

U.S. State of Minnesota to open Chinese Garden

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CHICAGO, Oct. 30 (Xinhua) -- A St. Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden in Phalen Park in U.S. state of Minnesota will open to the public on Nov. 3 in St. Paul City, the state capital of Minnesota, as the first-phase project of the garden completes.

Workers from China and Minnesota are doing finishing touches to a three-story granite and wood pavilion, called Xiang Jiang Pavilion.

The 1.2-acre garden at Lake Phalen is a result of 12 years' effort by Linda Mealey-Lohmann, a native American who majored in Chinese in the University of Minnesota in the early 1980s. By learning Chinese culture, Mealey-Lohmann has fostered a deep love for China.

In the past 12 years, Mealey-Lohmann has shuttled between China and the United States for 22 times, touring numerous Chinese cities and taking thousands of photos. And her time-and-again experiences in China led to her commitment to the construction of a China garden in Minnesota.

St. Paul established a sister city relationship with Changsha, capital of China's Hunan Province, in 1988. This relationship also facilitated the construction of the garden, the only authentic Changsha-style China Garden built in Minnesota. It is the first sister-city Chinese garden in Minnesota.

According to Zhou Chenxuan, board member of the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society, construction of the China garden will be carried out in three phases, and is expected to cost seven million U.S. dollars. About one million dollars has been raised, mostly through individual donors.

The whole project is expected to be completed in 2019, and the China garden will officially be open to the public on July 13, 2019.

Upon completion, the China garden will become a place for celebration, recreation, education, cultural performances, and relaxation in nature.

Being a symbol of Minnesota's longstanding friendship with China and a recognition of its sister-city relationships, the China garden will be an important cultural bridge to China, serve as a recognition of the contributions of the Chinese American community to Minnesota, and help boost trade and tourism between China and Minnesota.