

**From forgotten to foundational: revitalizing the Marlatt Homestead's
land-grant heritage.**

by

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A REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Department of Landscape Architecture
College of Landscape Architecture and Regional Community Planning

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2025

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Abstract

The Marlatt Homestead, a historically significant site in Manhattan, Kansas, represents the early foundations of Kansas State University (KSU) and the broader land-grant mission that shaped American higher education. Established in 1856 by Washington Marlatt, this homestead is one of the last remaining physical links to the university's origins. However, decades of neglect and its current use as a storage facility for K-State Athletic Facilities threaten its preservation. This project investigates how a 3D representation—combining physical and digital modeling—can serve as an interpretive tool to engage visitors, reinforce historical storytelling, and support the site's ecological restoration.

Through historical research, GIS mapping, site analysis, and stakeholder engagement, this study explores strategies for integrating interpretive design, ecological remediation, and adaptive reuse into the homestead's revitalization. A key focus is placed on aligning the project with Kansas State University's Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan, ensuring its long-term sustainability. Design proposals include restoring key structures such as the barn, smokehouse, and chicken coop, reconstructing historical elements like the stacked-stone boundary wall and windmill, and implementing green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) to address ongoing drainage issues.

Findings highlight the importance of public awareness, interdisciplinary collaboration, and campus integration in advocating for the homestead's protection. By developing a self-sustaining educational landscape, this project seeks to transform the site into a gateway to campus, offering a space for historical education, community engagement, and ecological research. Ultimately, this study provides a model for historic landscape preservation, demonstrating how adaptive reuse and interpretive design can ensure that significant cultural sites remain relevant and accessible for future generations.

*I would like to dedicate this book to my wife, Brittney, and my two incredible daughters.
Thank you for supporting me through this crazy time in our life. Your constant presence in my life has motivated me to
make a better life for me and our family.*

**FROM FORGOTTEN TO
FOUNDATIONAL:
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LAND GRANT HERITAGE**

ABSTRACT

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Figure 0.1: Aerial rendering of Marlatt Homestead preservation proposal. Rendered in Lumion by Chris Marble

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



Figure 1.1: Image of the homestead from the southeast, from before south addition was added, pre 1913

Courtesy of Riley County Historical Society and Museum

INTRODUCTION

The Marlatt Homestead holds a wealth of significant history that helped shape Kansas State University, as well as the community of Manhattan and Riley County, Kansas. The barn, constructed using materials from the original college building, can be seen as one of the last physical vestiges of campus history that supported Kansas State Agricultural College in becoming the nation's first land-grant university. Recognizing the importance of this site is essential to understanding and promoting the university's historical and educational mission.

Currently, the Marlatt house and barn, seen in **Figure 1.1**, are listed on the Kansas State Register of Historic Places, which grants them some protection from demolition without public approval. However, the neglect these structures have endured since their listing is concerning. If left unaddressed, deterioration could lead to irreversible damage, and eventually, these buildings may face demolition. Preserving these structures and their surrounding landscape could offer new opportunities to highlight the university's land-grant mission through educational and community-focused initiatives.

A primary reason for this neglect is due to the site's history being hidden from the public, coupled with its convenient location for Kansas State Athletic Facilities to use for staging and storing athletic field materials. Many individuals have noted that they only became aware of the house and its historical significance because of their involvement in this project, primarily through the Marlatt Homestead Task Force. Increasing public awareness and integrating the site into the university's broader educational landscape could help reverse this trend.



Figure 1.2: Graphite on paper image of "Prairie Windjammer" drawn by Alexandre Hughe 1931

A historical parallel can be drawn to the 1978 Penn Central Transportation Co. vs. City of New York case, often referenced in legal contexts. In this case, Penn Station had been deprioritized by the city government once rail travel declined, leading to years of neglect that eventually necessitated the station’s demolition. However, the backlash sparked a powerful historic preservation movement in New York City, resulting in the enactment of the Landmark Preservation Law in 1965. As part of this movement, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated Grand Central Terminal as a landmark in 1967, over the railroad company’s objections. According to Byrne (2021), “The company essentially gave up on demolition.” The Penn Central case illustrates how public outcry can protect historic sites from neglect and demolition, preserving them for future generations. While the Marlatt Homestead may not be as widely known as Penn Station, its historical value is equally significant to Kansas.

This background leads us to our central research question:

RESEARCH QUESTION:

Considering the historical landscape significance of the Marlatt Homestead, how can the site and buildings be preserved and enhanced to better serve and promote Kansas State University as a land-grant institution?

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

This proposal seeks to bridge public awareness, administrative priorities, and preservation efforts **(Figure 1.3)** for the Marlatt Homestead, emphasizing the importance of the site’s historical and educational value in promoting Kansas State University's mission as a land-grant institution. By increasing public understanding of the homestead’s significance, the Marlatt Task Force aims to inspire stakeholders—ranging from private donors to institutional partners—to support the project. Engaged and informed stakeholders not only provide essential financial resources but also create a community of advocates who encourage Kansas State University to prioritize the protection and enhancement of this heritage site.

Public awareness is a crucial component of this project, as it opens multiple channels for financial and community support. Attracting stakeholders who are enthusiastic about historical preservation will be instrumental in launching and sustaining fundraising efforts. Aligning with university priorities is essential to gaining the attention and support of key decision-makers. Additionally, building this network of supporters strengthens the site’s visibility and underscores its educational and historical importance, reducing the likelihood of future neglect and disrepair. Moreover, the upgraded Marlatt Homestead site can serve as a valuable educational resource and a potential fundraising tool for Next-Gen K-State, contributing to the implementation of the university’s strategic plan. In effect, this broader base of support can prevent the homestead from slipping into obsolescence and eventual destruction.

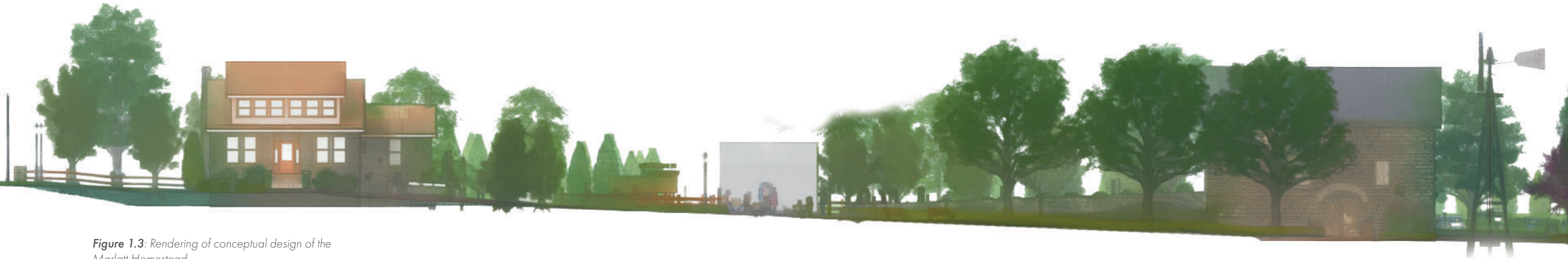


Figure 1.3: Rendering of conceptual design of the Marlatt Homestead

The proposed research will capture a range of information—personal experiences, community perspectives, university preferences, and rigorous technical data—to illustrate the site's value and develop a compelling narrative for preservation and historic interpretation. The primary goal is to create a comprehensive Marlatt Homestead master plan to guide preservation efforts and site improvements, transforming the deteriorating site into a self-sustaining campus and community amenity for education while extending the K-State land-grant mission. As part of the interpretive program, a physical model representing the 1860s site conditions is proposed to help convey the sequence of events related to the founding of the university and its land-grant designation.

This proposal aims to establish a sustainable framework for preserving the Marlatt Homestead by demonstrating its relevance, building public support, and providing Kansas State University with clear incentives to protect and promote the site as a vital part of the community's heritage and its ongoing mission as a land-grant institution.

IMPORTANCE OF HISTORIC SITES ON CAMPUS

Preserving historical sites like the Marlatt Homestead (**Figure 1.3**) on university campuses nationwide is essential, as these structures embody rich narratives and serve as tangible links to our educational heritage. Beyond their historical significance, these edifices offer invaluable lessons about institutional identity and direction. The initial buildings on a college campus often reflect the founding values and aspirations of the institution, setting a precedent for its future trajectory. Engaging in the preservation and study of such sites fosters a deeper understanding of an institution's evolution and its foundational missions. At Kansas State University, research and design initiatives centered on the Marlatt Homestead have illuminated aspects of the land-grant mission, emphasizing the university's commitment to accessible education and community engagement. This process underscores the broader importance of integrating historic preservation into campus planning, ensuring that the legacy and lessons of these sites continue to inspire future generations.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MARLATT HOMESTEAD

MARLATT FAMILY HISTORY

Washington Marlatt was one of the key builders of Kansas, contributing significantly both as an educator and a minister. Although fundamentally a farmer, his leadership and vision played an integral role in shaping Manhattan and what would become Kansas State University. Marlatt was one of the three founders and the first principal of Bluemont Central College, which later became Kansas State Agricultural College. (Connelley 1918)

Born in Wayne County, Indiana, on June 28, 1829, Marlatt descended from French Huguenot ancestry. His great-grandfather, Abram Marlatt, moved from New Jersey to what is now Martinsburg, West Virginia, around 1758. His grandfather, also named Abram, was a colonial soldier in the American Revolution before moving west to Indiana in 1823. Washington Marlatt's father, Thomas (Abram) Marlatt, was a War of 1812 veteran and a pioneer farmer in Indiana. (Connelley 1918)

Marlatt's early education came from subscription schools, and at age eighteen, he pursued higher education at Asbury University (now DePauw University) in Greencastle, Indiana, graduating in 1853 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and earning a Master of Arts in 1856. During this time, he also trained as a minister and became an educator, teaching in Greensburg, Indiana, before returning to farming. (Connelley 1918)

In 1856, drawn by the Free-State movement, Marlatt arrived in Kansas, traveling on foot from Leavenworth to Manhattan. He initially claimed 160 acres but later filed for another tract 2.5 miles northwest of Manhattan (**Figure 2.1**), which became his permanent home. He developed the land into a prosperous farm and over time expanded his holdings to 500 acres. His contributions extended beyond farming—he wrote extensively on agricultural practices and frontier life in articles such as “Farm Talks” and “Ten Years on the Frontier.” (Connelley 1918)

Marlatt became involved in establishing Bluemont Central College under the Kansas and Nebraska Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. When the college opened in December 1859 with thirty students, he served as its first principal, with Julia A. Bailey, his future wife, as an assistant teacher. Their shared commitment to education led to their marriage on April 3, 1861, at the college. (Connelley 1918)

Beyond his educational and religious endeavors, Marlatt was actively engaged in civic life. He was a founding trustee of Bluemont Central College (**Figure 2.2**) and played a crucial role in its transition to Kansas State Agricultural College in 1863. He was also the president of the Manhattan Town Association, a Mason, a member of the Grange, and an advocate for agricultural development through the Bluemont Farmers Club.

Washington and his wife Julia had five children who carried on the family's legacy of education and public service:

- **Charles Lester Marlatt** (1863-1954) was a renowned entomologist, serving as assistant entomologist in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and chairing the Federal Horticultural Board. (Connelley 1918) **Graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College in 1884**
- **Mary A. Marlatt** married F.G. Kimball and remained in Riley County. (Connelley 1918)
- **Frederick A. Marlatt** (1867-1947) became a successful farmer and manufacturer in Manhattan, Kansas. **Graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College in 1887**
- **Abby L. Marlatt** (1869-1943) was a pioneer in home economics education, organizing programs at Utah State University and the University of Wisconsin. (Connelley 1918) **Graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College in 1888 and 1890**

The Marlatt family's contributions extended well beyond their homestead, influencing Kansas State University, agricultural advancements, and education in multiple fields. Their deep-rooted ties to Bluemont and Kansas Agricultural College solidify their place in the state's history. (Connelley 1918)

This historical account below is based on information compiled from the original application for the Kansas Register of Historic Places prior to the site's official designation in 2006.

1. EARLY OWNERSHIP AND SETTLEMENT (1850S-1860S)

The land that would become the Marlatt Homestead was originally owned by Davies Wilson, a Harvard-trained engineer who came west with the Cincinnati Land Company. Although Wilson surveyed the town site for Manhattan, he primarily engaged in land speculation rather than permanent settlement. In 1858, Washington Marlatt purchased the land, 160 acres-worth, for \$1,200, making it his home for the next fifty years. Census records suggest the property, not the home itself, was initially rented, with the Browning family occupying it in 1856 and the Bloss family in 1859. (State of Kansas 2006)

2. ARCHITECTURAL EVOLUTION OF THE HOMESTEAD

The original stone house was constructed in 1856, possibly by local masons working on Fort Riley at the time. The home was a simple 1.5-story limestone structure in the New England/Colonial American style. Washington Marlatt made several modifications over time, including (State of Kansas 2006):

- 1860: Possible addition of a stone fireplace, based on construction materials that do not match later additions.
- 1877: A significant expansion, including a north-side lean-to (sometimes called a "saltbox" in New England architecture), which created more living space for the growing Marlatt family.
- 1913: A major remodel designed by Henry B. Winter, Manhattan’s leading architect at the time, which cost \$2,000 and modernized the home.
- 1940s-50s: Further modifications under Kansas State University ownership, including dormer additions and functional updates.

3. CONNECTION TO KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE LAND-GRANT MOVEMENT

The Marlatt Barn is of particular significance to Kansas State University's land-grant designation, as it represents the university's early agricultural focus and the repurposing of materials from Bluemont Central College. Marlatt acquired stone and roof timbers from the decommissioned Bluemont Central College building in 1883, incorporating them into the barn’s construction in 1884. The barn’s west door arch originally featured stone blocks with "Bluemont College" deeply carved into them, highlighting its connection to the university's foundational history. More details on the barn’s role and historical context will be explored in the next section of this chapter. Washington Marlatt was not only an early settler but also a founder and faculty member of Bluemont Central College, which later became Kansas State Agricultural College (KSAC) in 1863—the first fully legal land-grant institution in the United States under the Morrill Act. Marlatt’s contributions included (State of Kansas 2006):

- Serving as a trustee and early faculty member teaching Greek and Latin.
- Advocating for agricultural education and experimental farming, a key principle of the land-grant system.
- Playing a role in Manhattan’s civic development, including serving as president of the Manhattan Town Association.

The Marlatt Barn, built in 1884, also has direct ties to KSAC, as it was constructed using stone and timbers salvaged from the Bluemont Central College building after it was decommissioned. Parts of the building’s original sign, "Bluemont College," were incorporated into the barn’s west door arch and later relocated to K-State’s Alumni Center (State of Kansas 2006).

4. THE HOMESTEAD AS A FUNCTIONAL FARM AND STUDENT HOUSING (1909-1960S)

Historic recognition and preservation efforts during the first decade of the 20th century, while Washington Marlatt was still alive, the homestead remained an active farm. Local newspapers document its continued agricultural use (State of Kansas 2006):

- "W. Marlatt had a fine cow struck by lightning Tuesday night." – Manhattan Nationalist, 1904
- "The Marlatt chicken roost was robbed for a second time, so few chickens are left for the family." – Manhattan Nationalist, 1904
- "Wm. Marlatt's have begun harvesting their big peach crop."– Manhattan Republic, 1910

When Kansas State acquired the property, it housed students and faculty from the College of Agriculture, continuing its agricultural tradition. The barn was used for equipment storage and livestock, maintaining its original function (State of Kansas 2006).

5. HISTORIC RECOGNITION AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Today, the Marlatt Homestead remains one of the oldest structures in Riley County. In 2006, the site was officially listed on the Kansas Register of Historic Places in recognition of its architectural significance and its deep connection to Kansas’s territorial history and the land-grant education system. The designation underscores the importance of preserving the homestead’s historic character, particularly as post-1950 modifications by Kansas State University have altered some of its original features. With future restoration efforts following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the site could potentially qualify for the National Register of Historic Places to ensure its long-term preservation and interpretation (State of Kansas 2006).

BLUEMONT CENTRAL COLLEGE HISTORY

Bluemont College (**Figure 2.2**), originally known as Bluemont Central College, played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Kansas State University (Griffin 1966). Chartered in 1858 and opened in 1860, the college featured a substantial three-story limestone building, which housed classrooms, offices, and a large hall (Griffin 1966). The building was well-equipped with scientific apparatus and a library containing 1,200 to 1,500 volumes. Its location on a scenic hilltop, overlooking the surrounding countryside, added to its appeal as a potential site for the state's university (Griffin 1966).



Figure 2.2: Oil on Canvas rendering of the first Land-Grant college in the United States
(Blueumont College/KSAC located in the U.S. Capital Building, Cox Corridors by Allyn Cox)

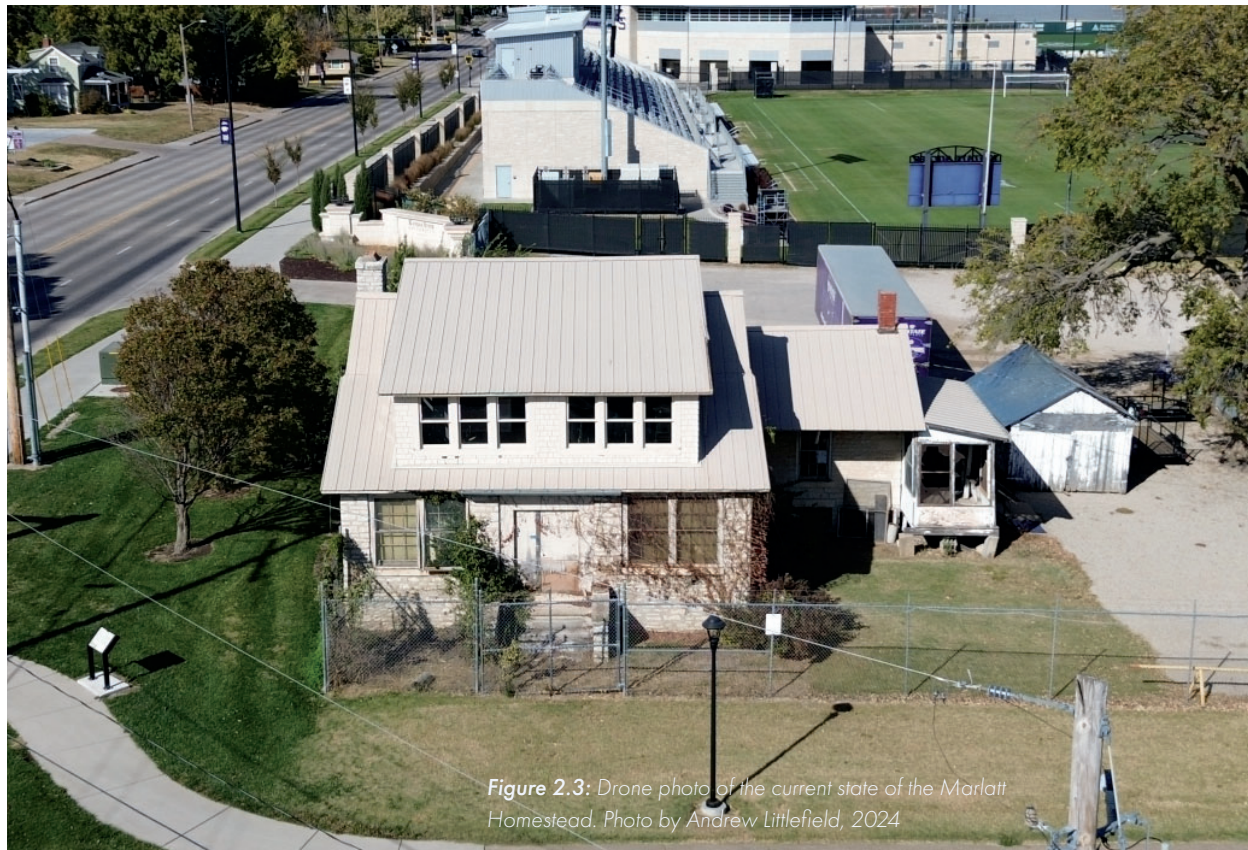
In the early 1860s, when the state of Kansas was debating the location of its first state university, Blueumont College's building and land became a central factor in the decision. The trustees of Blueumont College offered their building and 120 acres of prime land to the state in exchange for the university being located on that site (Griffin 1966). Through a contentious process, the Blueumont College building extraordinarily became the first home of the Kansas State University, helping Manhattan secure the location of the state's new university (Griffin 1966). The original college building and its scenic setting laid the foundation for the university's development and establishment in Manhattan (Griffin 1966).

LAND GRANT AND STATE COLLEGE DESIGNATION

In the late 1850s, Manhattan was in fierce competition to become the home of the state college of Kansas. Establishing a university in the Kansas Territory was an extremely political and contentious process, with Manhattan, Lawrence, and Emporia emerging as the primary contenders (Griffin 1966). The decision was so politically charged that the governor even vetoed the original proposal to designate Manhattan's institution as the state college, largely due to his ties and affiliations with Lawrence (Griffin 1966).

Despite this setback, Manhattan remained persistent. It was among the first communities to charter an official institution, which at the time was Blueumont College (Griffin 1966). The college stood out by being one of the first to erect a school building, establish a curriculum, and enroll students. Additionally, the community had secured land for the college by raising funds independently, presenting the state of Kansas with a fully operational institution that came free of charge (Griffin 1966).

This self-sufficiency and preparedness ultimately set Manhattan apart from its competitors. After two failed attempts, Manhattan's third proposal to become the state college of Kansas was finally approved in 1863 (Griffin 1966). At that time, Blueumont College was officially renamed Kansas State Agricultural College, commonly known as KSAC. This pivotal moment not only solidified Manhattan's place in Kansas history but also marked the beginning of Kansas State University's legacy as the nation's first operational land-grant institution (Griffin 1966).



CURRENT STATE OF THE HOMESTEAD

CURRENT USES

The Marlatt Homestead (**Figure 2.3**) has served as a functional site for university facilities for an extended period and is currently utilized for **Athletic Facilities Storage**. The property operates under a **yearly renewable memorandum of use**, granting **Athletic Facilities** the ability to use the site as needed, although ownership and oversight remain with the university.

Site visits revealed an **unclear organizational structure regarding stored materials**, with a variety of items scattered across the property. Among the notable contents are **equipment for maintaining the football stadium's parking lot**, **old building signs carved into limestone**, and a tractor that is occasionally stored on-site. Additionally, a **football team truck trailer** is sometimes parked at the location.

There are **eight Shipping containers** present, alongside a **small storage shed** that houses both general equipment and materials such as **fertilizer and sand**. The site also functions as a **staging location for field maintenance**, supplying essential elements for athletic field nourishment. On game days, stored **trash drums and other equipment** are removed from the homestead and distributed as needed, while **band students reportedly use the property for parking**.

Another reported use of the site involves the **disposal of excess dirt and gravel** from university projects, which has significantly altered the landscape, particularly in the area east of the barn, where the ground has been notably flattened. This practice, combined with its varied storage functions, has reshaped the homestead's physical and historical character.

SITE INVENTORY

1. Historic Structures & Features

- **Marlatt House (1856)(Figure 2.4)**
Oldest standing stone home in Riley County
Modified in 1860, 1877, 1913, 1940s-50s
New England/Colonial American style
- **Marlatt Barn (1884)(Figure 2.6)**
Built using salvaged stone and roof timbers from Bluemont Central College
West door arch originally featured carved "Bluemont College" stones
Two-story stone structure with historical agricultural significance
- **Stone Outbuildings & Sheds**
Small stone shed near house (possible springhouse or well house)
Larger stone shed between house and barn (built around 1884, possibly a former chicken coop)
- **Bluemont College Materials**
Salvaged limestone blocks with inscriptions repurposed in barn
Some removed and placed in K-State Alumni Center

2. Current Structures & Facilities

- **Athletic Facilities Storage**
 - Eight shipping storage containers
 - Small storage shed (housing equipment, fertilizer, sand)
 - Football team bus parking
 - Athletic field maintenance staging area
 - Trash drum storage and redistribution on game days
- **Equipment & Materials Stored**
 - End Loader (occasional storage)
 - Football stadium parking lot maintenance equipment
 - Old limestone building signs
 - Fertilizer, sand, and other landscaping materials
- **Dumping & Land Alterations**
 - University disposal site for excess dirt and gravel
 - Flattened terrain east of barn due to fill material



Figure 2.4: Aerial image of current conditions of the barn and shipping containers. Photographed with drone by Andrew Littlefield



Figure 2.5: Overhead view of the current site. Photographed with drone by Andrew Littlefield



Figure 2.6: Aerial image of the Marlatt's barn and chicken coop, looking northwest. Photographed with drone by Andrew Littlefield

3. Environmental Conditions

- **Topography & Drainage**
 - Originally rolling terrain; altered by fill material disposal
 - Potential storm water runoff issues due to compacted surfaces
- **Vegetation & Landscape**
 - Historically open prairie, later cultivated for farming
 - Modern grass and some tree cover near homestead structures
 - Limited natural ecological restoration due to continued use for storage
- **Access & Circulation**
 - Gravel driveways leading to storage areas
 - Used for event-day band student parking
 - No designated pedestrian pathways for interpretive use

• SITE ANALYSIS

Site Overview (Figure 2.7): The Marlatt Homestead occupies just over 2 acres in a strategic location between Kansas State University's athletic facilities and a student apartment complex. It is directly adjacent to the soccer stadium to the north and benefits from its proximity to highly trafficked pedestrian and bicycle routes along College Avenue. Foot traffic increases significantly during athletic events, presenting an opportunity for public engagement and education. Currently, the site is enclosed by a tall chain-link barbed wire fence, restricting public access.

Hydrology and Drainage: The site receives storm water runoff from the soccer and baseball fields to the north, leading to flooding in the eastern portion of the property during heavy rain events. The lack of green storm water infrastructure (GSI) exacerbates this issue, resulting in standing water and erosion risks.

Opportunity: *Implementing GSI solutions such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable surfaces could address flooding while providing educational opportunities related to ecological restoration and water management.*

Existing Swale: The only natural landscape feature visible on-site is a shallow swale, which could serve as the foundation for a larger storm water management strategy.

Soil and Vegetation: The constant application of gravel across much of the site has created an inhospitable environment for native plant species, severely limiting biodiversity. Soil compaction and poor infiltration are likely contributing to drainage issues and reduced plant health.

Existing Trees:

- A hackberry tree adjacent to the smaller shed appears unhealthy and may be encroaching on the structure's foundation, posing a risk to historic integrity.
- A Shumard oak tree north of the current east-west walking path is estimated to date back to the 1880s, meaning it would have been present during Washington and Julia Marlatt's lifetime. This living connection to the past adds significant interpretive value.

Restoration Potential: Restoring the natural landscape with native plantings could reintroduce biodiversity and enhance storm water management. The contrast of vibrant native species against the historic limestone structures would highlight the site's heritage while improving ecological function.

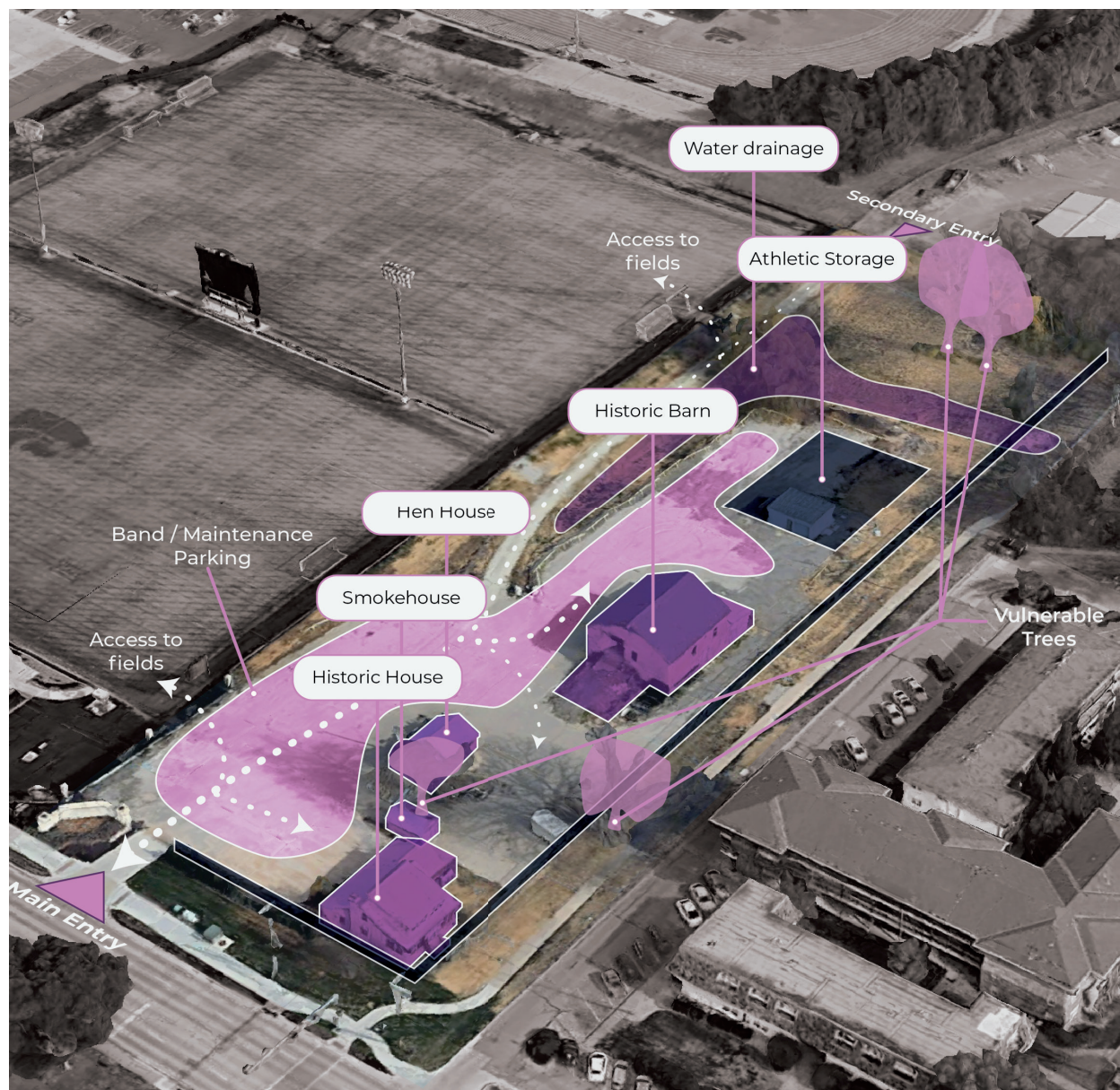


Figure 2.7: Current site inventory diagram. Photoshop and Google Earth, Rodrigo Sanchez

Circulation and Access: Currently, the site has no public access due to the tall chain-link barbed wire fence. Vehicular access is provided for maintenance and storage, serving primarily Athletic Facilities operations. Pedestrian circulation is underdeveloped, despite the site's highly visible location.

- Vehicular access supports equipment storage, including shipping containers, tractors, and field maintenance supplies.
- Pedestrian and cyclist traffic along College Avenue, particularly during university events.

Connectivity: The site is well-positioned to connect with university facilities, athletic fields, and the broader community. There is an opportunity to establish interpretive pathways, outdoor classrooms, or public engagement zones that align with K-State's educational mission.

Historical and Educational Potential The limestone structures on the site align architecturally with other historic buildings along College Avenue, creating a cohesive visual experience. The site's proximity to student housing and athletic facilities makes it an ideal candidate for educational programming, potentially including:

- Interpretive Signage: Sharing the history of Washington and Julia Marlatt, Bluemont Central College, and K-State's land-grant roots.
- Interactive Learning Opportunities: Utilizing the site's drainage challenges to demonstrate storm water management techniques.

Additional Considerations

- Structural Assessments: It may be beneficial to conduct a professional assessment of historic structures, focusing on foundations, masonry conditions, and potential impacts from nearby vegetation.
- Ecological Surveys: Before implementing a restoration plan, assessing the existing flora and soil conditions will help tailor native planting strategies.
- Storm-water Management Plan: Developing a site-specific hydrology model could identify the best practices for mitigating flooding while enhancing ecological and educational value.

LOCATION

The Marlatt Homestead is located just a quarter mile north from where Bluemont College once stood, highlighting the incredible convenience this location would have offered Washington and Julia Marlatt as they taught at the school. Living so close to the college meant the couple could easily travel back and forth, allowing them to remain deeply connected to school life.

The short distance also suggests that the Marlatts likely had a clear view of Bluemont College from their property. The orientation of their home further emphasizes this connection—the main entrance faced south, directly toward the college. Each morning, as the Marlatt family stepped out their front door, they would have been greeted by the sight of Bluemont College in the distance, a constant reminder of their pioneering role in shaping what would become Kansas State University.

This visual connection between home and campus serves as a powerful metaphor for the Marlatts' dedication to education and their integral role in establishing Manhattan as the home of the nation's first land-grant college.

MARLATT HOMESTEAD TASK FORCE

WHAT IS THE MARLATT HOMESTEAD TASK FORCE?

The Marlatt Task Force is a collaborative group dedicated to preserving and revitalizing the Marlatt Homestead at Kansas State University. Formed in 2023 from a reactivated coalition of preservation advocates, the task force works to protect the site’s historic integrity, promote its educational potential, and engage stakeholders in long-term stewardship. With roots dating back to 2012, the group has evolved from a watchdog organization into an active force for advocacy, planning, and community involvement in the homestead’s future.

ADMINISTRATION & PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

- Marlatt Task Force Chair, Gloria Freeland (Professor Emerita, Miller School of Media and Communication)
- Project Coordinator, Raphael Yunk (Professor, GE Johnson Arch Engr/Const Sci) with assistance from student Hannah McCormick
- Exterior Advisors, Howard Hahn and Lee Skabelund (Assoc. Professors, LARCP) with assistance from LARCP students, Chris Marble, Devin Holliday, and Rodrigo Sanchez Juarez
- Interior Advisors, Kristianna Johnson AIA (Assistant Professor, Interior Design Program) with assistance from student Kate Lennon (Interior Design & Modeling)

HISTORICAL RESOURCE ADVISEMENT

- Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, Kathy Dzewaltowski
- Restoration Specialist, Mel Borst
- Riley County Historical Museum, Linda Glasgow
- Anthropology, Lauren Ritterbush (Professor, Dept of SASW)
- Architectural Historian, Mick Charney (Professor Emeritus, Dept of Arch.)
- KSU Chapman Center for Rural Studies, Mary Kohn
- KS Preservation Alliance, Melina Steward
- Kansas Historical Foundation, Allana Saenger-Parker

UNIVERSITY LIAISONS

- K-State Division of Facilities, Chris Salmon (Asst. Vice President)
- KSU Athletics, TBD (Jason Brummett?)
- K-State 105, TBD (Jessica Gnad?)
- Ag/Research and Extension, TBD (Ron Wilson?)
- Office of Engagement, Tim Steffensmeier
- Foundation, Damon Fairchild

TECHNICAL ADVISEMENT

- Construction Science & Management, Dave Dalbey (Instructor)
- Matterport Training (3D Scanning), Julia Keen with student Ashby Schwanz
- Construction/AGC, Steve Schaffner with student Joel Wood
- Structural, Kyle Larson with student Shayla Johnson
- Mechanical HVAC/Plumbing, Andrew Sneed
- Mechanical Design, Andrew Augustine
- Electrical Power, Jake Hamilton with student Blake Koehn
- Electrical Lighting, Fred Hasler with student Jordan Hays
- KSU Tech. Development Institute, Jacob Picolet
- Construction Management, Steve Schaffner with student Miles Rivard

MARLATT TASK FORCE EVOLUTION

Kathy Dzewaltowski (Riley County Preservation Alliance), has provided a detailed account of how the group was formed and how it has evolved.

The origins of the Marlatt Task Force can be traced back to 2012, when a small, ad-hoc group of representatives from the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance (M/RCPA) and the Riley County Historical Society formed to address preservation concerns at the Marlatt Homestead. At that time, this informal “Marlatt Working Group” was primarily focused on responding to K-State’s decision to cover the upper, south-facing dormer with corrugated metal siding—an action taken without proper consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Early Efforts (2012–2013)

In response to advocacy efforts, a Memorandum of Agreement was established between K-State and SHPO, requiring K-State to restore the dormer within five years.

The M/RCPA initially offered to assist with the restoration, but K-State ultimately completed the work itself in the summer of 2013.

That fall, the group was granted access to the site for a “Founders Tour,” although access to the Marlatt House was restricted due to its deteriorating condition. During this period, K-State representatives expressed interest in preserving the site, with Jeff Morris (VP of Communications and Marketing) and Jackie Hartman (whose exact title is unknown) supporting the idea of maintaining the property as a potential showpiece for the university.

Dormancy and Reactivation (2013–2023)

After the dormer restoration, K-State’s engagement declined. Attempts to involve university leadership became increasingly difficult, and meetings with administrators yielded little interest. As a result, the working group gradually shifted into more of a watchdog role, keeping an eye on the property but with limited direct influence.

In January 2023, amid concerns about potential campus demolitions and broader changes at K-State, the M/RCPA board decided to reactivate the Marlatt group. This reactivation marked a shift from passive monitoring to active advocacy, leading to the formation of the multi-faceted Marlatt Task Force as it exists today.

Thus, while the task force formally took shape in 2023, its origins can be traced back to spring 2012, when preservationists first came together to protect the site.

The Marlatt Homestead Task Force has people involved from a wide variety of disciplines. Most of these individuals are either in the design or engineering profession. There are close to 40 people listed in **figure 2.8**. The members that are on the task force outside of the university, the original task force, have been responsible for getting connected with Ray Yunk, Architectural Engineering Professor, asking him to help get the university involved with the process of working toward a renovation of the homestead. Ray and his student, Hannah McCormick, Architectural Engineering student and Project Lead, assembled a team with a wide variety of expertise.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY



Figure 3.1: The Washington Marlatt Homestead possesses one of the richest histories in Manhattan, Kansas. The importance of accurate yet captivating storytelling can have a huge impact to the future of the site. Lumion rendering with Photoshop Generative AI by Chris Marble

HISTORICAL STORYTELLING

To create a landscape that effectively represents the historical and ecological significance of the Marlatt Homestead, compelling storytelling is essential. This project aims to use interpretive design to create a physical 3D representation of the homestead that brings historical storytelling and ecological themes to life. By highlighting key historical events, the Marlatt family's legacy, and the ecological processes being restored, this design will serve as an educational resource that engages both the public and university leadership, inspiring a deeper understanding and commitment to preservation. History, as Pokhrel (2022) notes, is often accessed through narratives, which shape how we interpret past events. Davison (2016) emphasizes that "stories are fundamental to cultures and societies. We have told stories for thousands of years. Stories can change the world." By following these principles, the project will present the Marlatt Homestead as a dynamic historical landscape that connects the past to the present through design.

The project's narrative draws on two types of storytelling: the research story and the researcher's story. The research story will focus on the historical facts surrounding the Marlatt family and the homestead's ecological design, integrating qualitative historical insights with quantitative ecological data to justify the significance of preserving the site. As Davison (2016) suggests, "a good storyteller ought to be able to write a story about almost any kind of research." This balanced approach aims to communicate the importance of the Marlatt Homestead, not only as a historical site but also as a place where ecological design and education intersect. The researcher's story, meanwhile, will highlight the personal challenges, decisions, and discoveries faced during the project, adding a tangible dimension to the narrative that encourages the public to connect with the homestead's journey.

Through interpretive design, the landscape itself becomes a storytelling tool, fostering a sense of community pride by linking the Marlatt family's legacy to current ecological efforts. This design will include historical facts, personal accounts, and environmental themes, creating an immersive experience for visitors. By incorporating personal narratives, as suggested by Scheuerell, the design will provide intimate glimpses into life at the time, making history more accessible and tangible. In sum, this project seeks to engage visitors with the Marlatt Homestead's rich history and ecological value, aiming to create a sustainable educational landscape that reflects the interconnectedness of cultural and natural heritage.

INTERPRETIVE DESIGN

Interpretive design uses landscape elements and storytelling techniques to engage visitors with a site's cultural, historical, and ecological significance (Potteiger and Purinton 1998). By integrating narrative with landscape, interpretive design encourages personal connections through visual and sensory experiences, creating an immersive environment that fosters learning (Chang, Bisgrove, and Liao 2008). This approach can effectively highlight the Marlatt Homestead's historical and ecological themes, turning the site into a narrative-driven landscape. For instance, pathways at the homestead could function as a timeline, guiding visitors through significant historical events linked to the Marlatt family and Kansas State University's origins (Olin 1999).

A strong precedent for this approach is Stourhead, an 18th-century idyllic English garden that uses landscape features to depict Aeneas' journey from mythology, connecting visitors to history and myth through carefully designed spatial elements (Siciliano 2005). Similarly, Marlatt Homestead can use interpretive design by placing educational displays, historical features, and native plantings that not only restore the ecological landscape but also illustrate historical moments. For example, reintroducing a windmill close to its original location could evoke the historical atmosphere, enhancing the educational experience and adding depth to the site's storytelling elements.

However, there are challenges to consider, including the need to bridge cross-cultural communication and address diverse visitor expectations (Irkutsk State University and Elena A. 2018). At the Marlatt Homestead, recognizing indigenous connections to the land and ensuring alumni and tourist engagement will be essential. By carefully balancing these interpretive elements with educational aids, such as 3D mapping, guided tours, or informational signage, the homestead can provide a meaningful, memorable experience that invites visitors to connect with its cultural and natural legacy.

ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

Ecological design at historical sites focuses on re-establishing native species, ecosystem structure, and ecological processes that were present before significant human intervention. Using historical records such as vegetation surveys and old maps, designers can recreate landscapes that mirror their natural states, balancing historical fidelity with modern ecological needs (Bolliger et al. 2004). For instance, the University of Wisconsin's ecological restoration efforts drew insights from 19th-century surveys to determine pre-settlement vegetation, highlighting how historical records can guide the Marlatt Homestead's ecological design.

Key strategies include restoring physical structures, such as tree density and vegetation layers, and reintroducing ecosystem processes like water retention and fire management, albeit with adjustments

for urban settings. These elements allow a landscape to achieve functional and ecological resilience. Practices from modern sustainable farming, such as cover cropping and rotational grazing, align with historical agricultural practices, potentially adding authenticity and ecological value to the site. For the Marlatt Homestead, implementing water retention features, native plantings, and restored prairie areas could connect visitors to the region's agricultural heritage while supporting sustainability (Strauser and Stewart 2023).

The Temple Valley of Agrigento in Sicily exemplifies the integration of historical preservation and ecological design. Here, Greek ruins, ancient agriculture, and an irrigation system from antiquity are conserved together, fostering cultural heritage while sustaining productive landscapes (Agnoletti 2006). This model shows that historical landscapes can balance productivity and ecological health, an approach that resonates with the goals for Marlatt Homestead. Restoration strategies tailored to the site's history and natural conditions can provide a meaningful experience for visitors and enhance long-term resilience. This foundation leads to the next step—3D modeling to visualize and refine these design ideas.

3D REPRESENTATION TECHNIQUES

3D representation techniques, particularly physical and digital models, are invaluable for illustrating historical landscapes and anticipating the impact of design proposals. This project at the Marlatt Homestead will feature a bronze casting of Manhattan's historical layout alongside a digital model depicting the proposed landscape design. Such representations not only serve as powerful interpretive tools for understanding historical transformations but also offer a multi-sensory educational experience. A bronze map, for example, combines tactile and visual input, which fosters enhanced pattern recognition and deeper engagement with historical and geographical context (Wan et al. 2018). This method has shown success in similar educational settings, such as the Dante's View bronze relief map at Death Valley, which orients visitors visually and spatially, particularly benefiting those with visual impairments ("Death Valley National Park Dantes View" n.d.).

Creating these models (**Figure 3.2**) requires careful integration of modern technology and traditional techniques. The initial stages of both the bronze and digital models rely on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to gather spatially accurate topographical data, capturing the original landscape before modern development (Gregory and Healey 2007). The bronze model is crafted through an intricate process, beginning with a 3D landscape model derived from GIS data, followed by mold creation, firing, and pouring molten bronze (Yan et al. 2021). The digital model, in contrast, progresses through a diverse set of steps; GIS data is exported to a Digital Surface Model (DSM), and software like SketchUp and Lumion is used to render natural and built features with textures and lighting effects (Cicalò et al. 2023). Together, these physical and digital maps offer immersive, accessible ways for visitors to connect with the Marlatt Homestead's historical and ecological significance.

These models will ultimately serve as educational tools, providing a tangible connection to the past while illustrating the site's future potential in landscape restoration, helping users visualize how ecological and historical narratives intertwine on-site. This multi-modal approach aligns with the project's goal of fostering understanding through sensory interaction and spatial awareness, which are critical in historical and ecological education (Schlegel et al., 2015).

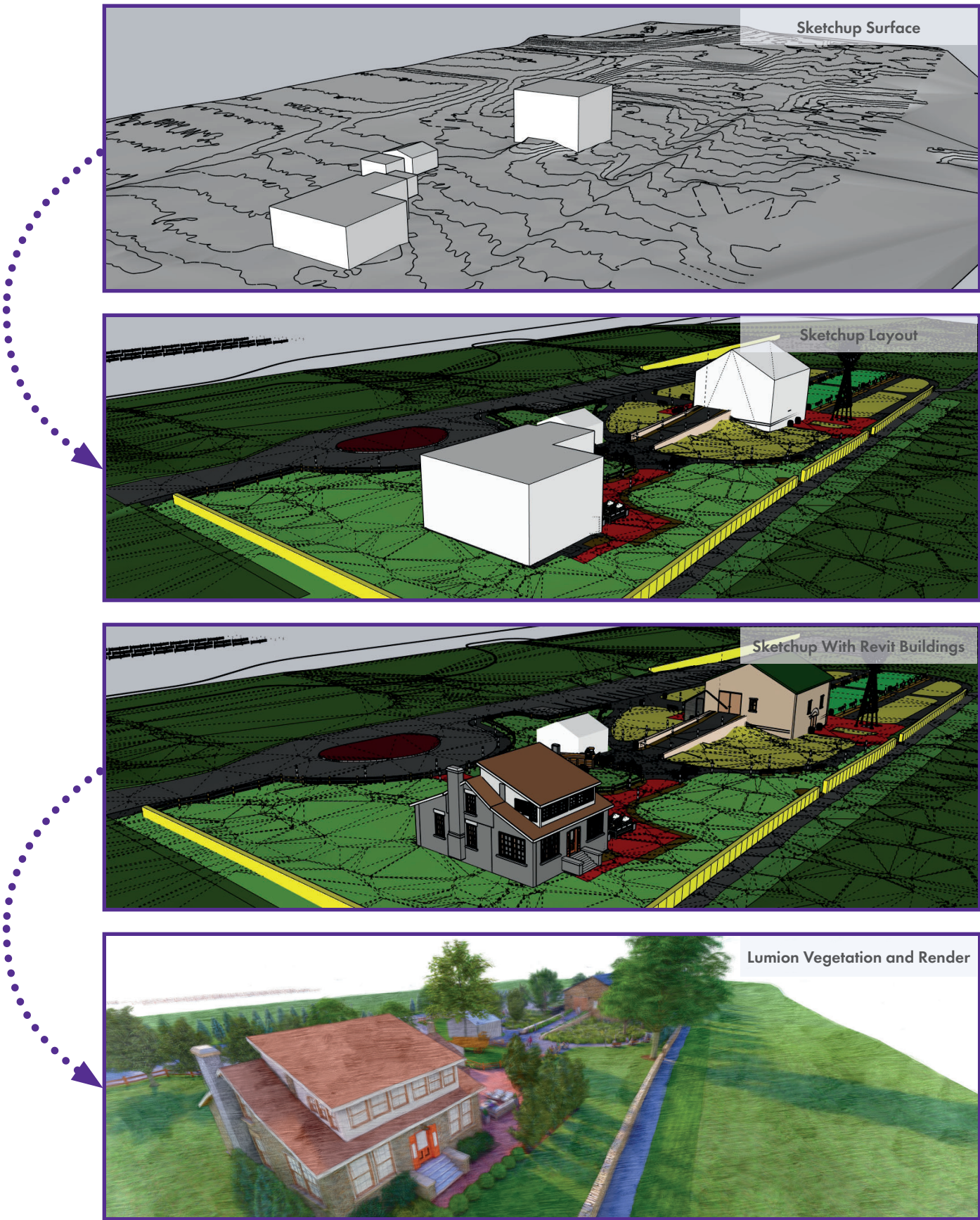


Figure 3.2: Process order for 3D modeling. Sketchup and Lumion renderings by Chris Marble

MEETINGS

The primary method for this project are structured meetings, which serve as a tool for engaging stakeholders, gathering insights, and negotiating solutions. Given the historical and ecological significance of the Marlatt Homestead, effective communication with university administrators, faculty, and community advocates is essential. This approach ensures that all perspectives are considered while maintaining a clear vision for the project's development (Wodak et al., 2011).

Stakeholder engagement is organized across different levels, with major professors providing foundational guidance through one-on-one meetings. These discussions help refine ideas, structure reports, and ensure academic rigor. In addition to individual consultations, small group meetings facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, integrating historical, ecological, and design elements. Task force meetings, held monthly, bring together a broader group to align progress with project milestones, while more frequent, focused discussions address immediate concerns (Wodak et al., 2011, p. 118).

Scheduling and structuring these discussions strategically is critical for maintaining engagement. Since stakeholders often have competing obligations, meeting coordination remains flexible, yet goal oriented. Pre-discussion agendas help keep conversations focused, ensuring that meetings remain efficient and productive (Wodak et al., 2011, p. 129). This structured approach increases clarity and momentum, allowing stakeholders to remain actively involved in decision-making.

A key outcome of these meetings is the collection of historical and ecological insights that inform the site's final design. Conversations with experts, community members, and university representatives reveal new perspectives, ensuring historical authenticity and contextual relevance. These discussions contribute to presentations and reports that articulate the project's significance to university administrators and funding bodies (Wodak et al., 2011, p. 145).

Building support for the project also involves negotiation, particularly when conflicts arise regarding land use priorities. By incorporating multiple perspectives and contingency planning, meetings serve as a platform for resolving differences and developing solutions that align with the project's educational and historical mission. The iterative nature of these discussions ensures that the final design reflects both stakeholder interests and the broader institutional vision (Wodak et al., 2011, p. 150).

Through structured meetings, this project fosters collaboration, builds consensus, and ensures that the Marlatt Homestead's historical and ecological legacy is preserved. By maintaining an inclusive and strategic approach to stakeholder engagement, the final design will serve as a meaningful and educational landscape that connects the past with the present.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations play a critical role in developing both visual and narrative materials, effectively showcasing historical photographs, key information, and conceptual renderings of the Marlatt Homestead. By integrating these elements, presentations create a compelling case for preservation and future development while engaging stakeholders in the vision for the site. Feedback gathered throughout the process is essential, offering valuable insight into audience perspectives. This input directly informs refinements to imagery, design, and historical interpretation, strengthening the overall project.

Strategic timing and audience selection are crucial when delivering presentations. Meeting with the wrong groups at an early stage can create setbacks, making it imperative to follow a structured approach. Initial presentations focus on internal discussions to ensure historical accuracy and alignment. Once a solid foundation is established, outreach expands to college administrators to build institutional support. From there, presentations target key university decision-makers, requiring persuasive storytelling to secure additional backing. The approach must be tailored to each audience, as different groups require different strategies (Schmickle 2007). Leading with facts that align with an audience's interests captures attention early, fostering engagement and increasing the likelihood of support. For example, when presenting to the Master Planning Committee, emphasizing the project's potential to serve as a gateway to campus through a community public/private event space strengthens its appeal.

The most effective method of delivery is in-person presentations. Unlike virtual formats, which limit post-presentation engagement, in-person meetings encourage extended conversations and deeper discussions. Attendees are more likely to provide immediate feedback, allowing for real-time adjustments and refinements to the project.

Collecting and incorporating feedback from presentations is essential to the design process. While all historical facts must be verified, audience input helps shape a stronger, more informed project. Continuous refinement of presentations ensures that as discussions move up the administrative ladder, they become increasingly persuasive and impactful. The Q&A portion of a presentation is particularly valuable, providing an opportunity to clarify details, counter opposition, and win over undecided stakeholders (Schmickle 2007). Allocating more time for Q&A allows for a more interactive experience, making it a strategic component of the overall presentation plan.

By adapting presentation strategies based on audience needs, maintaining an engaging delivery style, and prioritizing interactive discussion, this project effectively communicates its historical and ecological significance. These methods not only secure necessary support but also reinforce the long-term viability of the Marlatt Homestead as a key educational and community space.

PRECEDENT STUDY

Precedent studies were used to better understand strategies that should have been followed throughout the design process. By understanding previous successes and failures, we were able to move the design forward. The precedent studies used for the Marlatt Homestead covered three crucial topics when making design choices. A precedent on homesteading helped us understand the self-sustaining spirit and provided us with information on what types of elements needed to be considered to produce the best modern-day interpretation. Historic barns were also a fascinating study that gave us ideas not only on interpretation but also on programming that could provide a financial incentive to the university. The precedent used for our information on barns was, ironically, provided to us during one of our final presentations in the spring of 2025. Most importantly, precedents with a similar history showed us the true possibilities and potential that interpretive design had in reigniting a historical story that gave us direction for the future.



Figure 3.3: Allen Centennial Gardens Residence. Photograph by Kate Lennon



Figure 3.4: Sun dial monument in front of residence. Photograph by Kate Lennon



Figure 3.5: They provide many ways for guests and community members to contribute monetary gifts to sustain the operations of the site. Photograph by Kate Lennon



Figure 3.6: This image shows an incentive for people to volunteer their time to help keep up the gardens, which also contributes to the sustainability of the site. Photograph by Kate



Figure 3.7: This entryway is lined with permeable pavers and garden plots and cisterns, showing the level of detail for water retention on the site. Photograph by Kate Lennon

PRECEDENTS

ALLEN CENTENNIAL GARDENS

Historical Overview

The Allen Centennial Gardens (**Figure 3.3**), located on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus, was established in 1989. It surrounds the historic Agricultural Dean's Residence, a Victorian Gothic house built in 1896 that served as the home for the college's first four deans (Allen Centennial Garden 2025). The garden was developed to serve as an outdoor classroom for the university's Horticulture Department, providing hands-on learning opportunities for students and a serene environment for visitors (Allen Centennial Garden 2025). The establishment of the garden was made possible through the support of alumni, student organizations, and significant contributions from Ethel Allen, a former faculty member and renowned naturalist (Allen Centennial Garden 2025).

Revenue Generation and Operations

The Allen Centennial Garden operates without direct state or tuition funding, relying entirely on private support (Allen Centennial Garden 2025). Key revenue sources include private donations, endowments, grants, and fundraising events. The "Friends of Allen Centennial Garden," a nonprofit organization established in 2013, plays a crucial role in fundraising and community engagement (Allen Centennial Garden 2025). The garden also offers venue rentals for events such as weddings, and also visitor donation boxes (**Figure 3.5**), providing an additional revenue stream (Allen Centennial Garden 2025).

While the Marlatt Homestead does not currently generate revenue through public programs or events, ongoing preservation efforts aim to explore potential adaptive uses for the property. These efforts include 3D scanning of the historic structures to assess their condition and inform future preservation strategies (Kansas State University 2025).

Educational, Research, and Tourism Contributions

The Allen Centennial Garden serves as a living laboratory and outdoor classroom for the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Horticulture Department. It offers diverse plant collections and themed gardens that provide hands-on learning experiences for students and educational programs for the public. The garden is open daily from dawn to dusk, attracting visitors and contributing to local tourism (Allen Centennial Garden 2025).

The idea of the Next-Gen Land-Grant Mission is to extend research and provide accessible educational opportunities to the community. By transforming the Marlatt Homestead into an outdoor classroom, Kansas State University could create a dynamic space where history, ecology, and education intersect. Much like the Allen Centennial Garden, the homestead could offer hands-on learning experiences for students of all ages, from university courses in landscape architecture, history, and agriculture to K-12 field trips focusing on Kansas's cultural and ecological heritage. Interpretive gardens, demonstration plots, and interactive exhibits could help visitors explore topics such as sustainable agriculture, native plants, and historical land use practices. Additionally, the site could host workshops, guided tours, and public events, enriching community engagement and enhancing tourism in Manhattan, Kansas. By aligning with the land-grant mission, the Marlatt

Homestead has the potential to serve as a model for how historic sites can contribute to lifelong learning and foster a deeper connection between the university and the broader community.

Potential Opportunities for the Marlatt Homestead

Drawing inspiration from the Allen Centennial Garden, the Marlatt Homestead could be transformed into a dynamic space that honors its historical significance while serving contemporary educational and community needs. Potential initiatives include:

- Establishing a Public Garden or Interpretive Center: Developing themed gardens or exhibits that reflect the region's history and ecology, providing educational opportunities for students and visitors. This "pioneer garden" could be a satellite garden of the nearby KSU gardens by using directional signage and promotion.
- Hosting Educational Programs and Workshops: Offering classes, workshops, and tours that engage the community and promote learning in areas such as history, agriculture, and horticulture.
- Creating Event Spaces: Utilizing the property for events like weddings, conferences, and cultural gatherings to generate revenue and increase public engagement.

By embracing these opportunities, the Marlatt Homestead can become a vibrant center for education, research, and community engagement, ensuring its preservation and relevance for future generations.

LEVERAGING CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) STATUS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE MARLATT HOMESTEAD

The Marlatt Homestead, one of the oldest structures in Manhattan, KS, is a critical part of Kansas State University's historical landscape. Built in 1856, it represents both the early settlement of the region and the foundation of Kansas higher education (Chapman Center 2024). Despite its historical importance, the site faces multiple challenges: limited funding, stormwater management issues, and the pressure of surrounding university development (Marlatt Task Force 2023). Ensuring its long-term preservation requires a strategic approach that leverages available resources, partnerships, and regulatory protections.

One of the most effective ways to support preservation efforts is through Certified Local Government (CLG) status. The City of Manhattan has been a CLG since the 1980s, meaning it has a local historic preservation ordinance and access to technical and financial support from the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service (Kansas Historical Society 2023). While Kansas State University (K-State) is a state institution and not directly under municipal regulations, the city's CLG designation still offers opportunities to secure funding, increase community involvement, and provide oversight to ensure the homestead's preservation aligns with best practices.

How CLG Status Benefits Historic Properties on College Campuses

University campuses are often home to historically significant buildings, yet these structures frequently face threats from new development, lack of maintenance funding, or shifting institutional priorities. However, CLG status can mitigate these risks, as seen at the University of Kansas (KU). KU's Campus Historic Preservation Board (CHPB) functions similarly to a CLG commission,

reviewing campus projects for their impact on historic resources and integrating preservation into broader planning efforts (Lawrence Times 2023). This approach has led to:

- Official historic district recognition that strengthens legal protections (KU Facilities Planning 2023).
- Eligibility for state and federal preservation funding, including tax credits and grants (Kansas Historical Society 2023).
- Regulatory oversight that prevents the demolition or alteration of historic buildings without thorough review (Lawrence Times 2023).
- Community and university collaboration, fostering a shared commitment to campus heritage (KU Heritage Committee 2022).

KU's model provides a blueprint for how K-State can integrate CLG resources into its own preservation efforts at the Marlatt Homestead. While K-State does not have an internal preservation board like KU, the City of Manhattan's CLG status provides an opportunity to influence preservation decisions at the university level.

Applying CLG Strategies to the Marlatt Homestead

By utilizing the resources and protections available through Manhattan's CLG status, K-State can take meaningful steps toward securing the future of the Marlatt Homestead. Key benefits include:

1. Preservation Oversight and Legal Protections

Because Manhattan is a CLG city, any significant changes to the Marlatt Homestead require review under the Kansas Historic Preservation Act. This means:

- Any proposed demolition or substantial alteration to the site triggers a state-mandated review process (Kansas SHPO 2023).
- The Manhattan Historic Resources Board (HRB) can provide expertise and advocate for appropriate restoration efforts (City of Manhattan 2023).
- The review process increases public awareness and ensures that preservation considerations remain a priority in university planning (Riley County Historical Society 2023).

2. Access to Preservation Funding

One of the biggest barriers to historic preservation is funding, but Manhattan's CLG status opens up multiple financial opportunities:

- CLG Historic Preservation Fund Grants, which can fund surveys, planning studies, and rehabilitation projects (National Park Service 2023).
- Kansas Heritage Trust Fund Grants, available for restoration projects on state-listed historic properties like the Marlatt Homestead (Kansas Historical Society 2023).
- State Historic Tax Credits, which allow K-State to sell or transfer credits to generate revenue for homestead preservation (Kansas Preservation Alliance 2023).

These funding sources have been used successfully in other university preservation efforts. For example, Coker University in Huntsville, South Carolina, partnered with its city's CLG program to secure funding for its historic campus buildings (South Carolina SHPO 2023). Manhattan could serve as a similar financial conduit for preservation at K-State.

3. Increased Community Engagement

The CLG framework encourages universities and local communities to work together in preserving shared historical assets. In 2023, the Marlatt Task Force, a coalition of preservationists, university faculty, and local advocates, was formed to raise awareness about the homestead’s historical significance (Marlatt Task Force 2023). Since then:

- A permanent interpretive sign was installed at the site, providing historical context to visitors (Riley County Historical Society 2024).
- The site was 3D scanned by K-State’s Technology Development Institute to document its condition for future restoration planning (K-State Facilities Planning 2024).
- Public events, lectures, and partnerships with preservation organizations have increased visibility and advocacy for the site’s long-term protection (Manhattan CLG Report 2024).

By further integrating CLG-supported community engagement efforts, K-State can build sustained interest and investment in the homestead.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Step 1: Strengthen University Preservation Policies

- Advocate for K-State to establish a Campus Historic Preservation Board, modeled after KU’s CHPB.
- Integrate the Marlatt Homestead into the university’s long-term master plan and capital improvement strategies.

Step 2: Pursue CLG-Backed Funding Opportunities

- Partner with the City of Manhattan to apply for CLG grants to fund preservation studies and physical restoration.
- Work with local preservation groups to secure tax credits and matching funds for rehabilitation projects.

Step 3: Expand Public Awareness and Engagement

- Host public events, walking tours, and lectures on the homestead’s history.
- Develop a digital interpretive model for educational outreach and online engagement.
- Collaborate with Manhattan’s CLG commission and historical organizations to enhance interpretive programming and on-site storytelling.

The Marlatt Homestead is a significant historic asset that deserves protection, and the City of Manhattan’s CLG status provides a valuable framework to support its preservation. By following the model set by KU’s preservation policies and utilizing CLG funding, oversight, and community collaboration, we can ensure that the homestead remains a meaningful part of the K-State landscape for future generations.

NEXT-GEN LAND-GRANT

In 2023, Kansas State University published its strategic plan for 2030, Next-Gen K-State, outlining the university’s vision and direction for the future. To ensure the Marlatt Homestead Preservation Project remains relevant in the university’s priorities, its design and programming must align closely with this plan and actively support its objectives.

The mission of Next-Gen K-State is to “foster excellence in teaching, research, and service to Kansas, the nation, and the global community” (Kansas State University 2023). The vision is to “be a leader among land-grant universities, setting a standard for learning, discovery, and engagement” (Kansas State University 2023).

The plan identifies several key strategic priorities (Kansas State University 2023):

- **Academic Innovation** – Redesign curriculum for flexibility, applied learning, and interdisciplinary study.
- **Next-Gen Workforce** – Enhance faculty and staff retention, compensation, and career development.
- **Student Experience** – Expand advising, financial aid, and career services.
- **Research & Innovation** – Foster interdisciplinary research hubs and industry collaborations.
- **Community Engagement** – Strengthen K-State’s impact across all 105 Kansas counties.
- **Economic Impact** – Develop new industry partnerships and support workforce growth.
- **Operational Excellence** – Improve infrastructure, technology, and institutional efficiency.

The plan also establishes ten strategic imperatives, with several particularly relevant to the Marlatt Homestead project. One key imperative is ensuring that every student has an applied learning experience, an opportunity this project could provide across multiple university colleges. Another goal is to increase research expenditures to \$300 million annually—a target that could benefit from revenue generated by the site, supplemented by potential federal and state funding.

Additionally, the university’s commitment to operating as "One K-State" aligns with the preservation of the Marlatt Homestead. Understanding the institution’s origins is essential for shaping its future culture. By transforming the homestead into a living history exhibit, K-State can honor its past while using it as a foundational asset for future progress and fund raising.

CAMPUS MASTER PLANNING THEMES

After numerous community engagement events across all three Kansas State campuses, the SmithGroup and the Kansas State Master Plan Committee established a set of guiding themes for the university’s future development:

- **Enhance the K-State Experience**
- **Create Resilient Campuses**
- Transform Learning Environments
- **Expand Research**
- **Improve Connectivity**

Each theme contains more specific objectives that define its goals.

Within the **"Enhance the K-State Experience"** theme, one key objective states: “Preserve and revitalize our heritage buildings.” While this statement can be interpreted broadly, and should dovetail with national and state historic designation, the plan explicitly mentions only Anderson Hall and the Ahearn Field House as heritage structures. However, the Marlatt Homestead is undeniably a significant historical site for Kansas State University. The homestead’s stone structures predate both Anderson Hall and the Ahearn Field House, making it one of the university’s oldest sites. This omission raises an important debate: Why is the Marlatt Homestead not included in the university’s official heritage preservation plans? Advocating for its inclusion would ensure that its historical significance is recognized and protected as part of K-State’s evolving campus.

The **"Transform Learning Environments"** theme emphasizes the need for equitable, interdisciplinary, and well-maintained educational spaces. The Marlatt Homestead aligns with this vision by offering a unique setting that can serve multiple colleges through hands-on learning opportunities. By integrating outdoor classrooms, research spaces, and interpretive exhibits, the site could function as an interdisciplinary hub, fostering collaboration between fields such as history, architecture, agriculture, and engineering. Additionally, repurposing the homestead for academic use would help address deferred maintenance by revitalizing an aging but historically significant site. Rather than allowing the homestead to remain underutilized, incorporating it into K-State’s learning environment would increase campus space efficiency while preserving an important part of university history.

The **"Expand Research"** theme emphasizes the importance of leveraging existing and future programmatic adjacencies to create research partnerships. The Marlatt Homestead aligns perfectly with this objective, as its landscape and structures provide research opportunities across multiple disciplines. For example:

- Engineering – Structural analysis of historical stone buildings, including material composition, weathering patterns, and construction techniques.
- Agriculture and Horticulture – The University Gardens and College of Agriculture could cultivate portions of the site as living laboratories for research on historical gardens and heirloom crops, providing valuable insight into past agricultural practices.
- History and Preservation Studies – The homestead itself serves as a case study in historical preservation, offering students and faculty hands-on experience in restoring and maintaining heritage sites.

The final theme, "Improve Connectivity," focuses on strengthening access across campus. During the town hall meetings, a wellness loop was a recurring concept—an initiative designed to enhance pedestrian and cyclist mobility throughout the university. The adjacent Jardine pedestrian pathway already provides a natural connection between campus and the Marlatt Homestead, making it a logical extension of this initiative. By integrating the homestead into the campus-wide connectivity plan, K-State can enhance accessibility, encourage greater engagement with the site, and create a seamless link between historical and contemporary spaces on campus.

By aligning the Marlatt Homestead with these master planning themes, it can become an integral part of Kansas State’s future while preserving its historical significance. Recognizing the homestead within the master plan would not only honor the university’s origins but also create new opportunities for interdisciplinary education, research, and community engagement.

POTENTIAL USES ALIGNING WITH CAMPUS MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

EDUCATIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE CENTER

- Historical Exhibits: Display artifacts, photographs, and documents that tell the story of the Marlatt family, Bluemont College, and the early history of Kansas State University.
- Guided Tours: Offer tours led by students or local historians to educate visitors about the land-grant mission and the homestead's role in it.
- Interactive Learning: Incorporate augmented reality (AR) experiences where visitors can see what the original Bluemont College building looked like from the Marlatt's front door.

GUEST HOUSE FOR DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

- Luxury Historic Lodging: Accommodate visiting lecturers, researchers, or university guests in a home that offers modern comfort at the historic KSU epicenter.
- Event Space: Host intimate receptions or dinners that allow guests to experience a piece of K-State history firsthand.

RESEARCH FACILITY

- Interdisciplinary Research Hub: Provide space for students and faculty from history, architecture, landscape architecture, and ecology to collaborate on research projects.
- Archaeological Studies: Use the site for hands-on archaeology or preservation studies, offering real-world experience to students.

EXTENSION OF THE UNIVERSITY GARDENS

- Satellite Garden: Create a garden with historic plantings, including a restored peach orchard and 19th-century flora.
- Living Classroom: Use the gardens to teach about historic agriculture practices, native plants, and sustainability.
Community Engagement Space
- Workshops and Classes: Offer programs on historic preservation, gardening, Kansas history, and more.
- Seasonal Events: Host heritage festivals, peach-picking days, or historical reenactments to engage the community.

WELLNESS ROUTE CONNECTION

- Trailhead or Stop on a Campus Wellness Route: Integrate the homestead as a point of interest along walking or biking paths, encouraging both physical activity and historical education.
- Mindfulness Garden: Create a peaceful outdoor space for reflection, connecting the history of the site with wellness initiatives on campus.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING HUB

- K-State Collaboration: Partner with different departments to use the homestead for projects, including art installations, ecological studies, and historical research.
- Public Lectures and Presentations: Provide a venue for scholars to share their research related to the land-grant mission, Kansas history, and other relevant topics.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS



Figure 4.1: Presenting the story and redesign of the Marlatt Homestead to members of SmithGroup and the Kansas State Master Planning Committee. Photograph taken by Michaela Coulter

TIMELINE AND PRESENTATION DEVELOPMENT

The Marlatt Homestead project was introduced to Landscape Architecture students in August 2024. Initially, meetings (**Figure 4.2**) required little preparation, as they primarily served to gather information. However, as the project progressed, a pattern emerged: larger, more significant presentations required increasingly extended preparation periods. This pattern highlights the importance of structured planning and historical storytelling to gain traction with decision-makers (Andrews 2020).

The first meetings aimed at familiarizing students with the project. For instance, the August 19th meeting with Ray Yunk served as an introductory session, providing students with foundational knowledge (Smith 2018). Similarly, on August 27th, the Marlatt Task Force met with the students, allowing both parties to exchange ideas and establish monthly meetings. These early discussions were instrumental in shaping the initial direction of research but required minimal preparation (Johnson 2019).

By September, students began preparing for their first formal presentations (**Figure 4.2**). On September 5th, the interdisciplinary student team shared research updates, followed by a precedent study presentation on September 18th, which was graded. These presentations, although requiring preparation, were still limited in scope compared to later stages (Brown and Taylor 2021).

As the semester progressed, presentations evolved in complexity and significance. A mock presentation review with the Marlatt Task Force on October 2nd allowed students to refine content for university decision-makers. Although preparation took only a week, the lack of rehearsal time

was noted as a drawback (Williams 2017). This was followed by a key presentation to APDesign Dean Michael McClure on October 14, which, despite a short preparation period, successfully conveyed the project's importance (Davis 2022).

The November 19th presentation to the Riley County Historical Society at the Manhattan Public Library marked a shift toward public engagement. With an attendance of over 70 people, this session took two weeks to prepare, including rehearsal time (Miller 2020). The December 10th final review meeting with Tim Steffensmeier and Damon Fairchild, aimed at university decision-makers, was planned three weeks in advance. The additional time was dedicated to refining design renderings and programming, demonstrating the necessity of polished presentations to captivate influential stakeholders (Clark 2019).

By February 11, 2025, the Kansas State University Master Planning Committee and SmithGroup were engaged in discussions at the Business College. This presentation aimed to secure a place for the Marlatt Homestead in the university's 10-year plan. Preparation spanned four weeks, with the final week devoted to intensive rehearsals (Thompson 2021). Individual sections, such as a 15-minute portion, were rehearsed 4–6 times daily, emphasizing the importance of refining messaging and slide content to ensure clarity and impact (Wilson 2016).

Observing the evolving preparation process underscored the importance of thorough planning. A well-structured presentation not only improved communication but also reinforced the project's credibility. Historical storytelling played a crucial role in shaping audience perception—effectively framing the narrative influenced whether decision-makers saw the project as a valuable initiative or dismissed it as a student endeavor (Garcia 2018). Poor preparation risked losing interest, while a compelling and well-rehearsed presentation solidified support for the project (Hall 2023).

KEY PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

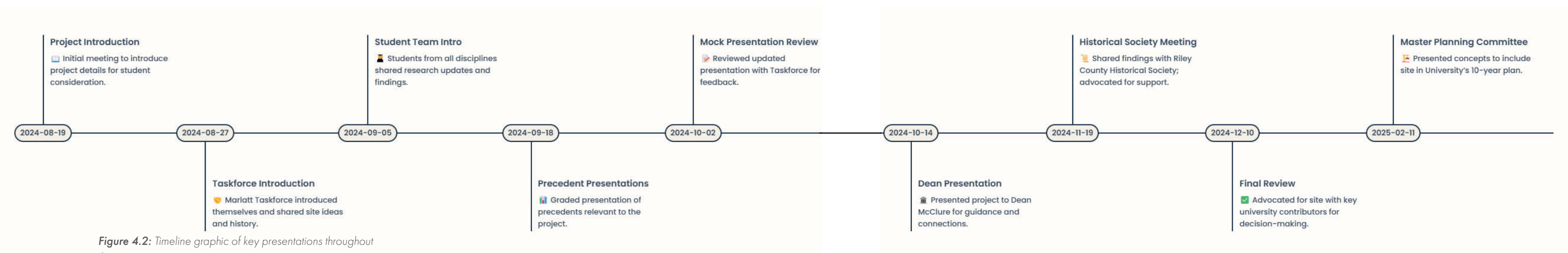


Figure 4.2: Timeline graphic of key presentations throughout the project.

DATE	WHO	WHERE	TASK/ EVENT	NOTES
8/19/2024	Ray Yunk	SR 2123	Project Introduction from Ray Yunk and Marlatt Task force	Meeting was for all students in our class to give details for us to consider when selecting it as our master's project.
8/27/2024	Marlatt Task force	SR 2144	Team introduction to Task force after a brief research period.	In this meeting the Marlatt task force got to introduce themselves to the Landscape Architecture students, and students were to get a better idea of task force members' thoughts and ideas for the site, along with brief history mentions of their own. Established monthly meetings for the Task force.
9/5/2024	Whole Student Team - All disciplines	SR 2028	Intro to other students along with research updates	Rod Devin and Chris present original findings,
9/18/2024	Precedent Presentations	SR 2143	Presented precedents to class	Required/Graded presentation over what precedents we feel fit our project best.
10/2/2024	Marlatt Task force	SR 2124	Mock Presentation Review	Presented an updated version of presentation to members of the task force for review to make sure we were communicating relevant info to University decision-makers.
10/14/2024	Dean McClure	Crit Room in SR	Project intro to Dean McClure	The LA students presented to APDesign dean, Michael McClure, in order to ask what our next steps should be and if he could help us get connected with higher parties. Katie Kingery-Page, was also invited to this meeting however she was unavailable at the time and set up a separate meeting to learn about the project. (See figure 4.5 10/31/2024 meeting.)
11/19/2024	Riley County Historical Society	Manhattan Public Library	Presented findings and concepts to members of the Riley County Historical Society	Attendance for the meeting was 70+. Members wanted to know what they could do to help smooth out this process, our response was for more advocacy.
12/10/2024	Tim Steffensmeier and Damon Fairchild + Task force	SR 2123	Gave a final review to promote the ideas to University Decision-makers	This was used as our final review but we advocated for the site to some key contributors to the university. In this review, Tim and Damon expressed their interest in the site and agreed to help us pass the messaging up the ladder to University leaders with even higher status.
2/11/2025	KSU Master Planning Committee + SmithGroup	Business College	Passing Historical story + Concept development to members of the Campus Planning Committee to get the site on designation for the University's 10-year plan	Presentation was really good. Changed a lot of the wording in order to captivate the right audience.
4/18/2025	Marshal Stewart	SR 2123	*Presenting to Marshall Stewart, the ideas developed on the Marlatt Homestead and its importance behind the Next Gen Land-Grant Mission	This presentation had not happened at the time that this report was published. The goal of this presentation is to plant a seed in the head of the Vice President of Extension's mind. The backing of this office will help assure the projects continuation and potential implementation.

Figure 4.3: Table representing the timeline into further detail.

CRUCIAL INTERNAL MEETINGS

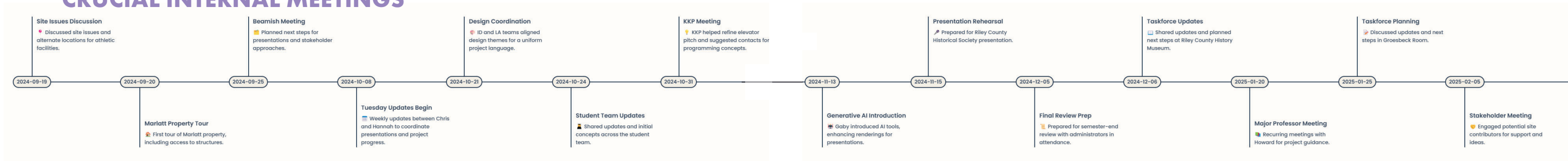


Figure 4.4: Timeline of crucial meeting throughout the project.

WHEN	WHO	WHERE	TASK/EVENT	NOTES
9/19/2024	Whole Student Team - All disciplines	SR 2028	Discussed more issues with site, alternate locations for athletic facilities	Met with other members of the group from different colleges and brainstormed the coming process and goals of the project.
9/20/2024	Marlatt Full Student led team	Marlatt Residence	Chance to tour the Marlatt property, being allowed in the structures for the first time.	Saw the neglect firsthand. Diseased animals throughout the home, barn was filled with clutter and noticed a raccoon hiding up in the rafters of the building.
9/25/2024	Chris and Anne Beamish	Anne's office	Met and discussed next steps on who to present to and how to approach different parties	Came away with more thoughts and ideas of whom our target was going to be for the project. Professor Beamish was very forthcoming about how the property should not be in the hands of Athletic Facilities.
(Recurring)	Chris and Hannah	SR 2143	First of many Tuesday update meetings between Hannah and Chris to coordinate presentation dates and project updates	These meetings helped open lines of communication between the College of Engineering and APDesign, creating a collaborative environment between the two colleges, bridging the gap between multiple disciplines.
10/21/2024	ID + LA Coordination	SR 2153	Coordinated design themes and concepts for uniform design language	Came up with alternative ideas for a private drive for the house, and also spoke about aiming to emphasize the value of the site for future research and cross-college collaboration.
10/24/2024	Marlatt Full Student led team	SR 2028	Coordination and updates across the whole student team, beginning concepts were also shown to students	Our team was introduced to many of the student engineers working on the project in defferent capacities. Giving them an idea of our ideas for the site helps them understand the mission of the project better.
10/31/2024	LA Students and KKP	SR 2123	Met with Katie Kingery-Page to introduce project	Katie Kingery-Page helped form elevator pitch and also made suggestions on who to contact and what to include in concepts and programming.
11/13/2024	Chris and Gaby Coleman	Gaby's office	Gaby introduced generative AI to Chris, which was then applied to renderings for presentations	This meeting was extremely beneficial, as it helped me create programming renderings and concepts quickly to plug into presentations.
11/15/2024	Chris, Hannah, and Kate	SR 2128	Presentation rehearsal	This meeting was used to prepare for our presentation to the Riley County Historical Society.
12/5/2024	Chris, Hannah, and Kate	SR 2123	Presentation rehearsal	Presentation preparation for final semester review, anticipating administrators being in attendance. Meeting duration ends up lasting 2 hours.
12/6/2024	Marlatt Task Force	Riley County History Museum	Updates, precedent, and next-step planning	I was not physically in attendance for this meeting, but I do have the meeting minutes available.
1/20/2025	Chris and Howard	SR 2153	Reoccurring Major Professor meeting	These meetings are used for progress updates throughout the year.
1/25/2025	Marlatt Task Force	MPL Groesbeck Room	Updates and planning for next steps	Task Force Meetings are a time for non-university and university members meet to discuss ideas of who to speak to to get attention on the project.
1/25/2025	Chris and Kate	SR 2143	Check-in post Winter Break	Met with Kate to discuss next steps for design and additional presentation material.
(Recurring)	Chris and Hannah	SR 2143	Recurring Weekly Check-in meetings	Reoccurring meetings to discuss project information and further project direction.
2/5/2025	Chris and Mick	Bluestem Bistro	Updates on individual and team project goals	This was a meeting that was set up to get guidance from Mick after updating him on recent project accomplishments and tasks
2/5/2025	Task force + Damon, Tim, and Ron	SR2153	Hannah and Chris lead this meeting to attempt to gain further support and backing from potential site contributors and users.	Hannah and I spoke with potential stakeholders for the Marlatt site, coming up with ideas of how their areas of expertise.

Figure 4.5: This table goes into further deatails of our meetings as a team.



Figure 4.6: Final presentation of Fall 2024 semester where we invited many to attend including two representatives from the office of extension and the Foundation. Photograph by Lee Skabelund

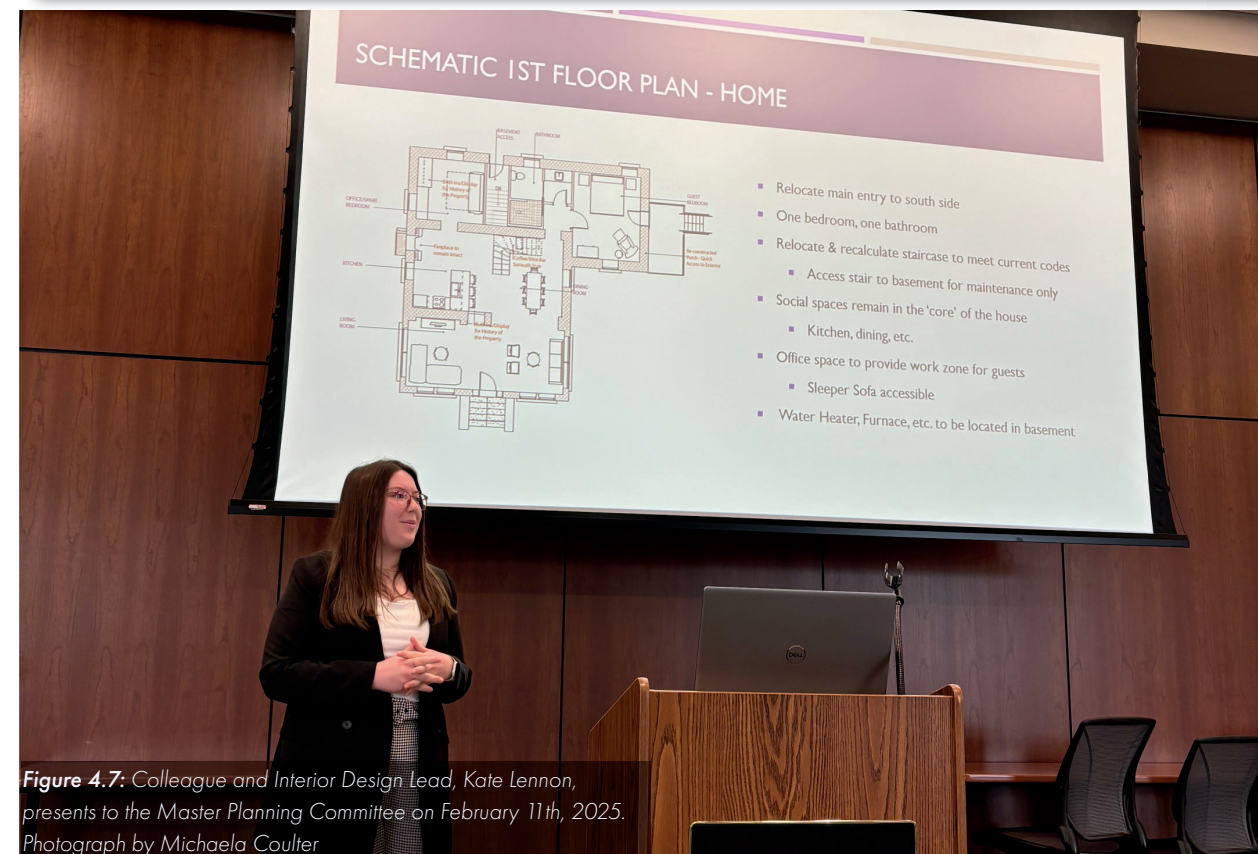


Figure 4.7: Colleague and Interior Design Lead, Kate Lennon, presents to the Master Planning Committee on February 11th, 2025. Photograph by Michaela Coulter

HISTORICAL STORYTELLING THROUGH INTERPRETIVE DESIGN:

The story of the Marlatt Homestead evolved significantly throughout this project as we uncovered new layers of history. Each discovery led us to reassess our understanding, and refine the narrative to be more accurate and compelling. Initially, we approached the homestead's story with a broad historical overview, but as research progressed, deeper insights into the Marlatt family's legacy and the site's ecological transformation emerged.

One of the key challenges was balancing historical accuracy with interpretive storytelling. Early on, we relied on general knowledge and existing records, but as new sources surfaced, our perspective shifted. This required revisiting our initial assumptions, ensuring that our portrayal of the homestead not only honored its past but also resonated with present-day audiences. When going back and reassessing our original research, we would come across even more details that we had missed before. As noted in Pokhrel (2022), historical narratives significantly impact how visitors engage with and interpret cultural heritage sites. The more compelling and accurate the story, the stronger the emotional and educational connection visitors develop.

The evolution of this narrative highlights the importance of continuous research and adaptability in historical storytelling. By weaving together historical facts, personal accounts, and ecological restoration efforts, we have created a narrative that is both informative and immersive. As Davison (2016) suggests, landscape elements can be used to create an experiential connection to history, guiding visitors through a story interactively and engagingly. The placement of features such as the original windmill site or native plantings can serve as storytelling tools that enhance visitor understanding.

By incorporating research on historical narratives and interpretive design, we aim to make the Marlatt Homestead a site that educates and inspires. Pokhrel (2022) emphasizes that storytelling strengthens cultural heritage tourism by fostering deeper visitor engagement. Davison (2016) highlights how physical landscapes can serve as immersive storytelling tools, further reinforcing the importance of a well-structured narrative in historical preservation efforts. This perspective supports our approach to integrating historical and ecological storytelling into the physical design of the Marlatt Homestead, making it a dynamic space where history and nature intersect, offering valuable lessons on preservation and sustainability.

3D Representation:

The use of 3D representation through renderings and sketches strengthened our argument immensely after initially only being able to provide plans and bubble diagrams. During a professional review, we received input emphasizing the necessity of projective renderings when presenting to the broader community. The average person may struggle to interpret construction documents or bubble diagrams, making visualizations crucial for effectively conveying spatial relationships.

Research supports the role of 3D visualization in improving public engagement and participation in design projects. Pokhrel (2022) highlights that visual storytelling significantly enhances how cultural heritage sites are understood and appreciated by the public. When applied to design, 3D renderings provide a way to make historical and spatial relationships more accessible. Similarly, Davison (2016) emphasizes that interactive visualization techniques help stakeholders better grasp project impacts

and spatial dynamics, leading to more informed discussions and decisions. Additionally, Skaaland and Pitera (2021) found that digital visualization models, particularly 3D representations, lead to a statistically significant increase in public understanding and engagement compared to traditional visualization methods. These insights reinforce the necessity of incorporating 3D tools into our design communication strategies.

Our perspective shifted significantly when integrating our final design into 3D software. This process revealed how certain relationships function—or fail to function—on the site, guiding adjustments and refinements. It also helped us refine the placement of interpretive elements, such as the windmill, by allowing us to assess how they would appear from a visitor’s viewpoint. Additionally, as noted by Pokhrel (2022), effective visual storytelling fosters emotional and intellectual engagement, making it easier to convey historical and ecological narratives through 3D representation. Furthermore, Ehab, Burnett, and Heath (2023) emphasize the role of VR and BIM software as well in enhancing participatory design, allowing stakeholders to interact with proposed designs in a more immersive and accessible way.

When people can clearly visualize design ideas, conversations become more productive, fostering real progress and generating momentum for the project. The ability to see and experience a design in three dimensions enhances engagement, making abstract ideas tangible and actionable. As Davison (2016) suggests, spatial visualization not only aids in understanding but also builds consensus, allowing stakeholders to explore multiple perspectives before a final design is implemented. Skaaland and Pitera (2021) note that structured evaluation of visualization methods can ensure that digital tools are used effectively to communicate design ideas and engage the public in meaningful ways.

HISTORIC ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

At the time this was written, almost all ecology on the site was nonexistent or neglected. This presented an opportunity to restore the soil, reintroduce native species, and reinstate plant types that existed on the site during Washington and Julia Marlatt’s residency. When Washington arrived in Manhattan, Kansas, in 1856, the city was still in its early stages of development, with property and lot lines just beginning to be planned. Given this timeline, it is highly likely that the site originally consisted entirely of native flora.

We propose to bring back many of these historical plant species with the support of the Kansas State University Gardens. This collaboration will allow K-State students and faculty to research the historic vegetation, contributing to both ecological restoration and educational outreach. Research has shown that restoring native prairie species not only improves biodiversity but also supports pollinators and enhances soil health (Harmon-Threatt and Chin, 2016). Selecting appropriate native species such as big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), and purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), as identified in Harmon-Threatt and Chin (2016), can help establish a resilient and ecologically functional landscape that mirrors the original prairie composition.

The historical significance of prairie wildflowers and grasses is well documented. As Smith and Smith (1989) note in "*Wildflowers of the Tallgrass Prairie*", native plants define the prairie’s aesthetic while providing key ecological benefits like erosion control and wildlife habitat. Incorporating these species into the Marlatt Homestead’s restoration will honor its ecological history and serve as an educational resource, highlighting the connection between native flora and the cultural landscape.

CHAPTER 5

DESIGN



Figure 5.1: Aerial image of the final conceptual design of the Marlatt Homestead.

DESIGN INTENT

NARRATIVE

The Marlatt Homestead stands as a vital link to Manhattan's early history and Kansas State University's origins, embodying a legacy of resilience, education, and community. By preserving this historic site, we honor the vision of the Marlatt family and their contributions to the first land-grant university in the nation. At the same time, we create opportunities to inspire future generations through educational programming, ecological restoration, and interpretive storytelling. This project seeks to balance historical integrity with modern functionality, transforming the homestead into a vibrant space that celebrates its past while engaging the community and fostering a deeper connection to our shared heritage.

DESIGN GOALS:

Goal 1: A complete restoration of the site may not be possible so we want to **restore to the best of our knowledge and ability.**

Goal 2: Create an **interpretive landscape that reflects life in the late 1800s with modern accommodations.**

Goal 3: Create a **place for all life** to come and play, reflect, and gather.

Goal 4: Create **revenue generation** to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND PROCESS

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis is a common tool used in site design to evaluate key factors that influence planning and decision-making. After conducting historical research, visiting the site, and documenting existing conditions through photographs, our team identified the site's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis provides a structured framework to assess both the positive and challenging aspects of the site, ensuring that design decisions are well-informed.

By understanding these four categories, we were able to develop programming strategies and prioritize design elements that enhanced the site's strengths, addressed its weaknesses, capitalized on potential opportunities, and mitigated existing threats. This process allowed for a more thoughtful and strategic approach to creating a functional, sustainable, and historically sensitive design.

Strengths:

Strengths are determined based on the site's existing conditions and historical significance. These inherent qualities add value to the site and can serve as a foundation for design decisions. Identifying strengths early in the process helps highlight what is worth preserving and enhancing.

Additionally, strengths often lead to opportunities, as they reveal potential ways to build upon the site's assets. By recognizing these positive attributes from the outset, we can develop strategies that protect and support them while ensuring they contribute to a cohesive and meaningful design.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses are site elements that require intervention or improvement. These may include physical constraints, environmental challenges, or historical limitations that impact the site's functionality or sustainability. By identifying weaknesses early, we can compare them against the site's strengths to establish priorities for the design process. This analysis helps guide strategic decisions, ensuring that the design addresses key challenges while enhancing the site's overall potential.

Opportunities:

Opportunities often emerge from the site's strengths, but they can also arise from addressing its weaknesses. While strong features may present natural opportunities for enhancement, site challenges can also inspire creative solutions that resolve multiple issues at once.

For example, poor site drainage may initially be seen as a weakness, but it presents an opportunity to implement green stormwater infrastructure. This intervention could not only mitigate flooding concerns but also serve as an educational tool for students and create a more aesthetically pleasing landscape for the community and daily visitors. By identifying these possibilities, we can develop a design that is both functional and forward-thinking.

Threats:

Threats are potential challenges or obstacles that could stall or even derail the project. These may include environmental risks, regulatory restrictions, funding limitations, or opposition from stakeholders. Identifying these threats early allows us to anticipate roadblocks and develop strategies to navigate them effectively. Understanding potential opposition also provides an opportunity to find common ground. By acknowledging concerns and incorporating solutions into the design, we can create a more balanced and holistic site that addresses a range of perspectives while maintaining the project's core vision.

MARLATT HOMESTEAD SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS Historical Significance Proximity to Athletic Venues Good Size for Community Park(~2.2 acres) Listed on State Register On the Corner of the Campus Close to original Bluemont College location Adjacent to College Avenue	WEAKNESSES Site Orientation Funding Unsure of Structural Integrity No Nearby Shops for Pedestrians Untold History Not Acknowledged as Heritage Building Not Currently Applicable for National Registry Lack of Vegetation Unappealing Barb-Wired Fencing Around Premises Used to Store Heavy Objects (Tractors, Busses, EMS)
OPPORTUNITIES Education Research Year-Round Event Spaces Green Storm Water Management Memorials Interpretation Tourism Photography Sessions Bed and Breakfast Food Truck Space Host for Extension Activities Site Orientation	THREATS Water Runoff from Athletic Facilities Storage University Financial Choices Proximity to College Ave. (Noise) Current Site Conditions Demolition by Neglect Potential Brownfield Status

Figure 5.2: SWOT Analysis Completed August of 2024 by Landscape Architecture Students (Chris Marble, Devin Holliday, Rodrigo Sanchez)

PROGRAMMING

After completing the site analysis, we gained a clearer understanding of the necessary and feasible programming for the site. This process helped us determine how different spaces should function and what types of activities they should support. Additionally, input from the task force provided valuable insights that we incorporated into our planning.

The site’s programming is divided into four distinct categories, each requiring thoughtful design consideration:

- The Site** – Overall landscape and circulation, including ecological restoration, public access, and interpretive elements.
- The Residence** – Adaptive reuse opportunities, historical interpretation, and potential Bed & Breakfast for distinguished guests of the university.
- The Barn** – Possible functions such as event space, storage, or an interactive learning environment.
- The Smaller Supporting Sheds** – Potential for auxiliary uses, including exhibit space, maintenance storage, service kiosks, or hands-on demonstration areas.

By structuring programming around these categories, we can ensure that each element contributes to a cohesive and functional design that respects both the site's history and its future potential.

SPACE PLANNING

Once the programming elements were established, we analyzed the site layout to determine the best spatial organization. Based on our programming decisions, we identified three distinct activity zones across the site, each serving a different purpose.

- Private Zone (Western Third – The Residence)**
 - The historic house will serve as a recruiting and hospitality space for Kansas State University.
 - It will host important guests such as recruits, donors, and Hall of Fame candidates, requiring a level of privacy.
 - Design solutions will focus on seclusion, controlled access, and a welcoming yet exclusive environment.
- Active Zone (Central Third – The Barn)**
 - The barn will function as an event center, making this the most dynamic and interactive portion of the site.
 - This space will accommodate gatherings, programming, and community engagement, reinforcing its role as the site's social and functional core.
- Passive Zone (Eastern Third – Public Landscape)**
 - The eastern third of the site presents a variety of different existing challenges but also opportunities for transformation.
 - We aim to capitalize on its current weaknesses by creating a peaceful, aesthetically rich environment for public use.

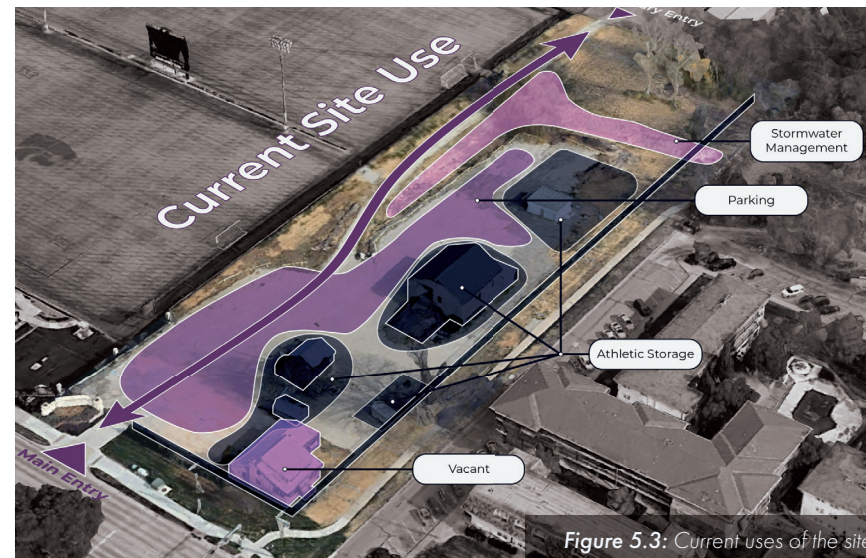


Figure 5.3: Current uses of the site.

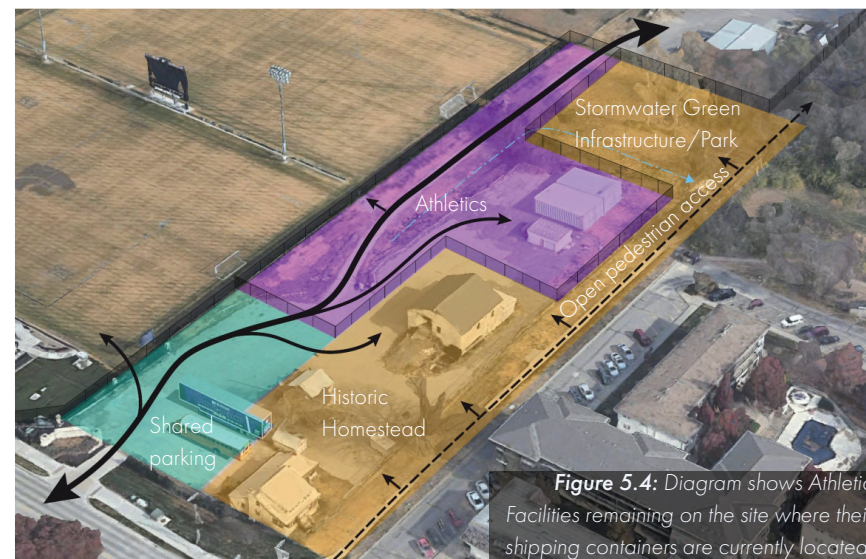


Figure 5.4: Diagram shows Athletic Facilities remaining on the site where their shipping containers are currently located.

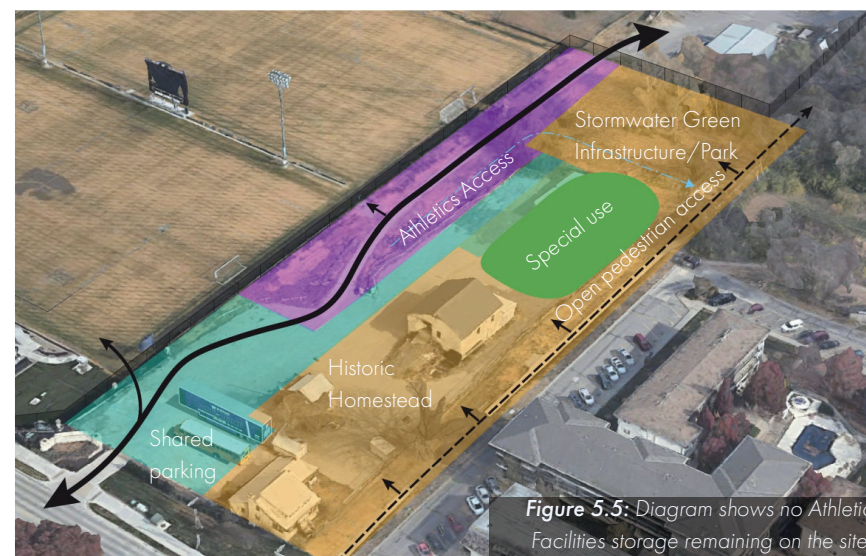


Figure 5.5: Diagram shows no Athletic Facilities storage remaining on the site.

- This zone will emphasize nature, reflection, and education, offering a quiet retreat that enhances the site's historical and ecological value.

By structuring the site into these three zones—private, active, and passive—we ensure a balanced design that accommodates both university needs and community engagement while maintaining the site's historical integrity.

BUBBLE DIAGRAMS

The next layer of design involved coming up with a series of bubble diagrams to get an idea of how much space should be allocated for each programming element. A particular challenge that we faced with this was where to create boundary lines in the case that the Athletic Facilities team would not be open to moving their stored items to another location on campus. Fortunately they have stated that they are open to the idea of moving elsewhere.

We once again dealt with this in 3 different scenarios:

1. Site without Athletic Facilities storage being moved except the immediate area around the house.
 - In this case the boundary line for the site would be placed just to the west of the barn, allowing for use of the house, and the other two sheds.
 - This was not a desirable idea for the group since the barn is potentially the most valuable asset for the university on this site.
2. Site with Athletic Facilities moving to the East portion of the site (**Figure 5.7**)
 - In this case, we move all athletic facilities' storage to the east of the current drainage ditch on site.
 - Preliminary measurements show that it is possible to displace them to that location and have even more room than they are currently using, with ample space to turn a large vehicle around.
 - This option of course allows for more programming than the first, however, guests and visitors would still be very close in proximity to athletic facilities.
3. Our desired goal of designing with all stored items being moved to a different location of campus. (Figure 5.8)
 - In this case, ALL stored items and equipment would be vacated from the property, pushing the expected boundary even further to the east until it abuts university facilities storage next door.
 - More space will allow for even more opportunities for education and research.
 - This is obviously our most desirable outcome because it saves the entirety of what is left of the Marlatt Homestead which will enable us the opportunity to create a complete gateway to the northwest corner of campus.

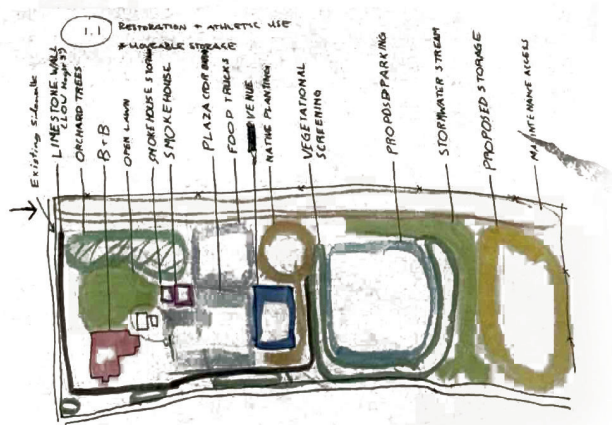


Figure 5.6: Bubble diagram 1.1 shows site layout with Athletic Facilities remaining on the site.

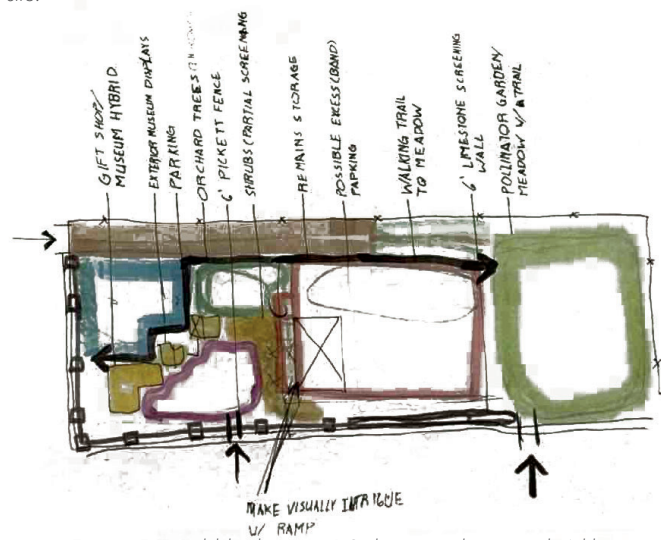


Figure 5.7: Bubble diagram 1.2 shows site layout with Athletic Facilities remaining on the site.

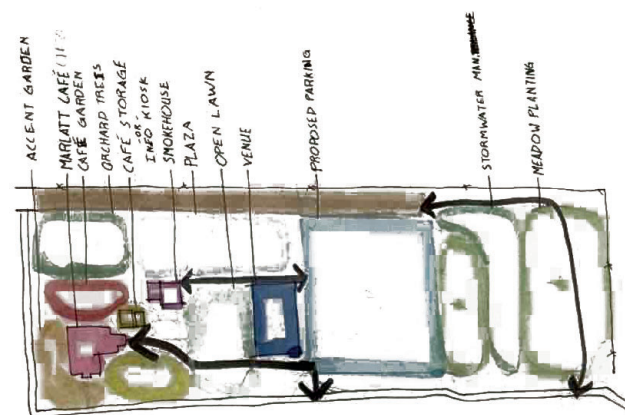


Figure 5.8: Bubble diagram 2.1 shows site layout with Athletic Facilities moved to another location on campus.

GRID & ACCESS

Access plays a crucial role in the functionality and success of the site. Since the project aims to create a gateway to campus, ensuring strong and intuitive connections is essential. To achieve this, we established a grid system at key thresholds, providing a structured approach to circulation and accessibility. This grid framework helped define how each important element on the site—such as the residence, barn, and public spaces—connects to primary and secondary access points. By analyzing these connections, we developed pathway options that enhance movement across the site while maintaining a cohesive and meaningful design.

The resulting circulation plan ensures that visitors can easily navigate the space, promoting engagement with the site's historical and educational elements while also supporting its private and public functions.

PARKING & PATHWAYS

As the design process evolved, we refined the circulation layout, ultimately settling on an oval-shaped pathway that encircles the barn and symbolizes the origins of Kansas State University. This framework not only provides clear movement across the site but also helps define functional spaces that support programming and educational opportunities.

Accessibility was a key consideration, ensuring that all pathways maintain a slope of less than 5%, making the site fully navigable for individuals requiring additional assistance.

In addition to pathways, parking played a crucial role in site access. While the goal was to minimize vehicular traffic, strategic parking solutions were necessary to support educational programming for primary, secondary, and college students. The design prioritizes the least invasive parking layout, including designated bus parking, to balance accessibility with site preservation.

The site entrance posed an additional design challenge due to its immediate slope, requiring careful grading considerations to ensure safe and functional access. These factors were integrated into the final design decisions, creating a circulation plan that is both efficient and sensitive to the site's historical and ecological integrity.

DETAILED PLANNING

The development of pathways, spaces, and programming underwent multiple iterations throughout the design process. Early concepts ranged from highly organic layouts to rigidly orthogonal designs, both of which presented challenges in terms of functionality and site integration. Over time, we refined the approach to strike a balance between structure and natural flow.

While the general arrangement of spaces remained consistent, adjustments were made to improve functionality and respond to the site's needs. Additionally, a key consideration throughout the process was the timeline of the Marlatt family's story—ensuring that the site's design accurately reflects their lifetime on the homestead and enhances the historical narrative through spatial organization and interpretive elements.

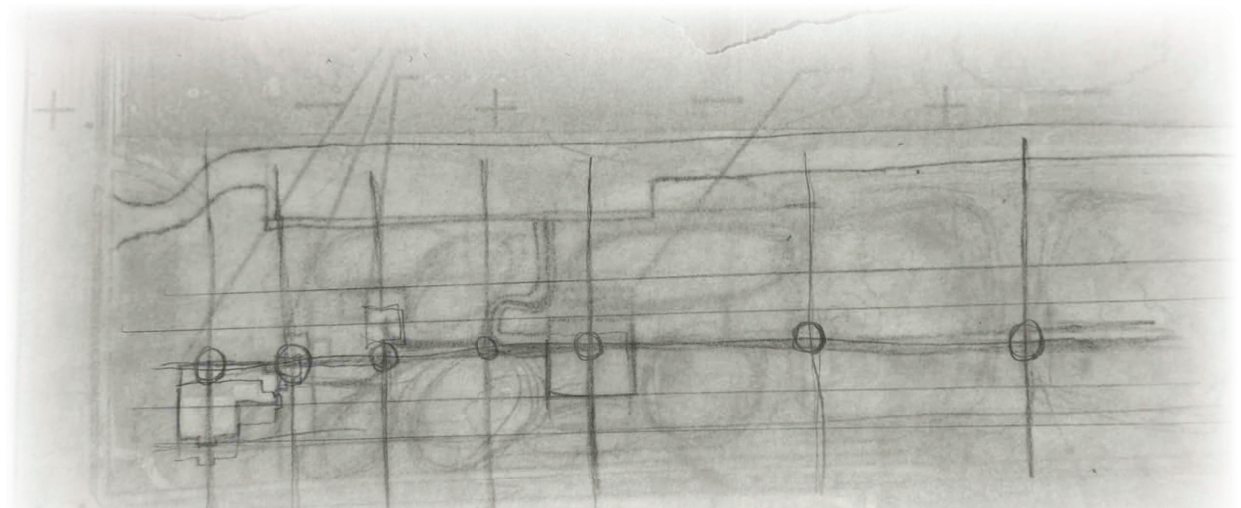


Figure 5.9: The original grid locates key access points within the current site and extends them to that perimeter of the site.

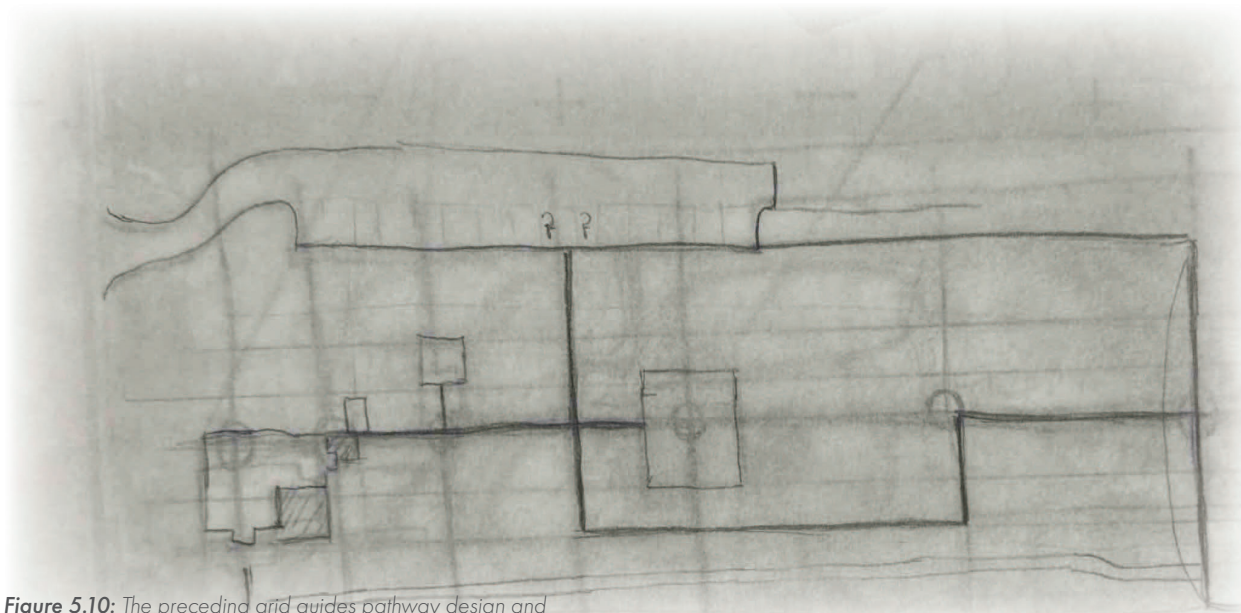


Figure 5.10: The preceding grid guides pathway design and provides access at critical points throughout the homestead..

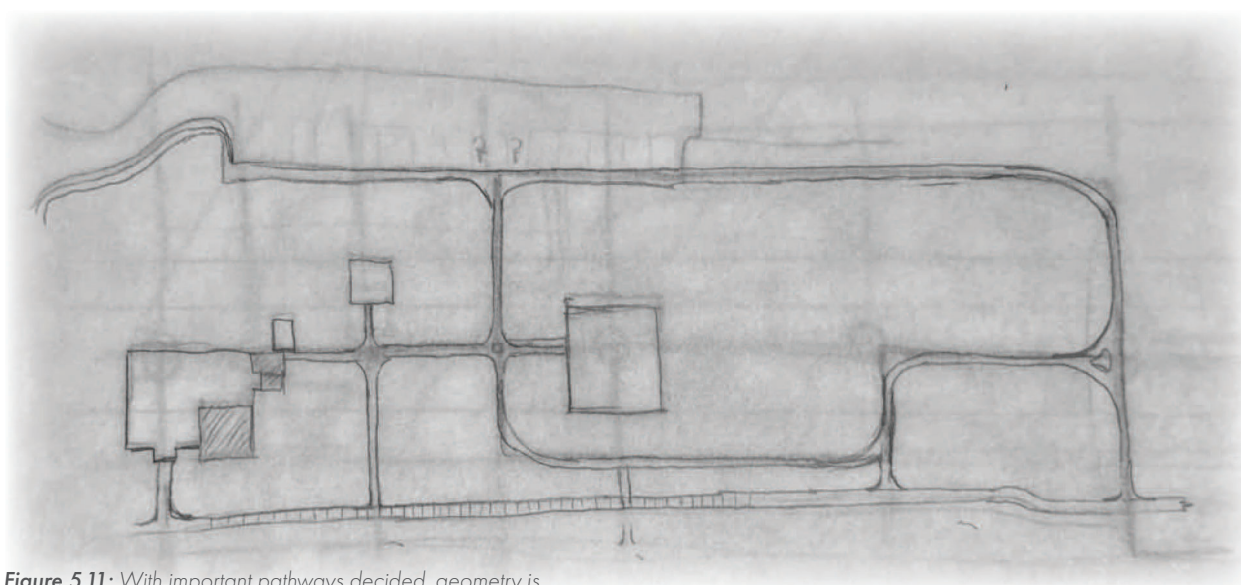


Figure 5.11: With important pathways decided, geometry is created, allowing better circulation and flow.

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENTS

Another important element of the site are the interpretive elements. Before any preservation is done, the site only has the 4 original structures remaining as far as interpretive elements go. Looking through old photographs and documentation was crucial in deciding factors such as including a peach orchard in with the site. In images we have seen from before the southern addition of the house was built, show elements like a windmill adjacent to the south side of the barn. Washington and Julia did not ever own a vehicle so including wagons next to the barn and the house give that impression. There has historically been a short stacked stone wall surrounding a lot of campus and in older photographs we see one separating the Marlatt Homestead from a dirt road that adjoined the south side of the site. This wall had a couple breaks in it to allow the Marlatts to enter out onto the road from their homestead. Another element that we see in photos and can still see remnants of on the north side of the barn was a lean-to. This lean-to can interpret Washington and Julia's pioneering spirits while also functioning as a possible means of egress and also perhaps an indoor kitchen area. While trees may not have been as prevalent in the early days of Washington's life on the homestead, in an image dated close to 1900, you can see a decent amount of tree canopy to the north. Even though we are not working north of the site, a good amount of tree canopy is needed for the site for a combination of reasons like screening, shade, and aesthetics.

CIVIL 3D IMPLEMENTATION AND PLANTING

In August, we received copies of an old CAD file containing elevation contours for the site. While these maps were not fully up to date, they remained relatively accurate when compared to our visual assessments. The only notable discrepancy was in the area east of the barn, where shipping containers used for storage were located. Acquiring this data was essential for understanding grade changes across the site, assembling construction documents, and developing digital 3D models to begin the visualization process.

Throughout the design process, Civil 3D played a crucial role in developing and refining our concepts. Initially, it was used to create basemaps, providing a foundation for spatial organization and bubble diagrams. As the design evolved into more defined geometrical spaces, Civil 3D allowed us to bring ideas to life in a feasible and measurable manner.

We developed and tested three different design concepts using Civil 3D, which were then presented for review by professional audiences and professors. At this stage, our focus was solely on design alternatives that allowed for the complete removal of all athletic facility items, maximizing the homestead's space and historical presence.

Concept 1: Northern Service Road and Compact Parking (Figure 5.14)

This option proposed shifting the service road north, adjacent to the soccer complex. The layout provided:

- 30 total parking stalls (27 for standard vehicles and 3 for buses).
- A private driveway for the residence with space for two vehicles.
- A spillout plaza at the southeast corner of the barn, positioned between a grand entryway to the lower barn level and an adjacent open lawn for gathering.

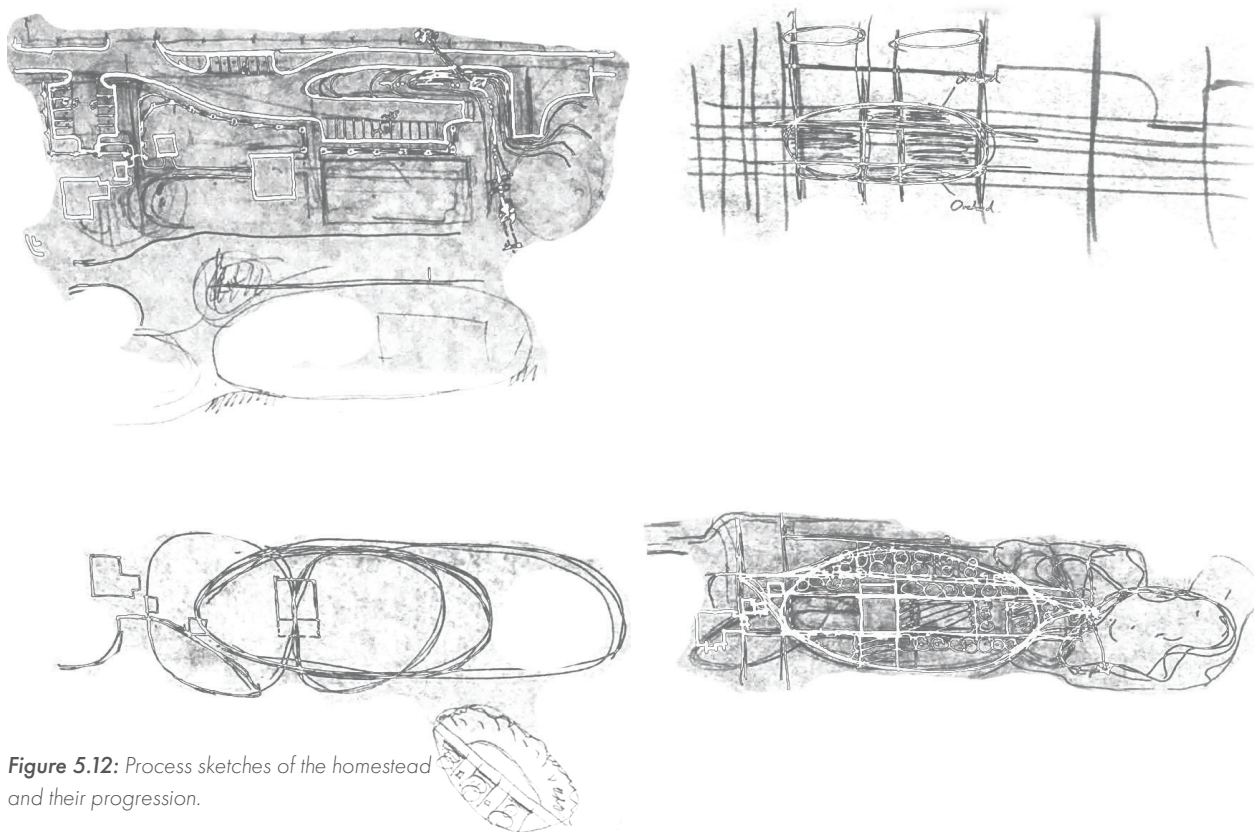


Figure 5.12: Process sketches of the homestead and their progression.

BOTANICAL / COMMON NAME	CONT	CAL	SIZE	QTY	UNIT COST	TOTAL
Acer saccharum / Sugar Maple	#15 Container	2" Min	8' Min	4	\$350	\$1,400
Cercis canadensis texensis / Texas Redbud	B&B 24"-36"	2" Min	8' Min	4	\$500	\$2,000
Malus x 'Select A' / Flowering Crabapple	B&B 24"-36"		8' Min	6	\$125	\$750
Pinus alba / White Pine	#25 Container	2" Min	8' Min	9	\$250	\$2,250
Prunus persica 'Elberta' / Elberta Peach	#15 Container	2" Min	8' Min	20	\$350	\$7,000
Thuja x 'Green Giant' / Green Giant Arborvitae	B&B 18"-24"	2" Min	8' Min	19	\$375	\$7,125
Thuja x 'RLH-GG' / Slender Giant™ Arborvitae	#15 Container	2" Min	8' Min	1	\$350	\$350
BOTANICAL / COMMON NAME	CONT			QTY	UNIT COST	TOTAL
Ilex vomitoria 'Nana' / Dwarf Yaupon Holly	#3 Container			39	\$60	\$2,340
Rhododendron viscosum 'Pink and Sweet' / Pink and Sweet Swamp Azalea	#5 Container			6	\$100	\$600
TOTAL COST:						\$23,815

MEADOW/PRAIRIE MIX			CODE	DESCRIPTION	QTY	COST	TOTAL
Asclepias incarnata / Swamp Milkweed	8,637 sf	15%	1	BARN PATIO PAVERS	4,709 sf	\$11	\$51,795
Bouteloua curtipendula / Side Oats Grama	8,637 sf	15%	2	Maglin MPL-1050-00010 1000 Series - 1050 Planter: 24in. H x 19in. W x 19in. D, Formed Steel Frame, Ipe Wood Sides, Galvanized Steel Liner Frame: Gunmetal Matte Slats: Ash Wood	2		
Echinacea purpurea / Coneflower	5,758 sf	10%	3	Maglin MBE-0300-00064 300 Series - 300 Backed Bench: 70in. L, Cast Aluminum Ends, Two End Arms Frame: Black Gloss Seat: Cedar Woodgrain HDPE	26		
Eutrochium maculatum 'Atropurpureum' / Purple Joe Pye Weed	5,758 sf	10%	4-PV	Stableized Decomposed Granite	544 cy	\$175	\$95,207
Iris versicolor / Blue Flag	2,879 sf	5%	5	Maglin MTB-1100-00017 1100 Series - 1100 Cluster Seating: H.S. Steel Tube Frame, Lasered Steel Table Top and Attached Backed Seats (4), Surface Mount Frame: Gunmetal Matte	4		
Lobelia siphilitica / Great Lobelia	2,879 sf	5%	6	Maglin MBR-0350-00002 300 Series - 350 Bike Rack: H.S. Steel Tube, Formed Steel and Solid Steel Angle, Surface Mount, 5 Loops, 4 Bike Configuration Bike Rack: Silver 14 Matte	2		
Panicum virgatum / Switch Grass	5,758 sf	10%					
Rudbeckia hirta / Black-eyed Susan	2,879 sf	5%					
Schizachyrium scoparium / Little Bluestem	2,879 sf	5%					
Solidago x 'Dansolitem' / Little Lemon Goldenrod	2,879 sf	5%					
Sporobolus heterolepis / Prairie Dropseed	2,879 sf	5%					
Symphotrichum novae-angliae / New England Aster	2,879 sf	5%					
Veronicastrum virginicum / Culver's Root	2,879 sf	5%					

Figure 5.13: Proposed Planting Plan for the Marlatt Homestead

- Wide pathways to accommodate small service vehicles for catering and maintenance.

However, this plan introduced functional challenges:

- Service vehicles had no direct access to the outdoor plaza, requiring them to drive around the entire site.
- The bus stalls reduced space available for necessary site drainage improvements.
- The peach orchard felt like an afterthought, limited to seven trees and placed in the shadow of the historic Shumard oak, posing a risk to its root system.

Concept 2: Expanded Parking and Direct Service Access (Figure 5.15)

This plan introduced a two-aisle parking lot accommodating 38 total spaces (35 standard vehicles and 3 buses). It also maintained a private driveway for the residence and improved site access.

Key improvements:

- Direct service vehicle and food truck access to the barn event space.
- A larger, better-shaped open lawn, enhancing usability for gatherings and events.

However, this design felt too vehicle-dominant, significantly reducing space for park guests. With an overwhelming focus on parking, the site’s historical and ecological character risked being overshadowed. Additionally, it left little room for green stormwater infrastructure, especially on the east side of the homestead.

Concept 3: Fractal Parking and Integrated Green Space (Figure 5.16)

This concept retained the existing service road while introducing fractals of parking bays along it. By splitting the parking lot south of the road, it:

- Allowed space to preserve the existing swale, improving stormwater management.
- Parking is closer to the event space, enhancing convenience for catering and food trucks.
- Established a more prominent peach orchard, lining the open lawn and integrating with the barn’s indoor and outdoor event spaces.
- Expanded the spillout plaza, which now wrapped around two sides of the barn.

Despite these improvements, concerns remained:

- Increased vehicular surface area, raising concerns about overcrowding and heat island effects.
- Spaces for visitors still felt somewhat constrained, limiting flexibility for passive recreation.

FINAL DESIGN INTEGRATION & KEY TAKEAWAYS

GEOMETRY

The oval pathway encircling the barn and event space is inspired by historic landscapes such as Monticello and Mount Vernon. This geometry emphasizes the barn’s historical significance within K-State’s history, reinforcing it as the focal point of the site. Additionally, the pathway serves as a boundary, defining the transition between active and passive spaces—with the event space acting as an extension of the barn’s west side.

The arrangement of spaces within the oval allows for flexible programming, supporting education, research, and community engagement. The half-circle drive at the site entrance complements the larger oval, enhancing the flow of movement and ensuring efficient access for various vehicle types.

By going through this iterative process, we identified a multitude of strengths and weaknesses across the three concepts, which ultimately shaped the final design. The feedback received from professionals during early review presentations played a critical role in refining our approach. A combination of these three plans was integrated into the final layout, blending their strongest elements while addressing functionality, accessibility, and ecological sustainability. Civil 3D was instrumental in synthesizing these ideas, ensuring the feasibility of our decisions based on real-world constraints.

We also learned that when presenting to clients or non-design professionals, conceptual imagery is essential to effectively communicate design intent. This phase underscored the importance of visual storytelling, making our ideas more accessible to diverse audiences.

Next Steps: Planting Design with Land F/X

With the spatial framework in place, our next step was to develop a historical planting palette using Land F/X software. This tool allowed us to estimate vegetation volumes and costs, ensuring that our planting design aligned with both the site’s historical context and design goals. The following section explores how Land F/X contributed to refining our planting strategy and strengthening the project’s interpretive design elements.

INTEGRATING LAND F/X INTO THE DESIGN PROCESS

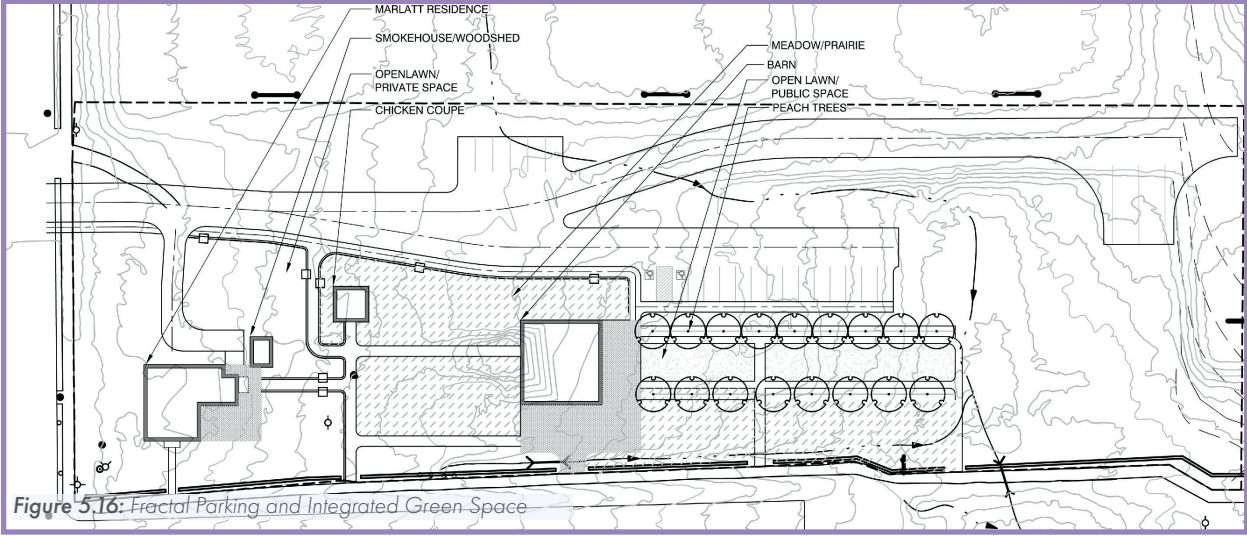
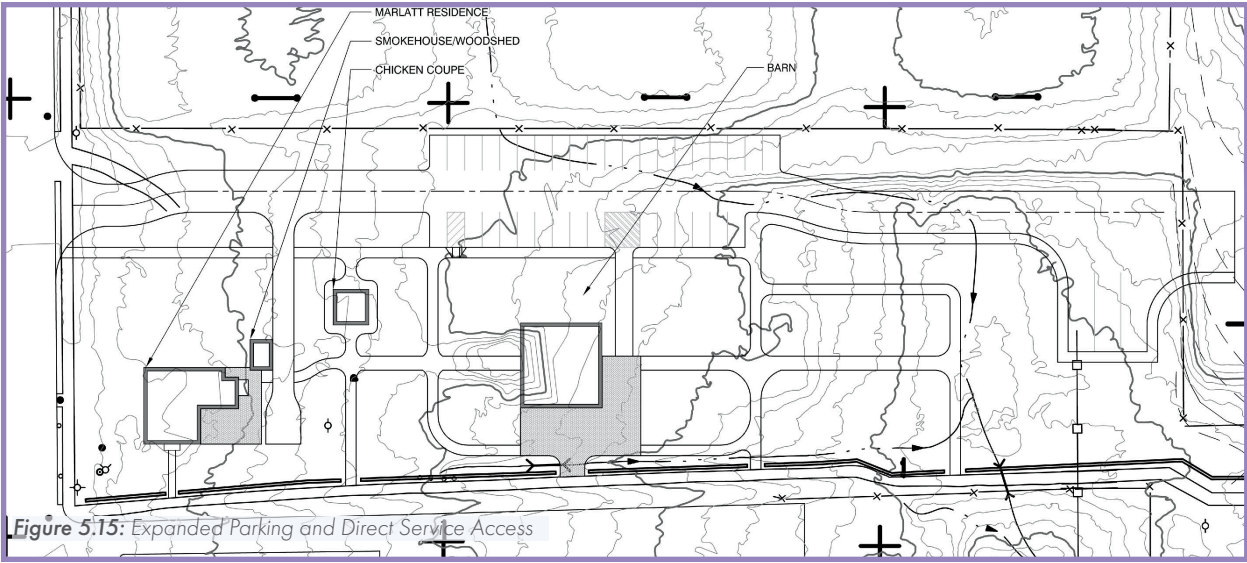
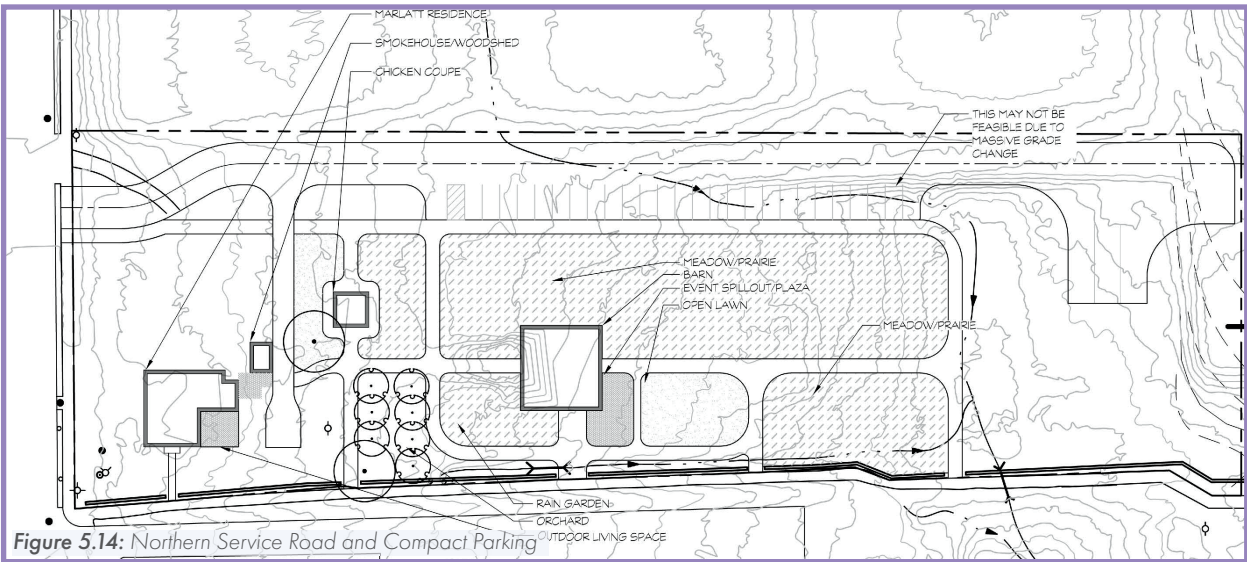
Land F/X is an add-on software for Civil 3D and other CAD programs, streamlining the conceptualization and implementation of planting designs. It enables designers to create conceptual planting groups, allowing for an early assessment of where plantings should be located to ensure a healthy landscape while enhancing the site's aesthetic appeal.

In the early design stages, we used the Concept Manager tool within Land F/X to generate broad planting groups, helping determine which types of plants could be used in specific areas to meet performance and design goals. As the project progressed, we transitioned to the Plant Manager, where we selected specific plant species and varieties for the site. This tool also allowed us to calculate planting volumes and cost estimates, providing valuable information for decision-makers.

However, Land F/X is not just for plants—it also helps with placing and managing site amenities (Figure 5.13) such as:

- Tables and chairs
- Benches
- Pavers and paving materials
- Other landscape elements

By incorporating these elements into our layout plan, we could generate a comprehensive cost estimate for all site furnishings. With the continuous development of Land F/X over the past few years, it has become an increasingly powerful tool—allowing us to handle nearly every aspect of landscape design within a single platform.



Layers of Plans: Grading and Visualization

As previously mentioned, the original grading plan we received was nearly 10 years old. While most of the site remained unchanged, the area where the shipping containers were located had been significantly altered. Over the years, excess gravel from various K-State projects had been dumped and flattened out at the homestead, modifying the site's natural topography.

Despite these changes, our design called for a relatively flat surface, meaning that minimal grading would be required for most of the site. However, where the swale, drainage infrastructure, and road intersect, a retaining wall would need to be constructed to address potential grading challenges in the roadway.

By overlaying the layout plan onto the grading plan, we were able to:

- Identify areas requiring modifications
- Determine where retaining walls might be needed
- Assess how to ensure ADA accessibility for the barn ramp

It's important to note that this grading plan was not an official grading proposal, but rather a demonstration of feasibility. By creating a surface model in SketchUp, we could better understand the practicality of our design choices and prepare for a future detailed grading plan if needed. This process also allowed us to communicate the general grading intent to stakeholders, providing insight into how the site could be shaped in reality.

SKETCHUP 3D MODELING

SketchUp played a crucial role in visualizing and refining the design as we transitioned from 2D planning in Civil 3D to 3D modeling. While Civil 3D allowed us to establish the site's geometry, grading, and spatial organization, SketchUp provided a more interactive platform to test, refine, and communicate our ideas in three dimensions.

Key Contributions of SketchUp in the Process:

- **Grading & Terrain Analysis:** Using the grading data from Civil 3D, we built a 3D surface model in SketchUp, allowing us to identify potential issues such as slope challenges, necessary retaining walls, and ADA accessibility considerations.
- **Design Refinement:** The 3D model helped us explore spatial relationships between programmatic elements, ensuring that pathways, gathering spaces, and structures were appropriately scaled and positioned.
- **Concept Validation:** By visualizing site conditions in SketchUp, we could evaluate how different elements—such as the barn, peach orchard, and event space—interacted with the site's topography and surroundings.
- **Stakeholder Communication:** SketchUp enabled us to create perspective views and conceptual renderings, making it easier for non-design professionals to understand and engage with our ideas. This was especially valuable in presentations where conceptual imagery was needed to effectively communicate the vision of the project.

In essence, SketchUp served as the bridge between technical site data and experiential design exploration, allowing us to refine our layout, test feasibility, and ensure that our ideas translated well into a realistic and build-able design.

LUMION

Lumion played a key role in bringing our design to life by transforming our SketchUp model into realistic, immersive visualizations. While SketchUp allowed us to analyze the spatial organization and grading, Lumion enabled us to create high-quality renderings and animations that effectively communicated the atmosphere, materials, and experiential qualities of the site.

Key Contributions of Lumion in the Process:

- **Realistic Renderings:** Lumion allowed us to apply textures, lighting, and environmental effects, making it possible to visualize how materials such as stone, wood, and vegetation would appear in real-world conditions.
- **Context Integration:** Using Lumion's dynamic lighting and weather settings, we could test how the site would look under different times of day and seasonal conditions, ensuring that the design remained visually appealing and functional throughout the year.
- **Immersive Experience for Stakeholders:** The ability to generate flythrough animations and perspective views made it much easier for stakeholders—especially those unfamiliar with reading architectural plans—to understand the spatial experience of the site. This was particularly useful for communicating the relationship between the barn, event spaces, and planting areas.
- **Design Validation:** By viewing the site in a naturalistic environment, we could evaluate how elements such as lighting, material choices, and vegetation placement interacted with the overall composition, helping refine final decisions before documentation.

In short, Lumion transformed our technical models into compelling visual narratives, making it an essential tool for both design refinement and effective storytelling when presenting to professors, professionals, and stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Throughout the design process, stakeholder input played a vital role in shaping the final layout, ensuring that it balanced historical integrity, modern functionality, and effective storytelling. Engaging with professors, professionals, and community members allowed us to refine key design decisions based on real-world concerns and priorities.

Key Stakeholder Feedback and Design Adjustments

- **Limiting Parking to Preserve the Historic Feel:** Stakeholders emphasized that excessive parking could detract from the historical character of the site. This feedback led us to reduce the total parking footprint while ensuring that essential bus and VIP parking remained functional.
- **Strategic Placement of Screening and Shade:** Input regarding shade and visual screening influenced the placement of trees and structures, ensuring that key areas—such as gathering spaces and seating—provided comfort while maintaining clear sightlines to historic features.
- **Incorporating Historical Elements:** Stakeholders expressed strong support for historic storytelling elements, leading us to integrate a windmill, stone wall, lean-to, and peach trees—all references to the site's past.

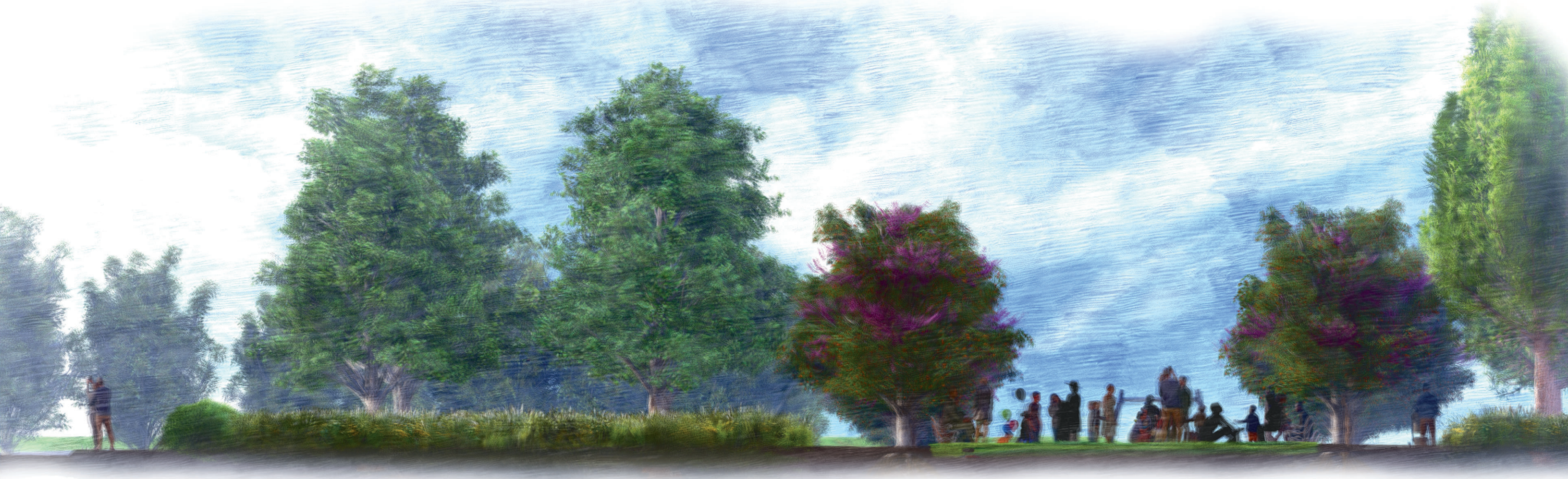
- **Addressing Flooding and Stormwater Management:** Recognizing the site's flooding issues, stakeholders emphasized the importance of green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). This guided the integration of swales, permeable paving, and native plantings to manage runoff while enhancing the ecological health of the site.
- **Bus Parking and Maneuverability:** The need for efficient bus access shaped how parking areas were positioned and sized, ensuring smooth drop-offs and turnarounds without interfering with the pedestrian experience.
- **VIP Parking for the House:** The request for dedicated VIP parking near the historic house influenced the inclusion of a small private driveway, preserving accessibility while maintaining the homestead's intimate feel.

These insights, among others, were essential in developing a design that respects the past while addressing modern needs.

Future Stakeholder Engagement

Looking ahead, continued engagement with the community and key stakeholders will help further refine interpretive elements, educational programming, and long-term site management strategies. Ongoing collaboration will ensure that the final implementation remains true to the historical, ecological, and educational goals of the project.

Figure 5.17a: Stakeholder engagement is crucial for this project in order to create a place people feel belonging.



DESIGN RESPONSES: HOUSE

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Established: Erected in 1856 by Architect, Davies Wilson. Making it the oldest standing stone structure in all of Riley County.

Washington Marlatt purchased and moved into the property in 1858. Later he would marry Julia Bailey and together they would have 5 children. The Marlatt family owned the property until they were forced to sell it to the University.

Front Entryway: The front entry to the house is on the south side of the residence. After an addition was made on the side side of the house, the original entry no longer exists, however, we still believe the entrance to the original core of the home was located to the south. This would have given the Marlatt family a clear view of Bluemont College every morning, and the close proximity made for a nice and easy walk to the school building.

Additions: The north addition to the home was built in 1877 by Washington, to support a growing family. The dormer on the south side of the home was added in the mid-20th century by the university, to which many have made known was a "poor choice".

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Interior Design: Interior design student Kate Lennon has crafted the interior to blend historical charm with modern functionality. Select original stone walls are exposed (Figure 5.22), offering visitors a glimpse into the home's historic architecture. The overall design embraces a modern aesthetic, ensuring comfort and convenience while honoring the building's heritage.

Exterior Design: The exterior spaces are designed to provide a warm welcome, maintain privacy, and accommodate small gatherings. The **front entryway** will serve as a **main focal point** (Figure 5.23), blending historical accuracy with appealing aesthetics to establish the home as a gateway to campus.

The **back patio** offers a **private retreat** with comfortable outdoor furniture and a firepit. Tall vegetation surrounds this space, creating an ideal setting for **both active gatherings and quiet reflection**, all while ensuring **privacy**.

A half-circle driveway, **Figure 5.21**, provides guests with a private drive and a dedicated walkway to the house, enhancing the sense of comfort and hospitality as they arrive or depart.

PROGRAMMING:

The home is intended as a privately used space, primarily serving as a short-term residence for important campus visitors and guests. It is programmed to provide privacy and comfort, historical interpretation and modern functionality, functional flexibility, and an outdoor experience.

K-STATE CONNECTION

This home, originally housing the first educators at Bluemont College, holds significant importance to Kansas State University. It now serves as a welcoming space for honored guests and a valuable asset for recruitment efforts. With the Marlatt family's life work showcased both inside and outside, the home creates a strong sense of place and connection to the university's history.



Figure 5.17b: Marlatt Homestead Fall of 2024



Figure 5.18: Current conditions inside the dormer on the second floor of the home.



Figure 5.19: Current conditions of the exterior section around the home.



Figure 5.20: Proposed bedroom inside dormer on the second floor of the home.



Figure 5.21: Proposed circulation around the exterior of the home.



Figure 5.22: Proposed Kitchen and Dining area of the home.



Figure 5.23: Aerial view of proposed layout of the home's exterior.

DESIGN RESPONSES: BARN

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Established: Built in 1884 by Washington Marlatt

The barn is perhaps the most historic structure on the property and potentially all of campus. The material for the barn comes from the very first building at Bluemont College, Kansas State's origin. With contention across the Kansas territory to become the first state college of the state of Kansas. Manhattan had this building already built and paid for, and a solid curriculum in place for its students, whereas Lawrence and Emporia could not provide better solutions. Therefore the building remnants that granted our state college and land-grant status, now sits on the Marlatt homestead site. The origins of Kansas State University.

Currently: Used for storage of a variety of equipment, signs, and trash drums.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Interior: The design includes new restrooms and a fully equipped kitchen to support various event needs. The east-side lean-to serves as a transition space between indoor and outdoor environments. It functions as a lounge where guests can relax and engage in conversation. The north-side lean-to is designed to provide an additional egress point and houses the barn's kitchen, ensuring efficient flow and service during events.

Exterior Design:

Plaza: The plaza at the southern entrance is constructed with permeable pavers to support stormwater management. The design includes seating areas, shaded by thoughtfully placed plantings that offer both comfort and natural beauty. The iconic windmill element is also positioned within this space, contributing to the site's historical narrative.

Outdoor Gathering Space: To the east of the barn lies a larger outdoor gathering area. Two rows of peach trees define the perimeter, guiding visitors' views either toward the barn or across the campus, depending on their perspective. This natural framing creates a sense of place and connection to the landscape.

Service Area: The northern adjoining space is designated as a service area, facilitating deliveries from food and catering companies, bands, and other event-related needs. This functional zone is designed for efficiency while keeping service activities separate from guest areas to maintain a welcoming atmosphere.

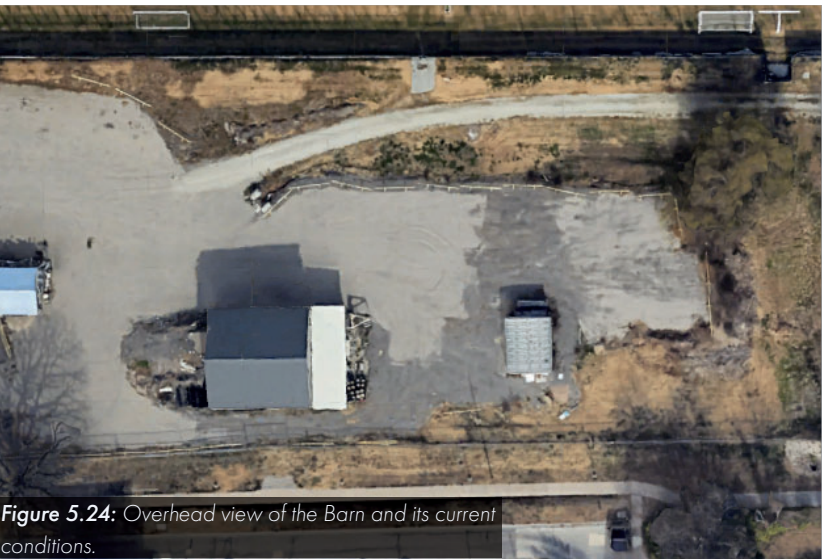
PROGRAMMING:

The barn's interior is transformed into a versatile gathering space, accommodating events with a maximum capacity of 300 people.

As the main focal point of the site, the barn's exterior design emphasizes its historical and visual significance. The entry on the southern side features a grand entrance, drawing visitors into the space with a sense of arrival and importance, the larger gathering space, called the Peach Orchard, is either the main gathering space on the site, or open park space for time the space is not being privately rented out.

K-STATE CONNECTION:

The barn holds the most direct connection to Kansas State University's history, with its trusses and stone originating from the very first building at Bluemont College. This authentic link to the university's roots transforms the barn into a versatile space for both private and public events while serving as an educational resource across multiple disciplines.



DESIGN RESPONSES: SMOKEHOUSE

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Established: Approximately 1861

Historically the smokehouse is considered to be the location that the Marlatt's would store either farming equipment, firewood, or even both. It has endured many amateur renovations throughout the last century with students living on the site for a good portion of it.

Currently: Also used for storage by athletic facilities. **Figure 5.31**

DESIGN RESPONSE:

The interior of this structure requires minimal design, with potential additions limited to shelving units for storing maintenance items. The exterior design will focus on strategic planting, using vegetation to frame intentional views and enhance the visitor experience throughout the homestead. **Figure 5.32**

PROGRAMMING:

The smokehouse will be restored to a functionality reminiscent of its original use during Washington and Julia Marlatt's time. It will serve as both a display piece, showcasing historical preservation, and a practical storage unit for maintenance items needed to support the house and the broader site.

K-STATE CONNECTION:

This building has a lot of character and can be coupled with signage that communicates it's history and significance to the Marlatt family.



Figure 5.31: Current conditions of the smoke house where Washington would have stored farming equipment and firewood.



Figure 5.32: Proposed smoke house additions will include strategic and aesthetic planting units.

DESIGN RESPONSES: CHICKEN COOP

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Established: Approximately 1884

The shed is believed to have housed the Marlatt family's chickens and possibly other small livestock, based on its layout and ventilation windows. The estimated construction date is supported by the use of materials and architectural features similar to those found in the barn, suggesting they were built around the same time.

Currently: Used for storage by athletic facilities. **Figure 5.33**

DESIGN RESPONSE:

This structure will be repurposed into a selling kiosk, with at least one side accessible for operations. Smaller vegetation will be strategically placed around areas where access is not needed, enhancing aesthetics while maintaining functionality. Only the southeast half of the building will be exposed to the public, clearly defining the boundary between private and public spaces.

PROGRAMMING:

The structure is designed to become a kiosk with cooking equipment for either a BBQ company or something else that could generate extra revenue while the site is in use. When it is not being used, interpretive signage will give a brief history of the purpose of this shed throughout its lifetime. Information for the smaller shed could be included onto this signage. **Figure 5.34**

K-STATE CONNECTION:

The structure's historical role in agriculture offers a valuable educational opportunity to teach visitors about homesteading practices and the management of small livestock. Interpretive elements can highlight traditional techniques, connecting past agricultural methods to modern sustainability practices.



Figure 5.33: Photograph of current conditions of the chicken coop, used to store more items for Athletic Facilities.



Figure 5.34: The former chicken house has the potential to become a kiosk where food could be served, like in this image where it's pictured as a quick-service barbeque.

DESIGN RESPONSES: PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Interior Site Pathways: Although homesteads typically did not feature formal interior pathways, it is reasonable to assume that certain areas—especially those without planted vegetation—were frequently used and naturally formed paths.

Exterior Site Pathways: Historical photographs and illustrations reveal that a dirt road once ran along the southern edge of the property, distinctly separated from the site by a stacked-stone masonry wall. Currently, **figure 5.35** shows where the public is allowed access, keeping the site completely off limits to the public.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Interior Site Pathways: The proposed interior pathways are designed to create a historical timeline that transports visitors back in time. These connected access points make the site easy to navigate, while an oval path encircling the barn and event space highlights one of the campus's most historic buildings. (**Figure 5.36**)

Exterior Site Pathways: The site now features a redeveloped pedestrian pathway, separated by a stacked stone wall to evoke the experience of walking past the Marlatt household. Additionally, multiple access points within the interior create openings in the wall, offering guests a variety of perspectives.

PROGRAMMING:

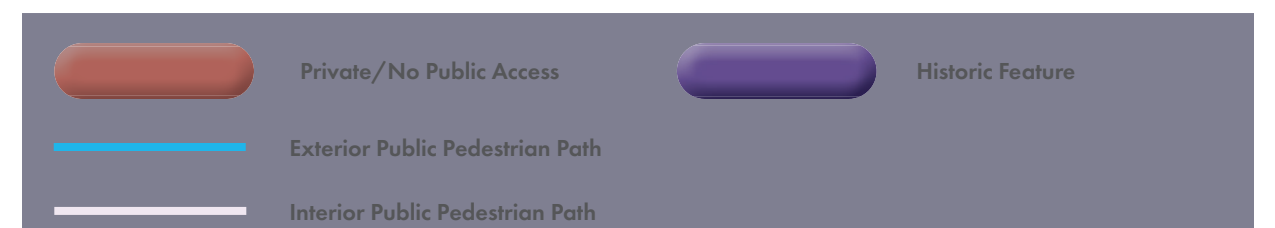
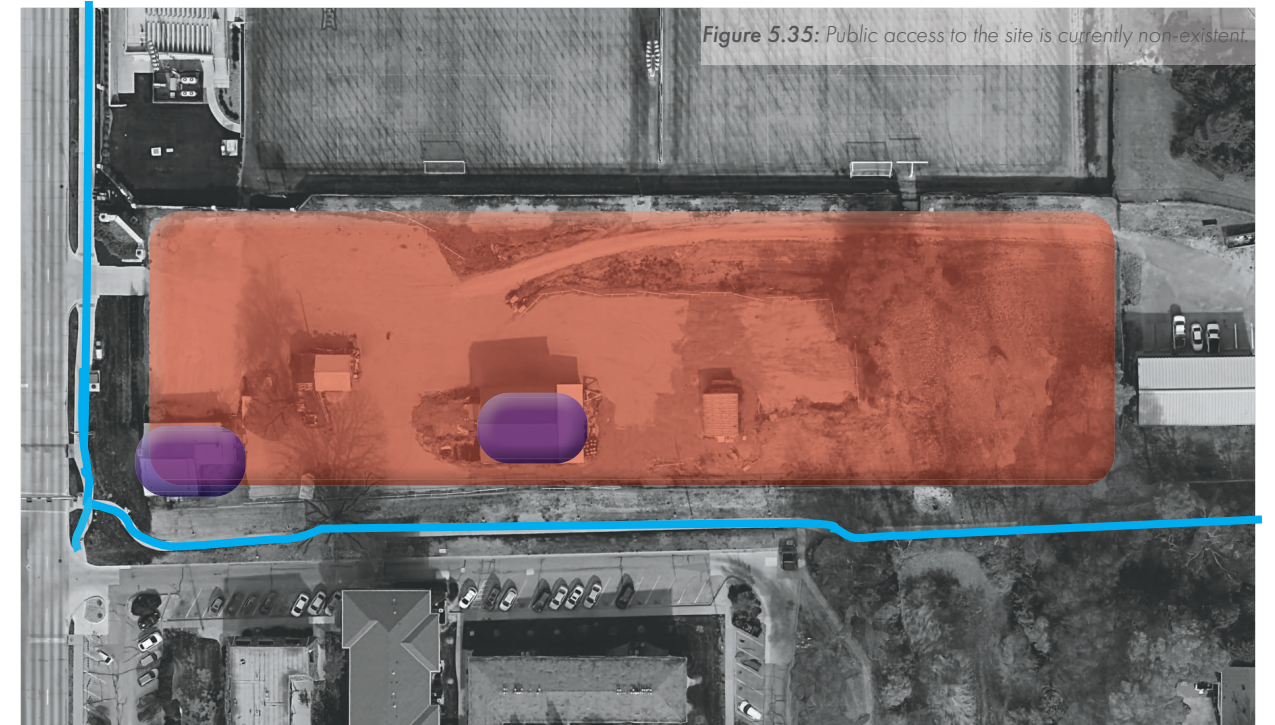
Interior Pathways: The interior pathways form versatile spaces that can accommodate various programming elements, such as events and other park activities. All of these pathways are designed to meet ADA regulations, including the ramp to the bank barn, which has been extended to reduce the slope and enhance accessibility.

Exterior Pathways: Should this site serve as a gateway to campus, its exterior pathways would play a crucial role in setting the scene. A pathway running beside a meticulously constructed stacked stone wall would prominently display the campus's rich history, inviting visitors, students, and community members to engage with its heritage.

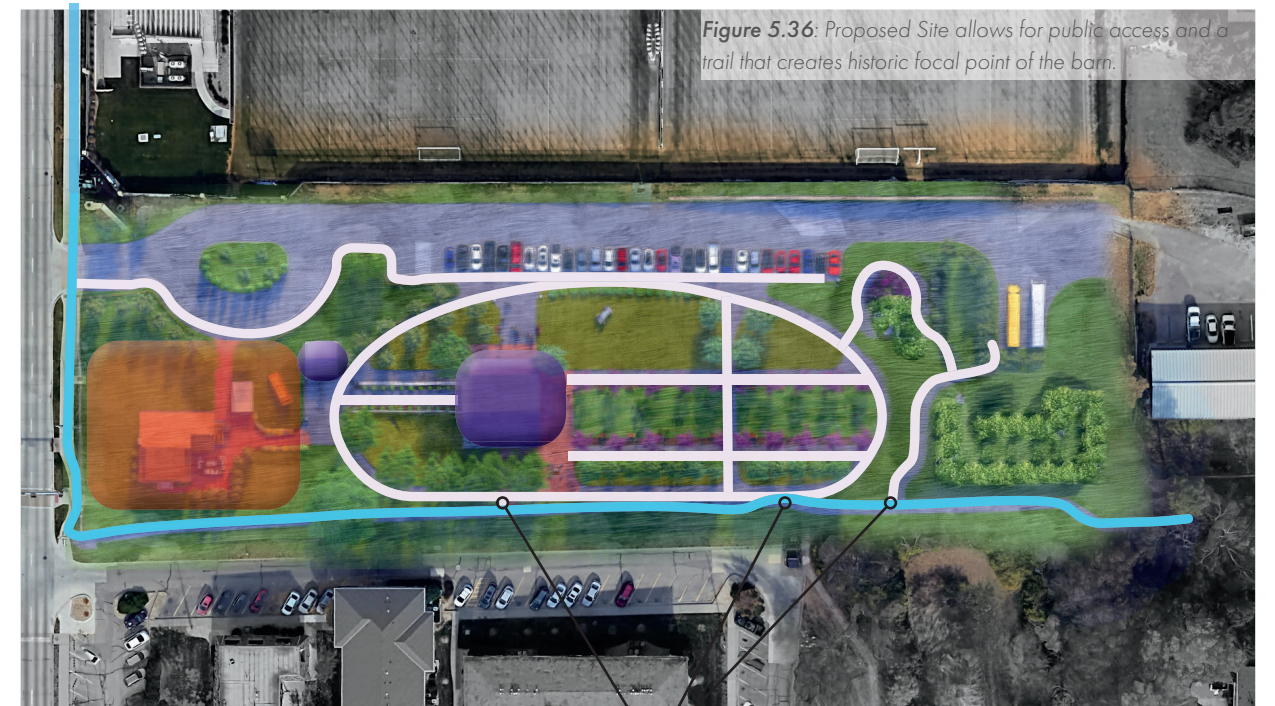
K-STATE CONNECTION:

The Marlatt Homestead offers a unique opportunity to intertwine K-State's legendary past with its high potential for the future by serving as a starting point for a proposed wellness route throughout campus. This historic site could anchor a network of pathways that promote physical and mental well-being, guiding visitors through educational and interpretive experiences while connecting them to key campus destinations and celebrating the university's rich heritage.

CURRENT PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION



PROPOSED PATHWAYS AND CIRCULATION



ADJACENT JARDINE
WALKING PATH ACCESS

DESIGN RESPONSES: VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

During Washington and Julia Marlatt's time, the primary mode of transportation was horse and buggy. The site's circulation consisted solely of a simple dirt road providing direct access to both the house and the barn, reflecting the practical and modest infrastructure of the era.

Currently, the site's circulation is largely open, however private, with minimal defined pathways. An existing access road runs through the site, leading to University Facilities storage and offices. This open circulation pattern lacks structure, impacting both site functionality and historical interpretation. **Figure 5.37**

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Road: Our response is to establish a clear boundary for vehicle access by straightening the road to align with the Jardine service road. Bus parking will be located on the east side of the road, with vegetation strategically placed to screen buses from view. The design includes ample turn radii to accommodate safe and efficient bus maneuvering. Site access will remain as is, but the gate restricting public entry will be removed to enhance accessibility and welcome visitors to the homestead. **Figure 5.38**

Parking: A semicircle driveway is dedicated to private use for guests staying in the residence, and general parking will be north of the barn.

PROGRAMMING:

From a programming perspective, the proposed circulation and parking strategy enhances both functionality and visitor experience. The road design establishes a clear hierarchy of access by aligning with the Jardine service road and defining vehicle boundaries. The strategic placement of bus parking on the east side, with vegetative screening, supports public transportation needs while maintaining the site's aesthetic and historical integrity. The removal of the gate improves accessibility, promoting the homestead as a welcoming public space.

K-STATE CONNECTION:

Opening the site up to the public exemplifies K-State's mission of extension by allowing members of the community safe and clear access to the site by means of vehicular travel.

EXISTING VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

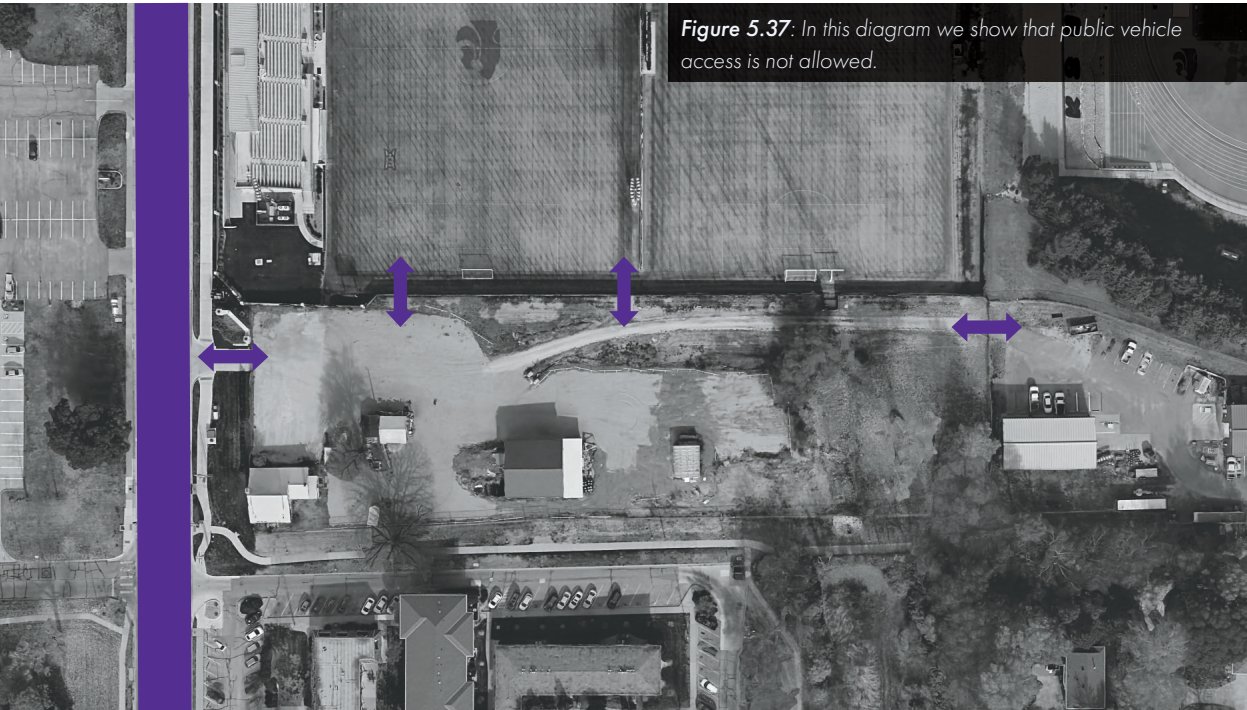
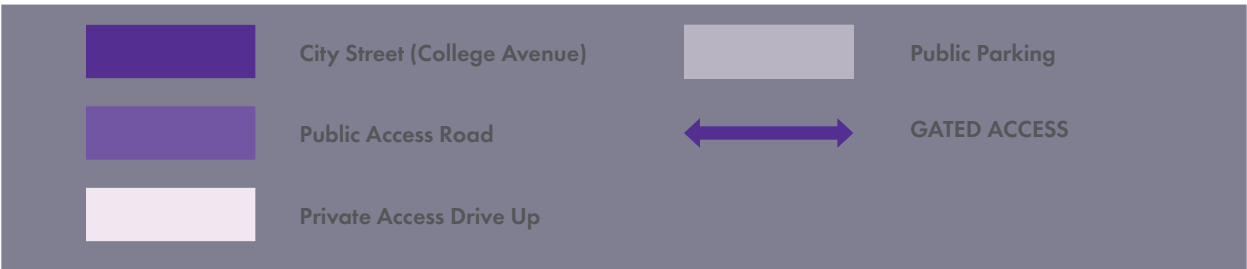


Figure 5.37: In this diagram we show that public vehicle access is not allowed.



PROPOSED VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



Figure 5.38: The proposed plans allow for limited vehicle access, keeping site's historical integrity intact.

DESIGN RESPONSES: BOUNDARIES

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Historically, Washington and Julia Marlatt owned significantly more land, 160 acres according to historic records, than the current property boundary encompasses, approximately 2 acres (**Figure 5.39**) (Kansas State Historical Society 2006). Old photographs (**Figure 5.40**) reveal a dirt road running along the south side of the property, where an apartment complex now stands. The original boundary was marked by a hand-stacked masonry wall, no taller than four feet. The wall featured intentional breaks, allowing the Marlatts to access their homestead from the south.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Our response to this is to slightly re-navigate the pedestrian walkway to allow for updates to the trail and install a stone wall like the one seen in the photos. This matches other edges of campus, particularly the wall that runs adjacent to Bluemont Avenue. Trees will also be installed around portions of the site for screening purposes.

PROGRAMMING:

The main idea for programming around the south and west boundaries of the site is to create an inviting environment that makes a statement about being a physical gateway to Kansas State's campus. Screening is chosen strategically to not only create screening and a sense of privacy around the boundaries but to also add to the aesthetic value of the site.

K-STATE CONNECTION:

The stone wall connects to other parts of campus where the boundary is set by a stone wall.

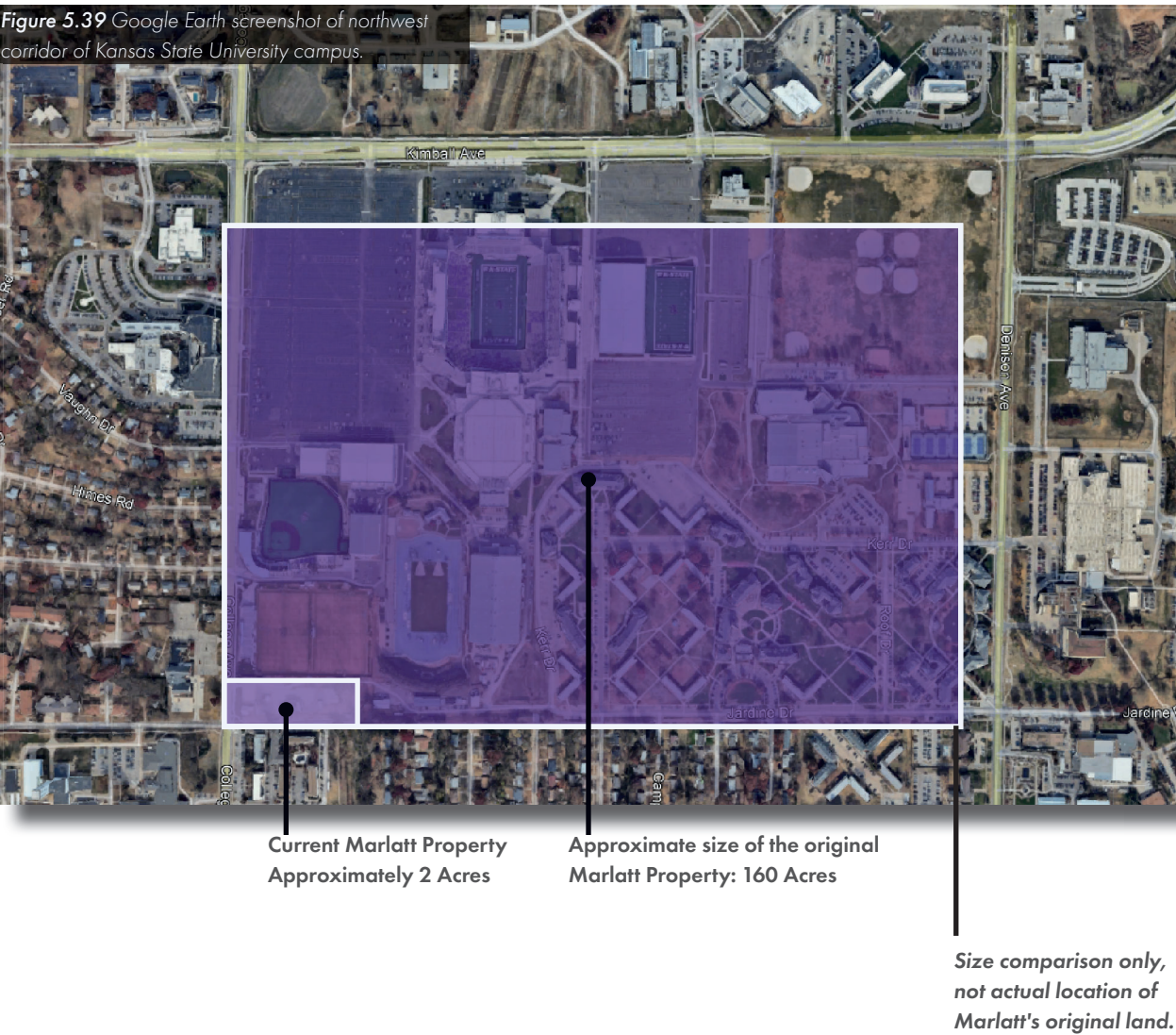


Figure 5.40: In this historic image of the homestead, a stacked-stone limestone wall runs across the southern boundary of what would be the current boundary of the homestead.

DESIGN RESPONSES: SITE DRAINAGE

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

While drainage issues were not historically a concern for the site, the recent addition of the athletic facilities has introduced significant flooding problems, particularly on the east side of the property.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

To address the drainage issues, the site will incorporate a robust green infrastructure system. Native grasses and flora will be utilized alongside thoughtfully designed pathways and rest areas. These elements will contribute to the creation of a historic garden, blending ecological function with historical interpretation and visitor comfort.

PROGRAMMING:

The site drainage provides an opportunity rather than a setback. By readapting this area into a functional green stormwater infrastructure sytem, we create moments for education and reflection.

K-STATE CONNECTION:

The connection to K-State that is made here is its potential for research in a number of disciplines across the college. The University Gardens could use this location as a satellite garden. This also connects to the master planning team's goal of expansion for the gardens.



Figure 5.41: Current conditions of swale and drainage site.



Figure 5.42: The homestead site takes on drainage from a large amount of athletic field space.



Figure 5.43: Proposed Green stormwater infrastructure helps slow the flow of water which puts less stress on city sewer system and native plantings help with water quality.

DESIGN RESPONSES: PLANTING

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

Peach Orchard: Newspaper clippings article noted the Marlatt's Peach Orchard.

Native grasses: Land was not developed, and untouched areas were most likely still native prairie across much of the region.

Tree Canopy: From photographs, we notice a significant amount of tree canopy to the north.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

Peach Orchard: The design features two rows of ten peach trees, totaling 20 trees. These rows create a natural boundary and guide views across the site, connecting the historic barn to the broader campus landscape.

Native Grasses: Native grassy meadows are integrated throughout the site, contributing to green stormwater infrastructure. These meadows support ecological restoration, enhance biodiversity, and reinforce the site's historical and educational themes.

Tree Canopy: A thoughtfully selected mix of shade and ornamental trees provides a layered canopy. Shade trees offer comfort and cooling for outdoor spaces, while ornamental trees add seasonal interest and enhance the site's aesthetic appeal.

PROGRAMMING:

Peach Orchard: A gathering place bordered by two lines of Peach trees

Native Grasses: Spaces for observation, education and quiet reflection.

Tree Canopy: Trees are programmed into the site to keep the summer temperatures moderate, help improve water quality, witness tree used as memorial, displayed prominently

K-STATE CONNECTION:

These responses open up opportunities for collaboration and research from multiple groups and colleges around the University. The College of Agriculture could implement historic farming practices, specifically those that you would have seen on a homestead. The University Gardens are important to Kansas State, and is looking to extend their operation, this would be a great location for a satellite garden, a historical garden, with some of the original vegetation that Washington and Julia would have been surrounded by. This is also a great case study for landscape architecture students looking to get into historic preservation, placemaking, and botany.

TREE CANOPY

PRAIRIE PLANTINGS

BASE MODEL

Figure 5.44: Historical plantings create a comfortable historic feel for homestead visitors.

DESIGN RESPONSES: GRADING

HISTORIC FACTS/CHALLENGES:

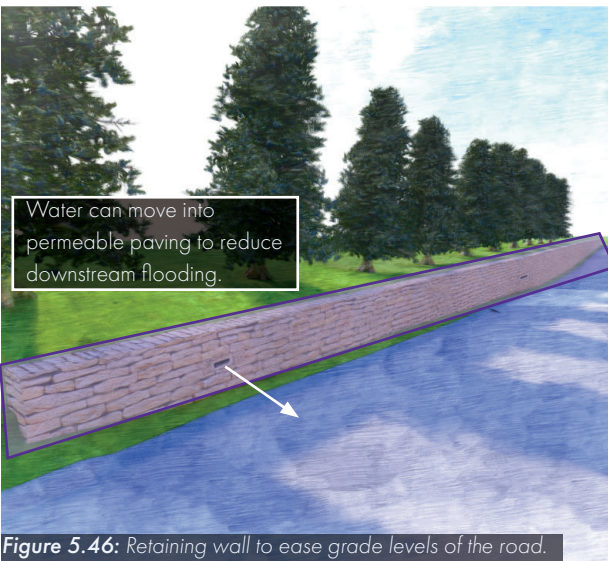
Historically, there has not been much grading work done on the site, aside from the service road that cuts through it and the flat surface where athletic facilities have placed their shipping containers on top of gravel fill for storage. According to a local source, leftover aggregate from university projects has been brought in and leveled over time. Originally, historic grading maps show a gentle slope toward the east.

DESIGN RESPONSE:

With our proposed grading plan, we anticipate that topsoil will need to be hauled in to level this area after gravel is removed for the Peach Orchard zone, as it has already been flattened. However, gravel would need to be removed and could potentially be washed and used as base material and underground water storage for areas of permeable paving. The two areas that would require more intensive intervention are the section on the northeast of the site along the road and the ramp leading into the bank barn. The vehicular road is being pushed north and straightened, which will require a retaining wall. This adjustment will allow us to extend the parking as much as possible while maintaining ADA compliance. The ramp to the barn will need to be extended to meet ADA regulations.

PROGRAMMING:

Regrading portions of the site will allow for larger rain gardens, swales, and other planting opportunities, such as along the proposed retaining wall to the north. These spaces offer increased potential for research and collaboration with horticultural colleges.



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION



Figure 6.1: The homestead is a precious piece of Kansas State University history, confirmed by its Kansas State Historic Place status. Photograph with Photoshop filter by Chris Marble

KEY FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Looking back at the Marlatt Homestead project, it becomes clear why historic preservation efforts can take years to come to fruition. Gaining traction for a site requires persistence, strategic advocacy, and the ability to present a compelling narrative to a wide range of stakeholders. Over the course of the school year, our team undertook extensive research, developed a strong interpretive framework, and engaged in multiple meetings and presentations, each tailored to different audiences.

From one-on-one discussions to broader group meetings, we continuously refined our approach to ensure that the Marlatt Homestead remained a focal point for institutional decision-makers. While our overall goal—to secure recognition and support for the homestead—remained consistent, the process required adaptability. Different stakeholders had varying priorities, from historical significance to land use efficiency, and our presentations had to acknowledge these perspectives while emphasizing the homestead’s potential as an educational and ecological asset.

At the heart of our efforts was storytelling. The narrative of Washington Marlatt’s journey to Manhattan, KS, became the foundation for demonstrating why the site deserved preservation and investment. Washington, a preacher and educator, arrived at a pivotal moment in history—his vision aligned with the establishment of Kansas State University as a land-grant institution, a defining moment not only for Manhattan but for public education in Kansas. By highlighting this connection, we strengthened the argument that preserving the homestead was about more than just saving a historic structure—it was about honoring the values that shaped the university and the community.

In addition to historical storytelling, structured preparation was critical. We supported our case

with detailed research, mapping, conceptual drawings, and ecological assessments, all of which highlighted the site’s potential for adaptive reuse. The iterative nature of the process—revising designs, integrating feedback, and addressing logistical concerns—was a testament to the complexity of historic preservation efforts. The project demonstrated that while securing institutional support is challenging, a well-researched, engaging narrative can elevate a site’s significance and rally stakeholders around a shared vision.

At the outset, our discussions were primarily centered on gathering factual information and clarifying details with key members of the task force—some of whom had been advocating for the preservation of the Marlatt Homestead since 2013. These early conversations ensured that we had an accurate understanding of the site’s history, prior efforts, and potential challenges. This foundational knowledge was critical as it allowed us to transition from simply informing stakeholders to strategically persuading them.

Once we had the right information in hand, we were able to shape our narrative and refine our goals for the homestead’s design and long-term viability. This process reinforced the importance of well-rehearsed, well-crafted messaging. Each presentation became an opportunity to secure buy-in from decision-makers, and we learned that a compelling story—grounded in historical significance and future potential—was more effective than facts alone.

Over time, this effort resembled a snowball effect, where one successful meeting led to new opportunities that expanded our network of support. A key example of this came from a discussion in one of our meetings, which led to us reaching out to Ron Wilson via a letter published by Professor Howard Hahn. This connection resulted in Ron joining the task force, bringing his own experience and network into the conversation. Through Ron, we were able to secure a long-awaited presentation with Marshall Stewart, Senior Vice President for Executive Affairs, University Engagement and Partnerships, and Chief of Staff—an opportunity we had been working toward for the entire project.

The goal was to secure enough backing from university administrators to ensure that the homestead would, at the very least, be protected. Ideally, this protection would lead to a phased renovation of the site, transforming it into a meaningful gateway to campus—one that honors the Marlatt legacy while serving as an educational and ecological asset for future generations.

This process underscored a key lesson in advocacy: facts alone are not enough to drive change. A persuasive argument, backed by thorough research and clear, compelling storytelling, is essential to rallying support and turning a vision into reality. The snowball effect of growing advocacy and networking demonstrated that persistence and strategic engagement are key to making historic preservation projects successful.

A lack of preparation could have potentially derailed the desired outcomes of each presentation. Without a well-structured and persuasive argument tailored to the specific audience, we risked losing their attention, making it far less likely to secure buy-in for the project. Each meeting and presentation were an opportunity to build credibility, and we quickly learned that decision-makers respond best to concise, research-backed proposals that clearly outline the historical, educational, and ecological value of the homestead.

Polished presentations, backed by thorough research and a clear narrative, became one of our strongest tools. Our ability to adapt the message based on our audience—whether it was task force members, university officials, or external stakeholders—helped reinforce the legitimacy of



the project. Research on interpretive design emphasizes the importance of storytelling in fostering deeper engagement with historical sites (Tilden, 1957). By structuring our presentations around the Marlatt family's legacy and its connection to Kansas State University's land-grant mission, we anchored our arguments in both historical context and contemporary institutional goals.

In addition, studies on historical preservation advocacy stress that projects with well-defined educational and ecological benefits are more likely to receive funding and institutional support (Mason, 2002). For example, when engaging with university administrators, we highlighted the potential for the homestead to serve as a gateway to campus, aligning with existing campus planning initiatives and sustainability efforts (Smith and Anderson, 2015).

By maintaining an elevated level of preparation and professionalism, we ensured that each presentation not only informed but also persuaded. The attention to detail in our storytelling, design concepts, and supporting research helped position the homestead as a site worth preserving and investing in. In contrast, had we approached these meetings without a strategic plan, we could have easily lost credibility, allowing skepticism or competing priorities to overshadow the project's value.

This experience reinforced a critical lesson: while passion and advocacy are important, they must be accompanied by solid preparation, data-driven arguments, and well-rehearsed delivery. The success of our efforts depended not just on what we were saying, but how effectively we were able to communicate it.

Presentations to top campus administrators were essential because the Marlatt family's story remains largely untold within the university and local community. By providing a clear historical narrative, we helped decision-makers understand the significance of retaining the site and its potential as an interdisciplinary resource. Engaging the community also created a system of accountability, ensuring broader advocacy for preservation efforts. Research highlights that successful historic preservation efforts rely on both institutional backing and community involvement to secure long-term support (Mason, 2002).

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRESERVING AND ENHANCING THE MARLATT HOMESTEAD

For the Marlatt Homestead to gain long-term support, presentations, meetings, and design efforts must align with Kansas State University’s land-grant mission. Without this alignment, advocacy risks losing traction among administrators who prioritize initiatives that reflect the university’s founding principles. As Mason (2002) emphasizes, successful preservation efforts must be integrated with institutional goals to secure lasting investment. The land-grant mission has guided KSU since its inception, and by positioning the homestead within this framework, we reinforce its relevance as both a historical and educational asset.

As Kansas State University’s roots lie in agriculture, framing the Marlatt Homestead as a living educational landscape strengthens its connection to the university’s identity. The site offers opportunities for collaboration with the College of Agriculture while also supporting ecological restoration efforts. Research highlights that integrating historical landscapes with active educational programming enhances their long-term viability and institutional support (Mason, 2002). Washington Marlatt’s agricultural background further reinforces the site’s relevance, making it a natural fit for both historical interpretation and applied learning.

Using historical storytelling as a design tool allows us to connect the Marlatt family’s legacy with Kansas State University’s identity, ensuring the site remains relevant and functional. This approach helps preserve historical integrity while adapting the space for modern educational use. Research shows that interpretive design strengthens engagement by making history tangible and accessible (Tilden, 1957). By embedding storytelling into the landscape, the homestead becomes more than just a preserved site—it transforms into a meaningful, actively used space that aligns with the university’s mission and long-term planning efforts.

Ongoing and immediate engagement was necessary for the site. In conversations with Mick Charney, Architectural Historian, a common practice to get around using state statutes is “Demolition by neglect,” meaning, sites like the Marlatt Homestead could essentially be torn down if they fall into such a state of disrepair that they could never recover. It would be very disappointing to find out that the last remnants of the origins of Kansas State University were torn down especially when it is at a potential gateway to campus.

FINAL THOUGHT

The lessons learned throughout this process provide a framework not only for preserving the Marlatt Homestead but also for managing historic sites nationwide. Successfully balancing institutional priorities with historical and ecological significance is critical in ensuring long-term preservation. As Mason (2002) notes, historic sites that align with an institution’s mission are more likely to secure ongoing support and investment. By positioning the homestead within Kansas State University’s land-grant mission, we reinforce its value as an educational and cultural asset while advocating for its protection and enhancement.

APPENDICES

Kansas State Historical Society

01-2005

Register of Historic Kansas Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Washington Marlatt Homestead
Other name/site number The Bluemont Farm 161-3490-0160

2. Location

Street & number 1600 College Avenue ☐ not for publication
City or town Manhattan ☐ vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Riley Code 161 Zip code 66502

3.4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Daniel J. Gellner DSHPO 11/9/06
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☒ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing Noncontributing
4 buildings
sites
structures
objects
4 total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

N/A

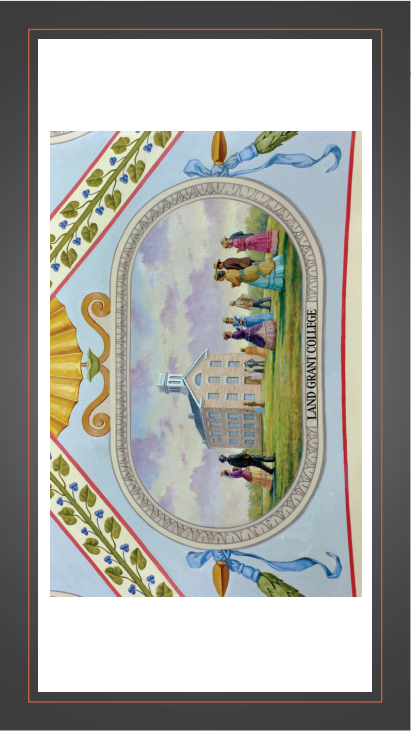
6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling = homestead
EDUCATION/college = university
EDUCATION/education related = college housing
AGRICULTURE/animal facility = barn

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/education related

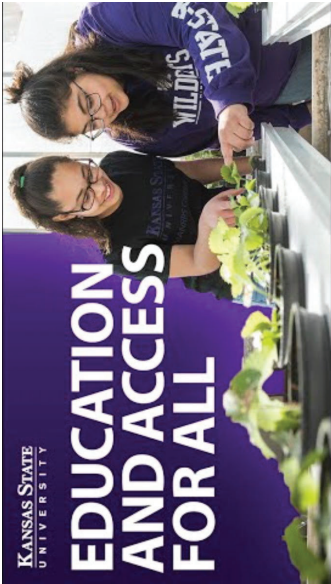


TIMELINE

Date	Objective
Spring 2024	Marlatt Taskforce contacts Ray Yunk
June 2024	3D Scanning Performed
August – September 2024	Project Team is formed
September – October 2024	LAR Students Develop Site Alternatives
October 2024	Task force and project team members provide feedback to campus master planning effort
October – November 2024	ID student models buildings and develops alternatives
November 2024 – February 2025	ARECNS students develop recommendations
February – March 2025	LAR & ID students develop recommendations
March – April 2025	Team develops report and presentation
	Team presents to campus decision makers

OUTREACH/KEY CONTACTS

- Marlatt Task Force – Gloria Freeland
- Facilities – Chris Salmon
- Athletics – Jason Brummett
- Foundation – Damon Fairchild
- Office of Engagement – Tim Steffensmeier



MARLATT HOMESTEAD

ADVANCING THE PRESERVATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE HISTORIC MARLATT HOMESTEAD



OUR PROJECT TEAM

STUDENTS:

Hannah McCormick – Project Manager
Chris Marble – Landscape Architecture
Devin Holiday – Landscape Architecture
Rodrigo Sanchez – Landscape Architecture
Kate Lennon – Architecture
Miles Rivard – Construction Management
Jordan Hays – Lighting Design
Blake Koehn – Electrical and Power Design
Andrew Augustine – Mechanical Design
Shayla Johnson – Structural Design

PROFESSORS:

Ray Yunk – Architectural Engineering
Lee Stabelund – Landscape Architecture
Howard Hahn – Landscape Architecture
Kristianna Johnson – Architecture
Steve Schaffner – Construction Management
Fred Haaler – Lighting
Jake Hamilton – Electrical and Power
Andrew Sneed – Mechanical
Kyle Larson – Structural

GUIDANCE

- **Kansas Preservation Statute 75-2715. Historic preservation declared policy of state.** The legislature hereby finds that the historical, architectural, archeological and cultural heritage of Kansas is an important asset of the state and that its **preservation and maintenance should be among the highest priorities of government.** It is therefore declared to be the public policy and in the public interest of the state to engage in a comprehensive program of historic preservation and to foster and promote the **conservation and use of historic property for the education, inspiration, pleasure and enrichment of the citizens of Kansas** taking into consideration land used for agricultural purposes located within the environs of any historic property.
- **Register of Kansas Historic Places.** The listing confirms the historic significance of the Marlatt homestead and places restrictions on what can be done with the buildings.



Washington Marlatt and Julia Marlatt, and three out of five children, either graduated and/or taught at Bluemont College/KCAC

MEET THE MARLATT FAMILY

Washington Marlatt

- Helped originate the Bluemont College charter
 - First Principal of Bluemont College & taught in early years
- Julia (Bailey) Marlatt**
- Came to Manhattan upon an invite from Isaac Goodnow to be Washington's associate
 - One of the first educators at Bluemont College

Children

- Willie B. Marlatt
- Charles Lester Marlatt
- Mary A. Marlatt (Kimball)
- Frederick A. Marlatt
- Abby Lillian Marlatt

BLUEMONT CENTRAL COLLEGE PAVES THE WAY (1858 – 1863)

“Locating a university in the Kansas Territory in the late 1850s – early 1860s was extremely political and contentious with Manhattan, Topeka, Lawrence, and Emporia vying as competitors.”

Manhattan benefited from opportunistic timing and sequential favorable factors over other Kansas settlements:

- 1858 – Among **First** locations to charter a private college institution
- 1858-1859 – First location to successfully raise funds and erect a college building
- 1860-1861 – **First** location to become operational with students
- 1861 – Kansas territory becomes a state, making it eligible for land-grant status
- 1862 – Morrill Land-Grant Act was enacted
- ~1863 – Kansas State Agricultural College is among the **first** land-grant institutions in the nation

Register of Historic Kansas Places

Historic Kansas Places are those buildings, structures, objects, sites, or areas that are of historic significance to the State of Kansas. They are designated as such by the Kansas State Historical Society, which is the official agency for the registration of historic places in the State of Kansas.

NAME: **Bluemont Central College**

ADDRESS: **1000 N. 1st St., Manhattan, KS 66502**

DATE OF REGISTRATION: **10/1/2011**

REGISTRATION NUMBER: **1000000001**

REGISTRATION STATUS: **Active**

REGISTRATION TYPE: **Building**

REGISTRATION CATEGORY: **Education**

REGISTRATION SUBCATEGORY: **College**

REGISTRATION OFFICER: **John H. H. H.**

REGISTRATION DATE: **10/1/2011**

REGISTRATION TIME: **10:00 AM**

REGISTRATION LOCATION: **Manhattan, KS**

REGISTRATION COORDINATOR: **John H. H. H.**

REGISTRATION CONTACT: **John H. H. H.**

REGISTRATION PHONE: **785.773.1234**

REGISTRATION FAX: **785.773.1234**

REGISTRATION EMAIL: **John.H.H.H.@gmail.com**

REGISTRATION WEBSITE: **www.bluemontcentralcollege.org**

REGISTRATION NOTES: **Bluemont Central College was founded in 1858 and was the first land-grant college in the state of Kansas. It was founded by Washington Marlatt and Julia Marlatt, and three out of five children, either graduated and/or taught at Bluemont College/KCAC.**

¹ Headquartered in "The University of Kansas and the Years of Foundation, 1864-1867," by C. S. Griffin, Kansas Historical Quarterly, Spring 1966.

² The first land-grant college in the state of Kansas, depending on how the designation is granted.

SITE ANALYSIS

HISTORICAL ELEMENTS
NEEDING RESTORATION

- WINDMILL
- SOIL/ENVIRONMENT/WATER
- VEGETATION
- STRUCTURES
- STONEWALL



Courtesy of Riley County Historical Society and Museum

ALLEN
CENTENNIAL
GARDENS –
MADISON, WI

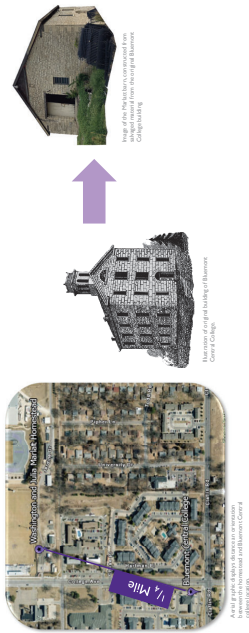
- Home of the first Dean of Agriculture at the University of Wisconsin (Land-Grant Institution).
- 130 years old, 30 years after the Washington Marlatt's Homestead was first built.
- Generates revenue through hosting events and photography sessions.



BEFORE WE BEGIN...

DISCLAIMER
THIS IS AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE
ALL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
SHOULD BE REVIEWED/VERIFIED BY
LICENSED PROFESSIONALS

SIGNIFICANCE OF BLUEMONT COLLEGE TO THE HOMESTEAD



HOMESTEAD BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES



CURRENTLY ...

- USES:**
- ATHLETIC FACILITIES STORAGE(MOU)
 - VACANT FACILITIES OFFICES (HOUSE)
 - STAGING SITE FOR ATHLETIC FIELDS
- NOTABLE FEATURES:**
- HISTORIC HOUSE AND BARN
 - TWO SMALLER SUPPORTING SHEDS
 - EXISTING TREES
 - ATHLETIC FACILITIES STORAGE
 - 8 PORTABLE CONNEX CONTAINERS
 - 1 STORAGE SHED

WHAT'S POSSIBLE?

COMMUNITY ACCESS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- **Stormwater Filtration & Infiltration**
 - Permeable paving, rain gardens, and naturalized detention.
 - Interactive educational demos.
- **Habitat Creation**
 - The new landscape creates habitats for butterflies and other pollinators.
- **Native Species**
 - Native trees, shrubs & perennials play an important role in the local ecosystem.
- **Bioswales**
 - Naturalized swales reduce flooding downstream.
- **Vegetative Management**
 - Meadow/prairie, rain garden, bioswale, and orchard management.



APPENDIX B.3: POWERPOINT SLIDES 13-18

APPENDIX B.2: POWERPOINT SLIDES 7-12

APPENDIX B.6: POWERPOINT SLIDES 31-36

CONTEXT OF THE HOME

EXISTING CONDITIONS OF THE HOME

PROPOSAL FOR THE HOME

- Luxury Overnight Stay, "BoB" use
- Use for university "entertaining" - dinners, small events
- Potential Guests:
 - High-level Administrators from peer universities
 - Guest lecturers
 - Prospective hires
 - Alumni
 - Athletics recruits and family
- Rent to public as well when available

INTERIORS



EXISTING CONDITIONS OF THE HOME

DOCUMENTATION OF THE HOME

1 - Social - Gathering Spaces
2 - Kitchen - Dining - More intimate Gatherings
3 - Master Bedroom - Office, Bedroom, Bath

APPENDIX B.7: POWERPOINT SLIDES 37-42

PROPOSAL FOR THE HOME

1 - Social - Gathering Spaces
2 - Kitchen - Dining - More intimate Gatherings
3 - Master Bedroom - Office, Bedroom, Bath

VIEW OF LIVING ROOM

VIEW OF KITCHEN

VIEW OF FORMAL LIVING ROOM

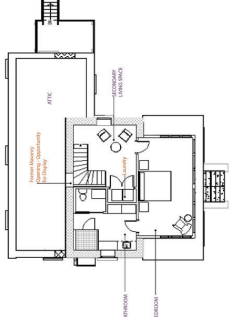
VIEW OF FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM, BATHROOM, AND OFFICE

SCHEMATIC 1ST FLOOR PLAN - HOME

- Relocate main entry to south side
- One bedroom, one bathroom
- Relocate & recalculate staircase to meet current codes
 - Access stair to basement for maintenance only
- Social spaces remain in the 'core' of the house
 - Kitchen, dining, etc.
- Office space to provide work zone for guests
 - Sleeper Sofa, accessible
- Water Heater, Furnaces, etc. to be located in basement

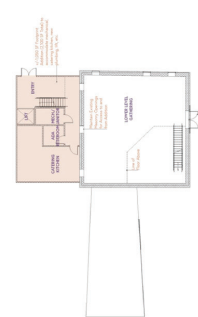
SCHEMATIC UPSTAIRS PLAN - HOME

- One bedroom, one bathroom
- Separate living spaces for upstairs guest
- Proposed blackout shades for sleeping
- Luxury bathroom with wardrobe
- Washer and dryer closet with storage for cleaning supplies, linens, and other sundries



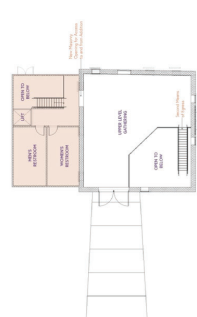
SCHEMATIC INTERIOR PLAN - BARN

- Construct Addition to the north resembling 1884 lean-to
- Assembly Space - 300 occupants
- Proposed Addition to accommodate:
 - Catering kitchen
 - Wheelchair Lift
 - ADA accessible entry and restrooms



SCHEMATIC UPSTAIRS PLAN - BARN

- Construct Addition to the north resembling 1884 lean-to
- Assembly Space - 300 occupants
- Proposed Addition to accommodate:
 - Catering kitchen
 - Wheelchair Lift
 - ADA accessible entry and restrooms



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APPENDIX B.9: POWERPOINT SLIDES 49-54

HVAC

Floor 1 Plan

Floor 2 Plan

Basement Plan

- Air Source Heat Pump with Fan Coil Unit
- DX Cooling Supplemental Electric Heating
- Floor 1 ducted via floor grilles and ducts below finished floor level
- Floor 2 vents arranged for minimal space impact, primarily remain within crawlspace
- Kitchen hood will ventlate stovetop
- Bathrooms will be ventilated via ceiling fans

BARN

Floor 1 Plan

Floor 2 Plan

Basement Plan

- Furnace with AC, Air Cooled Condensing Unit
- DX Cooling, Natural Gas Heating
- Vent ducts with fans provided in kitchen, restrooms, ADA restroom
- Ventilation provided to both levels by single duct system, fan grills to upper levels noted on first floor plan

HOMESTEAD

Floor 1 Plan

Floor 2 Plan

Basement Plan

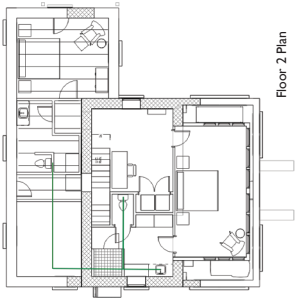
- Electric tank water heater will supply house's hot water supply
- San line will begin in second floor restroom, extend into crawlspace, chase down into first floor bathroom, drop into basement, and exit towards san sewer
- Kitchen sink san line will drop directly into basement, join main san line

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HOMESTEAD



Floor 1 Plan

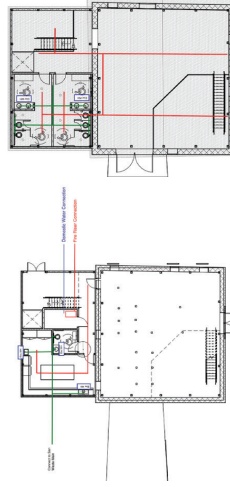


Floor 2 Plan

NEXT STEPS

- Exterior Work to be Explored/Recommended – for both the Home and Barn
 - Replace metal roof with shingles
 - Rehabilitation of east side lean-to
 - Stabilize Structure – Barn trusses and Home Framing masonry bearing walls
 - Replacement windows installed that remain coherent with historic style
 - Re-point chimneys
- Explore Funding Opportunities
 - Grants for Educational Restoration Workshops open to the public

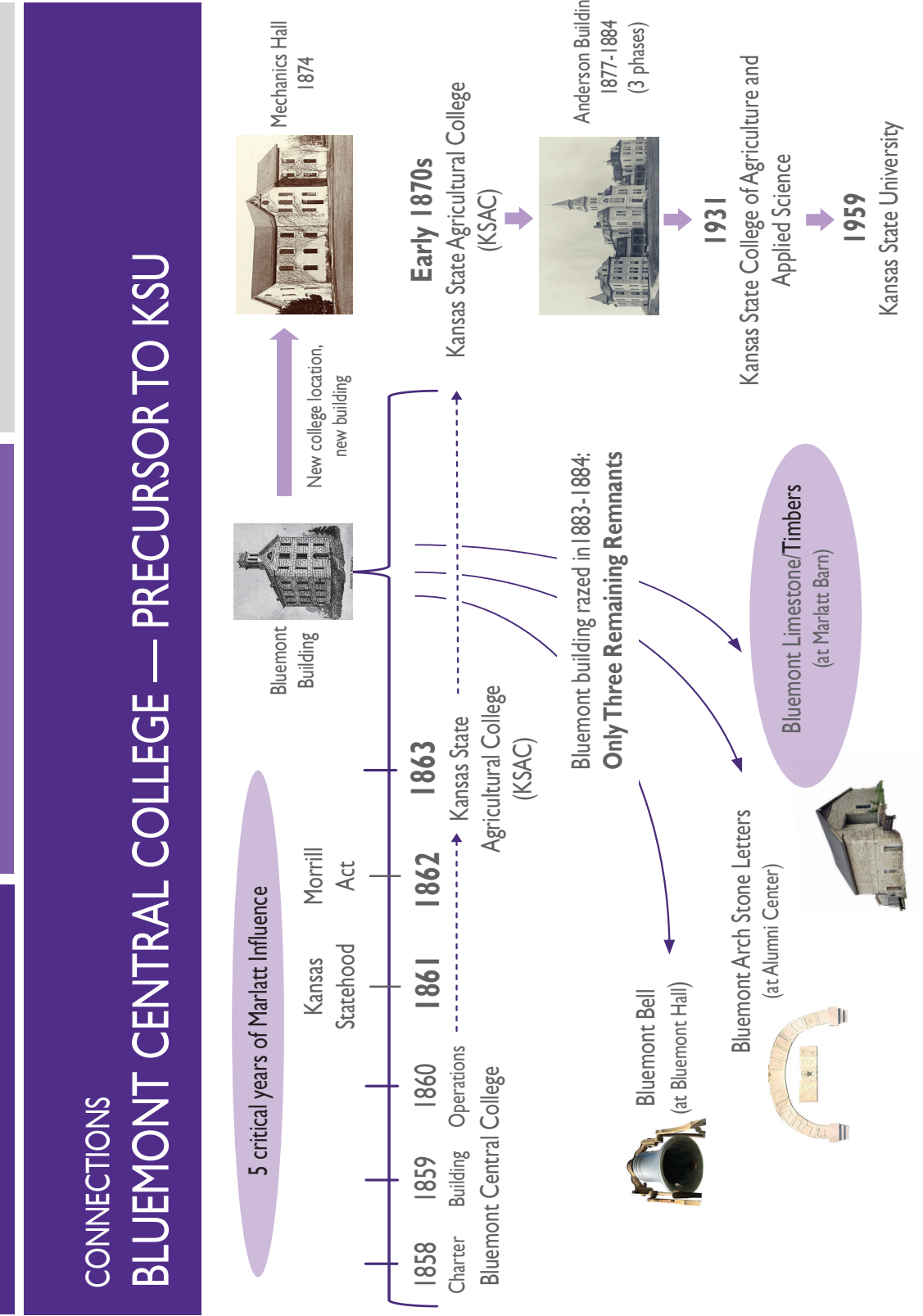
BARN



- Fire Sprinklers (red line) will be provided throughout barn
- Fire riser located in mechanical room will pressurize sprinklers
- Due to inconsistent demand, hot water will be provided by tankless water heaters at sinks



IN CLOSING...
Image Courtesy of Riley County Historical Society and Museum



APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A

Adaptive Reuse: The process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than what it was originally designed for, often seen in historic preservation.

Agricultural College (Kansas State Agricultural College - KSAC): The first operational land-grant college in the United States, established in Manhattan, Kansas.

Allen Centennial Garden: A precedent study site at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, used for educational programming and historic preservation.

B

Barn (Marlatt Barn): A historic structure built in 1884 using salvaged materials from Bluemont College, representing Kansas State University’s origins.

Bluemont Central College: The predecessor institution to Kansas State University, originally established in 1858.

Bubble Diagram: A conceptual design tool used to visualize spatial relationships in site planning.

C

Campus Master Plan: Kansas State University's strategic framework guiding campus development, including themes such as heritage preservation, research expansion, and connectivity improvements.

Certified Local Government (CLG): A federal-state-local partnership program that supports historic preservation at the local level by providing funding, technical assistance, and regulatory oversight.

Community Engagement: A process of involving local stakeholders, students, and faculty in decision-making and advocacy for the Marlatt Homestead.

Conceptual Design: The initial phase of design development, focusing on spatial planning and storytelling.

D

Demolition by Neglect: A term describing the deterioration of historic buildings due to lack of maintenance, often leading to their eventual demolition.

Demolition Review Process: A regulatory procedure in which proposed demolitions of historic buildings are assessed to determine whether alternatives can be pursued.

Digital Surface Model (DSM): A digital representation of terrain and structures used for landscape planning and 3D modeling.

Drainage Issues: A significant site concern, with stormwater runoff from athletic fields affecting the Marlatt Homestead.

E

Ecological Restoration: The process of rehabilitating a landscape to its natural or historical state through planting native species and implementing green infrastructure.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Educational Programming: The development of activities and interpretive elements to engage students and the public in historical and ecological learning.

Extension Services (K-State 105): A Kansas State University initiative that focuses on community outreach and engagement across all 105 Kansas counties.

F

Funding Strategies: Methods for securing financial support for preservation projects, including grants, university funding, and private donations.

G

GIS Mapping (Geographic Information System): A spatial analysis tool used to study historical site changes and plan restoration efforts.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI): Sustainable stormwater management techniques, such as bioswales and permeable paving, proposed to address drainage issues.

H

Historic District: A designated area containing multiple buildings or sites of historical significance, often protected under preservation laws.

Historic Preservation: The practice of protecting and maintaining historic buildings and landscapes.

Historic Rehabilitation Grant: A funding source for restoring historic properties, typically awarded by state agencies or local preservation commissions.

Historic Resources Board (HRB): A local advisory body that reviews preservation-related projects and policies within a city or community with CLG status.

Historical Storytelling: The use of narratives and interpretive design to connect visitors with the history of the Marlatt Homestead.

I

Interpretive Design: The integration of storytelling into the landscape to educate visitors about the historical and ecological significance of the site.

Interpretive Signage: Informational displays that provide historical context about a site for public education.

K

Kansas Land-Grant Mission: Kansas State University’s founding principle under the Morrill Act, promoting accessible education and agricultural development.

Kansas Historic Preservation Act: A Kansas state law that mandates review of projects affecting properties listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places to ensure preservation.

Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): The state agency responsible for overseeing

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

historic preservation efforts, reviewing projects under state preservation law, and administering CLG grants.

L

Land F/X: A software tool used for landscape design, planting design, and cost estimation.

Landscape Architecture: The professional field that integrates ecological, historical, and aesthetic considerations into site planning and design.

M

Marlatt Family: The original owners of the homestead, including Washington Marlatt, a key figure in the founding of Kansas State University.

Marlatt Homestead Task Force: A group dedicated to advocating for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the homestead.

Master Planning Committee: The Kansas State University body responsible for long-term campus development, including potential site designation for the homestead.

N

National Register of Historic Places: The official federal list of historic sites deemed significant for preservation under the National Park Service.

Native Planting: The reintroduction of historically native vegetation to the site for ecological and educational purposes.

Next-Gen K-State: Kansas State University’s 2030 strategic plan, aligning university initiatives with research, community engagement, and preservation goals.

P

Peach Orchard: A historic feature of the Marlatt Homestead, proposed for restoration in the site’s design.

Physical 3D Model: A proposed bronze representation of the homestead to illustrate historical site conditions.

Preservation Alliance (Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance - M/RCPA): An advocacy group supporting historic preservation efforts in Riley County.

Preservation Tax Credits: Financial incentives offered at the state and federal levels to support the rehabilitation of historic buildings while maintaining their historical integrity.

Public Access: Proposed site modifications to open the homestead to visitors, replacing its current restricted access.

R

Rendering (Lumion & SketchUp): Visual design tools used to create conceptual images of the homestead’s future state.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Research Hub: A potential adaptive reuse function for the homestead, integrating interdisciplinary studies across history, agriculture, and ecology.

S

Shumard Oak: A historic tree on-site, dating back to the 1880s, which holds potential interpretive significance.

Site Inventory: A detailed analysis of existing conditions, including structures, vegetation, and drainage.

Stacked Stone Wall: A historically significant boundary wall, proposed for reconstruction to align with original site features.

Stormwater Management: Strategies for mitigating site flooding through green infrastructure solutions.

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats): A planning framework used to assess the homestead’s potential.

T

Task Force Evolution: The transformation of a small preservation advocacy group into a formalized multi-disciplinary task force.

Tactile Model: A physical, hands-on representation of the homestead’s historical landscape for visitor engagement.

Topography & Grading: The process of adjusting site elevations to improve accessibility and stormwater flow.

U

University Gardens (K-State): A potential partner for integrating historic plantings into the Marlatt Homestead restoration.

University Historic Preservation Board: A university-based committee (such as KU’s Campus Historic Preservation Board) that oversees the preservation and planning of historic campus buildings.

V

Visitor Experience: Proposed enhancements to public engagement, including educational tours, interactive exhibits, and outdoor programming.

W

Wellness Route: A proposed pedestrian and cycling pathway that integrates the homestead into a larger campus connectivity plan.

Windmill Element: A historically significant feature of the site, proposed for reconstruction as part of the interpretive design.

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