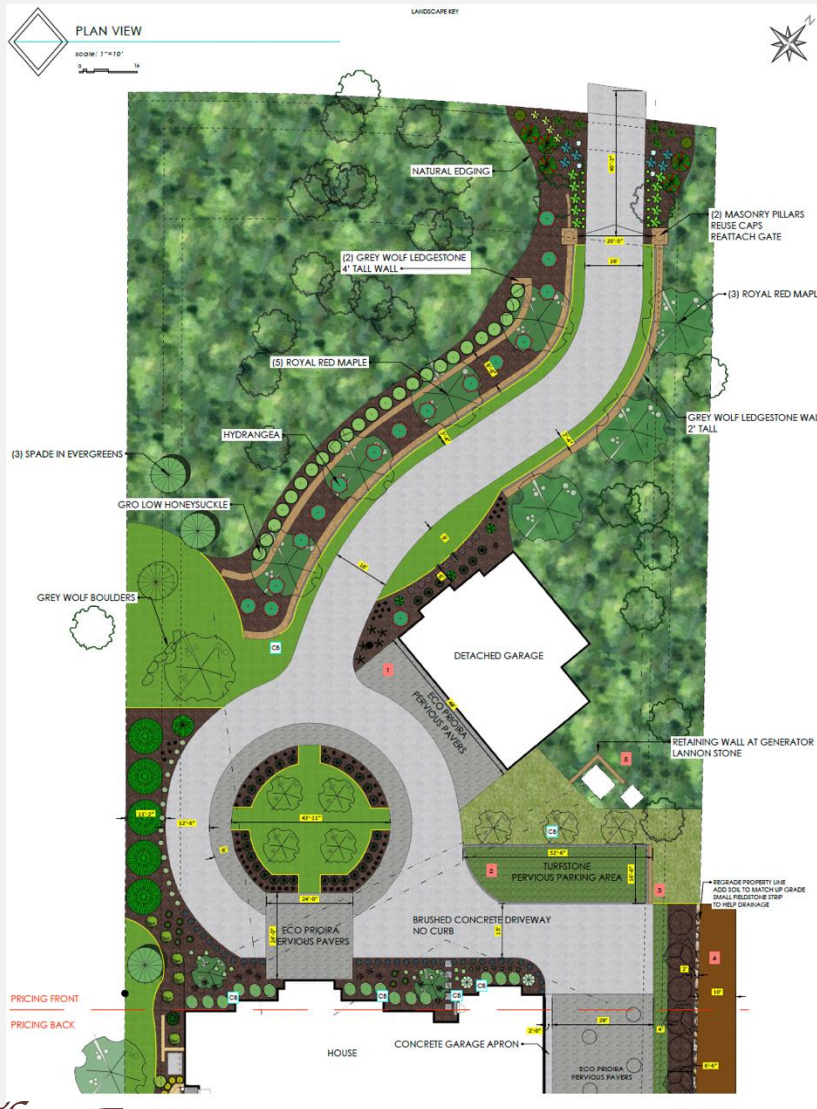
- **Functional space for family hosting** – A flexible layout for regularly hosting daughters and their families, plus larger extended family and friend gatherings throughout the year
- **Distinct areas to sit and enjoy** – Multiple spaces that flow together for large groups but stay intimate for smaller ones, each suited to a time of day: morning coffee on the upper patio, poolside lounging by day, evening fires at the firepit, nighttime soaks in the sunken hot tub
- **Uninterrupted lake views** – Framed views of Lake Minnetonka from the home and every sitting area, with the pergola placement, arced firepit patio, and firepit positioning all designed to avoid obstructions and keep the lake in sight
- **Privacy from the close neighboring lot** – An arborvitae hedge for year-round ground-level screening, paired with Aspen trees that will grow over the pergola for upper-level privacy and shade
- **Parking for multiple cars without blocking flow** – A circular driveway (16' wide, two cars can pass) with additional parking along the circle and in front of the detached garage, plus a reinforced paver-and-sod parking area that supports cars without damage or sinking



Before



The Design



The Front



The Side & Backyard

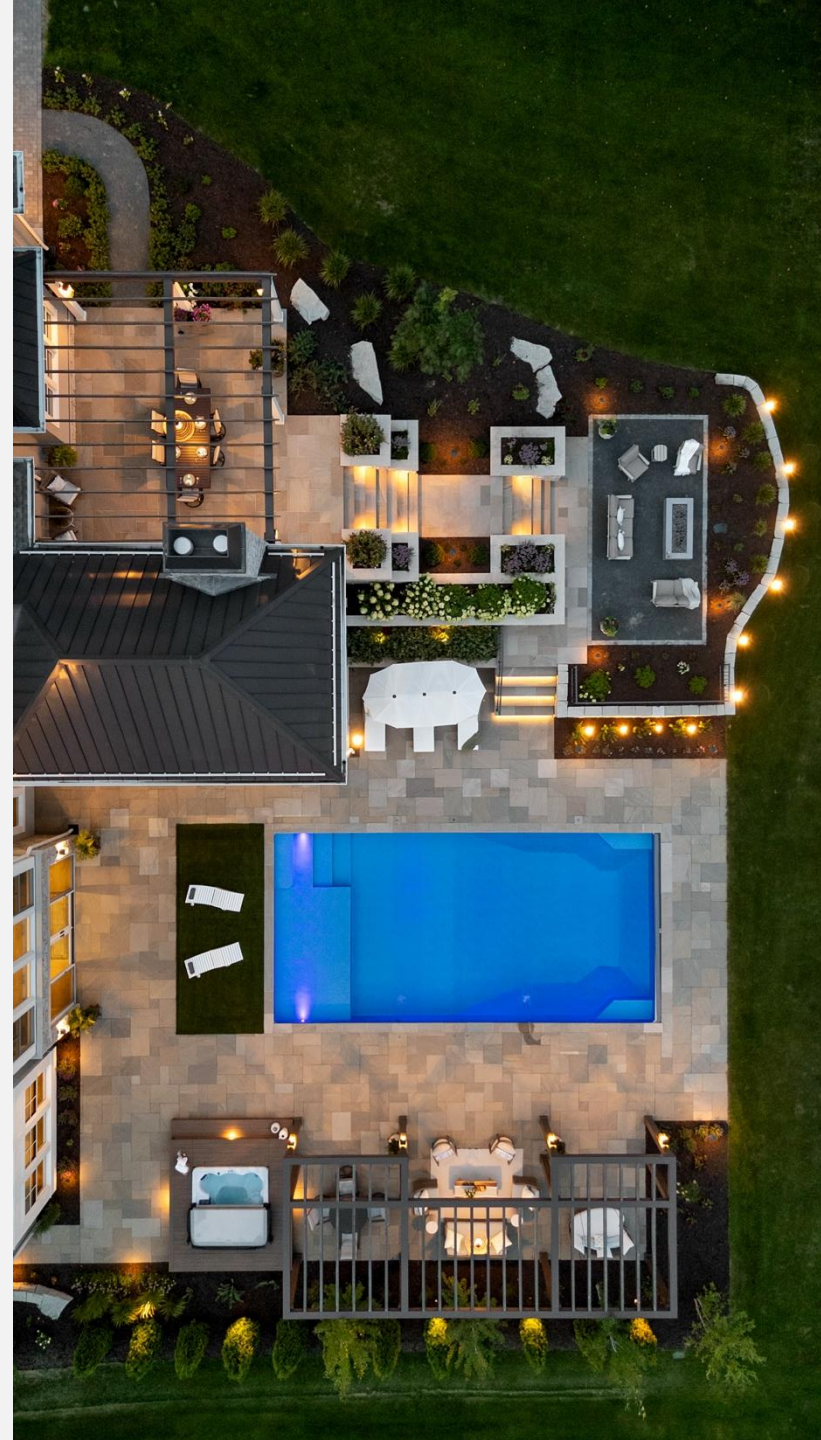
After

(Front Drive)



Before & After

(Backyard)



Functionality

- *Flow of the space from basement to upper patio was important to connect with such a grade change. Creating an easy pathway and steps to get up and down the yard was a critical point to set the program of the space. By building out the walls and creating a comfortable step path with treads with a railing and added levels to entertaining, the grade change is barely noticeable as you have destinations on your path. Creating a tiered space system here with the tiered walls with plantings and having the planted firepit patio as the destination between upper and lower, really softened all the hardscapes of the walls and path.*
- *Lighting was also an important part of the design. A combination of hard-wired lighting on the house and pergolas as well as low voltage lighting on the walls and steps and in the planting areas add a layered lighting plan to the whole property.*
- *All the materials we selected are natural products so that they add a great touch and feel to the space as well as weather well throughout the many years to come.*



Aesthetic Touches

- *The color palette was kept in neutral, natural tones to complement the house — using a mix of natural stone patio products, natural stone retaining walls and retaining wall veneer, and a rich wood stain on the cedar pergolas. The design leans into a classic Minnesota lake lifestyle with warm, rich colors.*
- *The focal point of the space directs the eye back toward the lake, and the pool placement really sets that tone. The grades and elevations were worked through so that from within the pool, it has an infinity-pool feel that seems to expand from the pool's edge to the lake. Enough sod space was left at the end of the pool for cornhole and other yard games, then the grade drops so the lake connection stays uninterrupted from the pool's elevation.*
- *All the spaces are balanced and symmetrical, with clean lines and clearly defined areas. The length of the pool determined the size and shape of the pergola and sun lounge patio. Within the long pergola are separate zones: small-group lounging on the furniture set at the center, a small dining table on the house side for poolside lunches or nighttime cards by the hot tub, and a swing bed right at the lakeside for the ultimate 180-degree views of pool to lake — perfect for afternoon reading and sunbathing. The sun loungers sit in a purpose-built nook just off the screened patio area, in front of the tiered wall — a south-facing spot that gets full sun from morning through late afternoon.*



Innovation & Craftsmanship

The hot tub's location was chosen for its proximity to the house, making winter use effortless for the homeowners. Sinking the concrete pad down 18" and building a wooden surround lets the hot tub blend seamlessly into the pergola and pool space, while the surround adds space for towels and drinks at a comfortable height for sitting down and dipping in.



Innovation & Craftsmanship

The pergolas bring clean lines and a classic purlin style, offering shade on a very sunny lot while placemaking for group seating and connecting the upper and lower spaces. Since the upper pergola attaches to the house, its posts were painted to match the house trim, tying it visually into the patio.



Innovation & Craftsmanship

Pervious pavers were used throughout the driveway to manage significant drainage challenges from the neighboring yard and the driveway's top slope. An underground stormwater system collects water at two large collection points and channels it into the dry stream bed along the property line. Decorative pervious pavers in front of both garages, the front door, and the circle add further infiltration capacity without relying on sheet drainage across the front yard — and a cobblestone border around the circle and entryway lends a classic, lived-in feel to the new build.



Innovation & Craftsmanship

Large Grey Wolf boulders form a tiered retaining wall system to manage the slope along the driveway, reducing its grade while tying cleanly into the woodland setting. Maples with uplighting along the drive complete the scene, creating a stately ambiance for evening arrivals.



Challenges

- *Drainage from surrounding properties threatened to overwhelm the site. An underground stormwater system paired with a dry streambed and pervious pavers throughout the driveway managed the incoming water.*
- *A significant grade change between the upper and lower patio needed to be addressed. An attached wall system was built out with wide steps and a path connecting down to the firepit level, turning the elevation change into a defined transition between spaces.*
- *Strip drains were required between the house and pool to manage runoff. Pavers were custom-cut to serve as the slot drain over the PVC piping below, achieving a clean, integrated look without a visible drainage grate.*
- *A close neighboring lot made privacy a priority. The pergola placement and a planting buffer along the lot line create year-round screening.*



A photograph of a modern house with a large, covered terrace. The house features a mix of materials: a stone chimney and fireplace, grey horizontal siding, and a dark grey metal roof. The terrace is covered by a dark wooden pergola with white columns. Inside the terrace, there is a dining table with chairs and a yellow sofa. The terrace is surrounded by lush greenery and flowers. The sky is a soft mix of orange and purple, indicating dusk. The overall aesthetic is contemporary and elegant.

Shoreline Terrace

A large, rectangular swimming pool with a blue interior is the central feature. The pool is surrounded by a light-colored stone patio. To the right of the pool is a large, covered terrace with a dark wood frame and a flat roof. The terrace is furnished with several lounge chairs and a dining table. Warm, glowing lights are mounted on the terrace's columns. In the foreground, two white lounge chairs are positioned on a patch of green grass. The background shows a calm body of water and a distant shoreline under a twilight sky with soft clouds. The text "Shoreline Terrace" is overlaid in a white, elegant script font across the middle of the image.

Shoreline Terrace

A modern outdoor terrace at dusk. The space is covered by a dark wood pergola with horizontal slats. In the foreground, a large, round, wicker daybed with a white cushion and several patterned and solid pillows sits on a light-colored stone tile patio. To the right, a wicker sofa and armchair are visible, along with a small wooden coffee table holding a vase of flowers. A large, white, textured planter with a flowering plant stands near the foreground. Warm, ambient lighting is provided by a glowing lantern-style light fixture on a post and a pendant light with a woven shade. The background features a stone and white siding house, lush greenery, and a clear twilight sky.

Shoreline Terrace

A large, multi-story house with a swimming pool at night. The house features a combination of grey siding and stone masonry. Large windows and a glass-enclosed porch are illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. A swimming pool in the foreground is lit with blue underwater lights, and its surface reflects the house's lights. To the right, a stone retaining wall with integrated lighting and a set of stairs leads up to a wooded area. Outdoor furniture, including lounge chairs and a dining set, is arranged on a stone patio.

Shoreline Terrace

A high-end outdoor pool and terrace area at dusk. The pool is rectangular with blue water and two small fountains. It is surrounded by a stone patio and a grassy lawn. In the foreground, two white lounge chairs are on the grass. To the right, there is a covered patio with wooden columns and warm lighting. In the background, a body of water and a forested shoreline are visible under a twilight sky.

Shoreline Terrace

A large, multi-story house with a swimming pool and outdoor patio at dusk. The house features a mix of light-colored siding and stone masonry. The interior lights are on, and the pool is illuminated. The outdoor area includes a covered patio with seating, a swimming pool, and a stone retaining wall with landscaping. The text "Shoreline Terrace" is overlaid in a white, cursive font.

Shoreline Terrace