

<b>Essence</b>	<b>The Flint Hills landscape undulates through space, burns through time, and offers refuge to its ever changing character of community.</b>						
<b>Essence themes</b>	The undulating limestone and tallgrass prairie landscape of the Flint Hills traces the submarine surface of an ancient inland sea, 165 million years ago.		The Flint Hill's ecologic and agropastoral patterns dance to cycles of human-induced fire.		In recent centuries, the Flint Hills have suffered various displacements of its (non)human inhabitants, leaving behind fragmented communities, but enriching its overall natural and cultural diversity.		
<b>Universal process themes</b>	The precipitation of minerals exposed to prolonged periods of pressure produces sedimentary rocks such as limestone from calcium carbonate skeletons of marine organisms.	As tectonic plates move about the surface of the earth, their collisions produce uplift into mountains and creation of new land surfaces.	Complex dynamic systems, such as fire-dependent ecosystems, cycle through stages of rapid growth, conservation, and then rapid energy release that feeds the next cycle.		Economic growth converts land uses, leaving behind patches of the pre-existing use, such as natural habitats.	Species expand into areas of low relative competition, often displacing existing residents.	The rise and fall of cultural practices depends on the socio-economic needs of the times.
<b>Local themes</b>	Millions of years of pressure crushed calcium carbonate animal skeletons into limestone at the bottom of an inland sea, later uplifted by tectonic activity into today's viewscape of the Flint Hills.	The undulating surface of an ancient inland seabed has risen and transformed into a sea of tallgrass prairie.	Despite the destructive power of fire, without it, trees and shrubs would overgrow and smother the productive tallgrass prairie.		The Flint Hills is the largest intact block of remaining tallgrass prairie, capable of sustaining viable populations of prairie chickens.	Fort Riley was the lance point into Kaw territory to move and protect settlers from the East into the future slave-free Kansas and beyond.	The rise of the iconic cowboy culture depended as much on the quality of the Flint Hill tallgrass prairie and railroad access, as it did on the cows themselves.
<b>Attractions &amp; Stories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large concentration of marine fossils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-rated clear sunsets and sunrises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep roots</li> </ul>		Prairie chickens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last aboriginal homeland of Kaw Nation</li> <li>• First territorial Capitol of Kansas</li> <li>• First US case of Spanish Flu in Fort Riley</li> <li>• First land-grant college in the US</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iconic cowboy</li> </ul>

**This framework does not include examples of the following heritage elements: intangible expressions and outstanding features.**