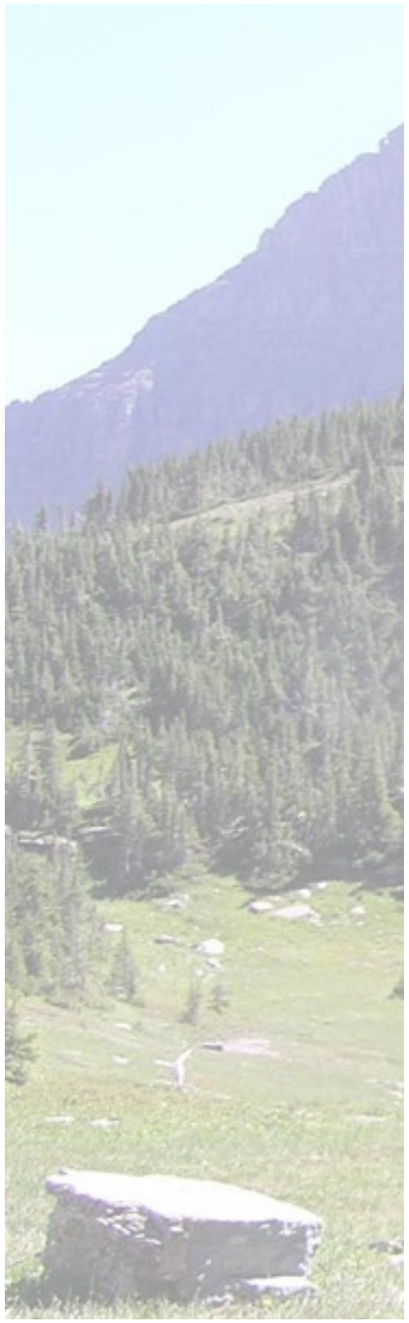
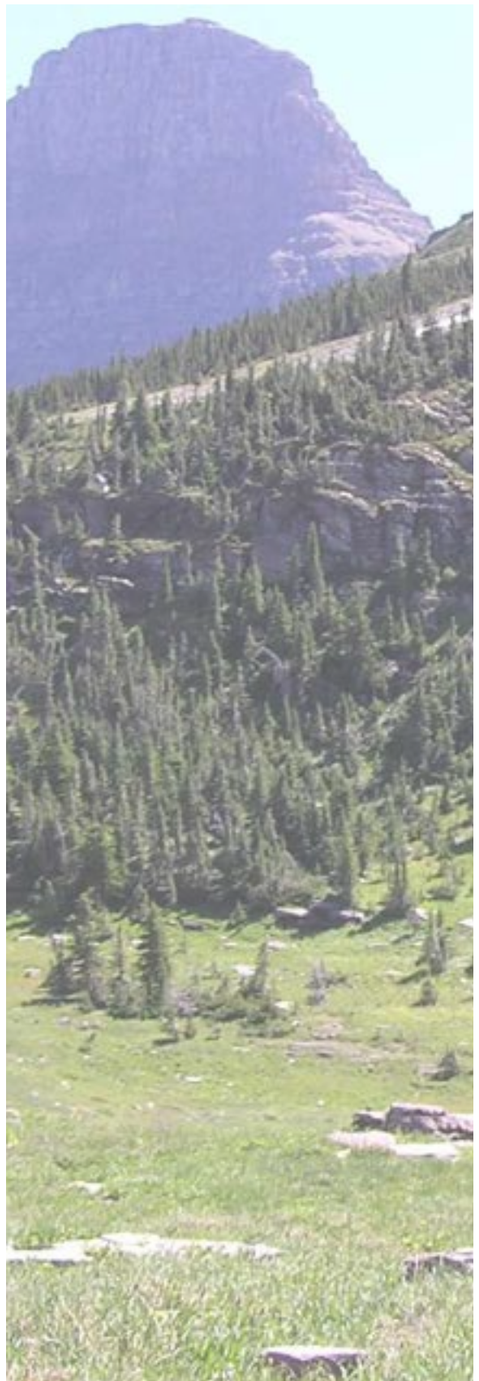
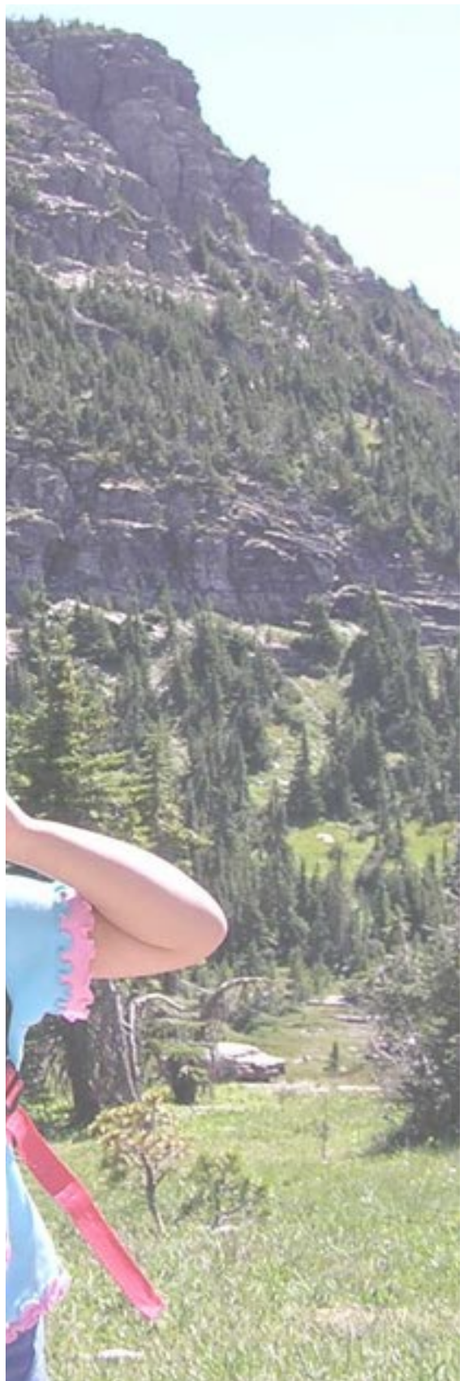
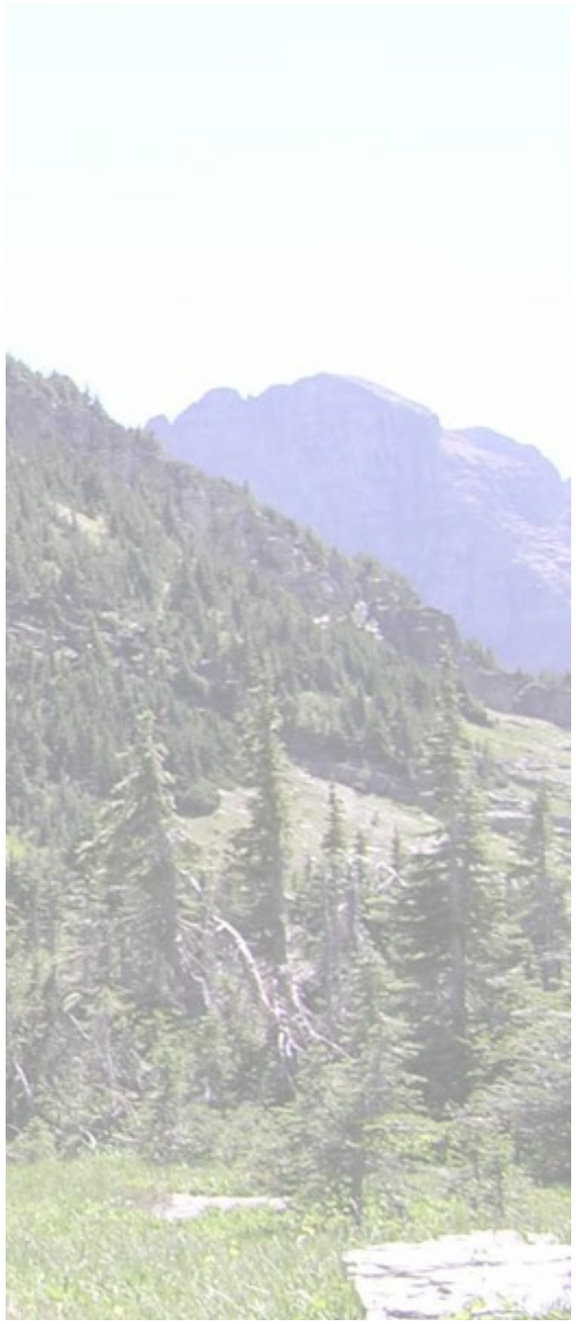
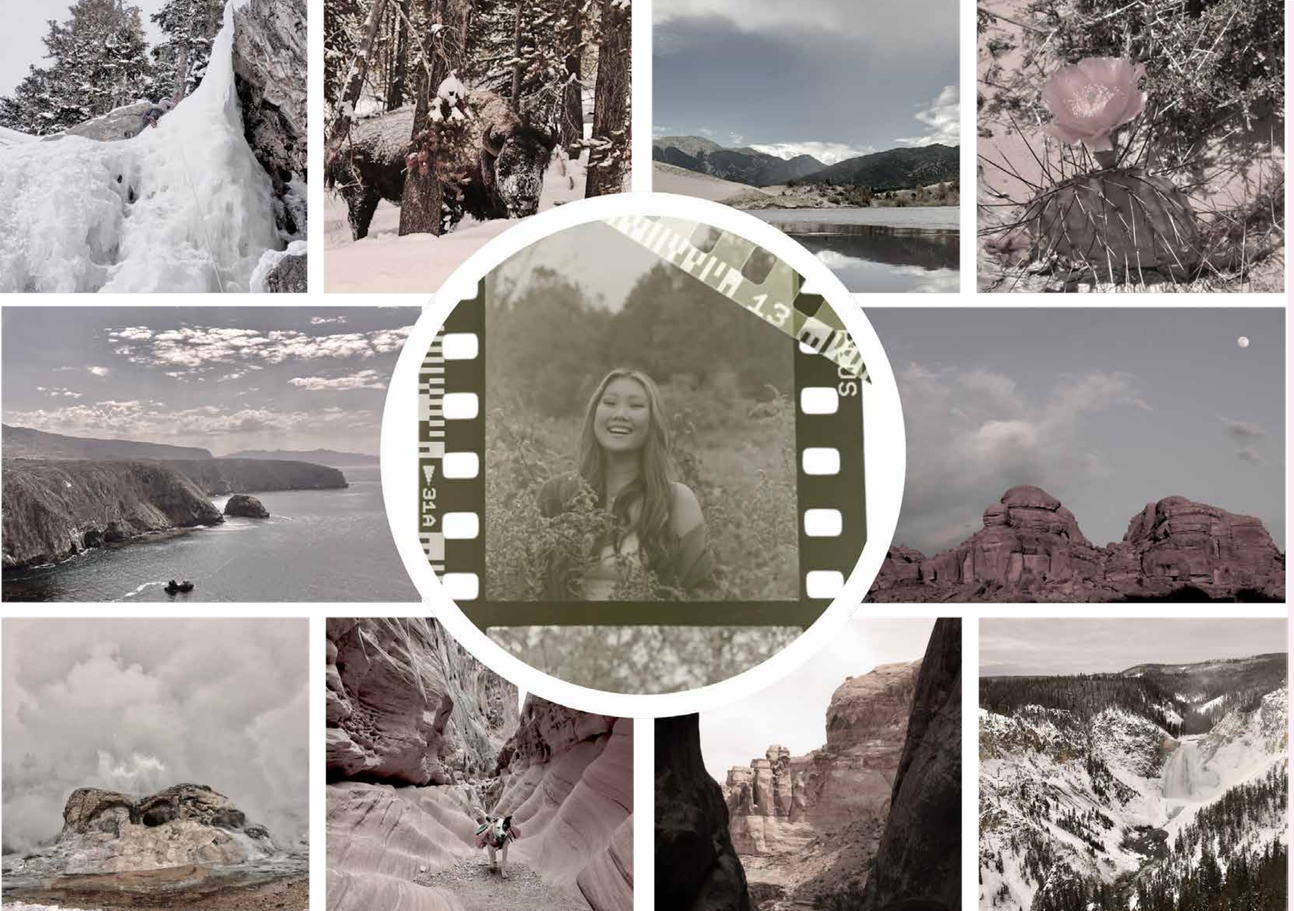
RUTH CHALMERS

DESIGN PORTFOLIO



I am a designer who believes that how we shape our environments says everything about what we value and who we value it for. My work lives at the crossroads of biophilic design, climate resilience, and community, because those things are inseparable. The climate crisis is not a future problem; it is the context we are designing within right now, and that urgency should show up in every decision we make. I am passionate about using new technologies as bridges to reach younger generations, spark curiosity about the natural world, and show them that design is one of the most powerful tools we have for shaping the future we want to live in.

RUTH CHALMERS

SKILLS

- Rhino
- AutoCAD
- Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- InDesign
- SketchUp
- Xfigura.ai
- ArcGIS
- QGIS

SOFT SKILLS

- Work Ethic
- Personable
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Leadership
- Adaptability

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2025-Present
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR
BOULDER ATHLETICS
- Design evidence based training programs for diverse clients
- Managed all business operations, including client acquisition and scheduling

2024-2025
NANNY
BOULDER, CO
- Managed and provided a safe environment for two young girls
- Responsibly took care of daily childcare needs in a timely manner
- Took time and effort to truly understand each girl's needs

2024-2025
PERSONAL TRAINER
CRUNCH FITNESS
- Coached clients through comprehensive programs with emphasis on technique and sustainable habit formation.

2018-2024
SERVER
SWENSONS DINER
- Delivered efficient customer service for over six years
- Coordinated with kitchen and front-of-house staff.

2021-2022
KIDS TEAM MEMBER
LIFE TIME FITNESS
- Supervised children's programming for ages 3–12
- Prioritized safety protocols and engagement strategies

EDUCATION

2022-Present
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER– UNDERGRAD
Bachelor's in Environmental Design (B.EnvD)
Major: Landscape Architecture
May 2026

LANGUAGES

- **English** (fluent)

AWARD & ACHIEVEMENT

2025
AI in Design — Xfigura.ai Symposium Fall 2025
- **Critically engaged with AI tools in design pedagogy, examining ethical implications and creative workflows.**
- **Work presented at Design Intelligence: New Pedagogies for AI-Aided Architectural Design**

2020
2020 Photography Contest
- **High school Photo Contest**

Contact: +1 (614) 603-8830
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THE COMMONS RESTORED

Reclaiming an Abandoned Rail Station as Civic Infrastructure in Caimalito, Colombia.

A forgotten rail station. A community with everything but space. This project restores both, reclaiming Caimalito's historic station as a civic commons rooted in culture, ecology, and the everyday rhythms of the people who live there.







SITE CONTEXT

Caimalito is a small riverside community in Risaralda, Colombia, located along the Cauca River just outside of Pereira. The area sits within the UNESCO-recognized Coffee Cultural Landscape, rich in biodiversity and agricultural heritage. Despite this, the community is economically marginalized with limited public infrastructure and few opportunities for local economic growth. At its center sits a historic rail station, long abandoned and long overdue for reinvention.



STRENGTHS

- 3.4-acre riparian site with high accessibility and urban integration
- 2,000–2,500mm annual rainfall eliminates irrigation requirements
- Native species proven to survive seasonal flooding and high water tables
- Natural Cauca River dynamics support soil stabilization
- Part of the UNESCO Coffee Cultural Landscape, heritage value

OPPORTUNITIES

- Flood mitigation: Riparian buffer reduces downstream erosion
- Biodiversity corridor connecting fragmented forest habitats
- Community recreation and environmental education platform
- Water quality improvement: Natural filtration of upstream runoff
- Carbon sequestration: Mature forest functions as climate sink

WEAKNESSES

- Degraded baseline requires invasive species removal
- Clay heavy soils with poor drainage; costly amendment needed
- High humidity increases fungal disease pressure and monitoring costs
- Limited local native plant nurseries; sourcing requires regional coordination
- Seasonal flood windows restrict planting calendar to 4-month window

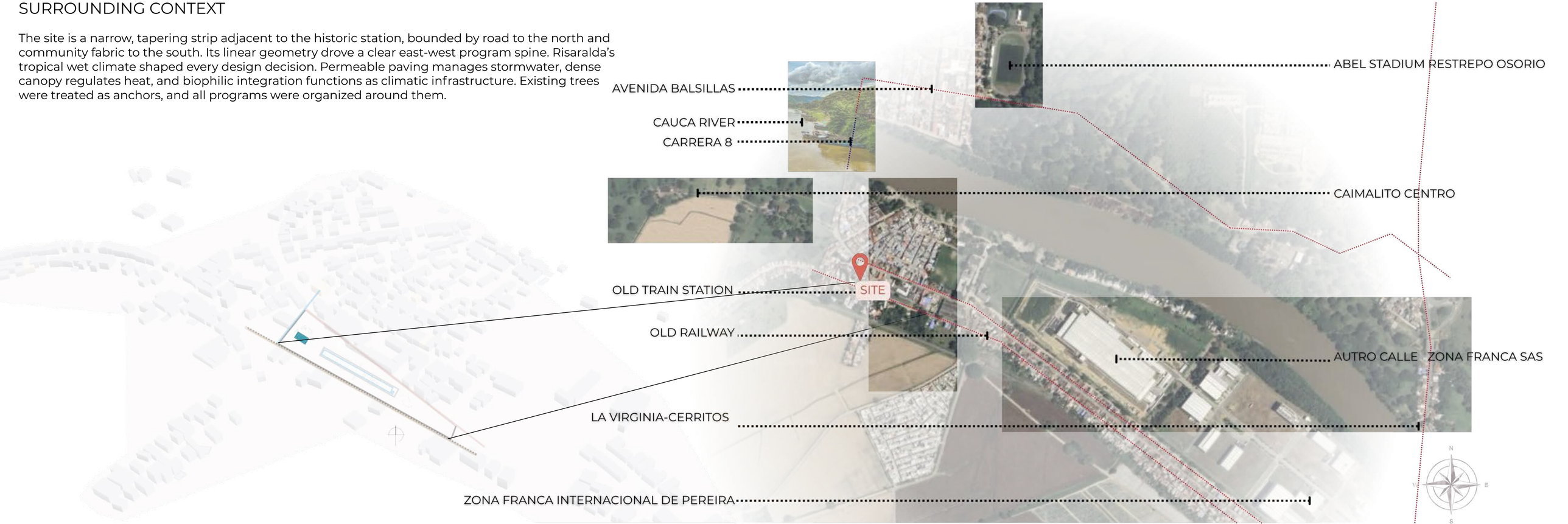
THREATS

- Upstream agricultural expansion increases sediment and erosion pressure
- Extreme flood events may exceed native species tolerance limits
- Invasive species rapidly recolonize cleared areas
- Inadequate funding for maintenance beyond establishment phase
- Climate variability threatens long-term project sustainability



SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The site is a narrow, tapering strip adjacent to the historic station, bounded by road to the north and community fabric to the south. Its linear geometry drove a clear east-west program spine. Risaralda's tropical wet climate shaped every design decision. Permeable paving manages stormwater, dense canopy regulates heat, and biophilic integration functions as climatic infrastructure. Existing trees were treated as anchors, and all programs were organized around them.



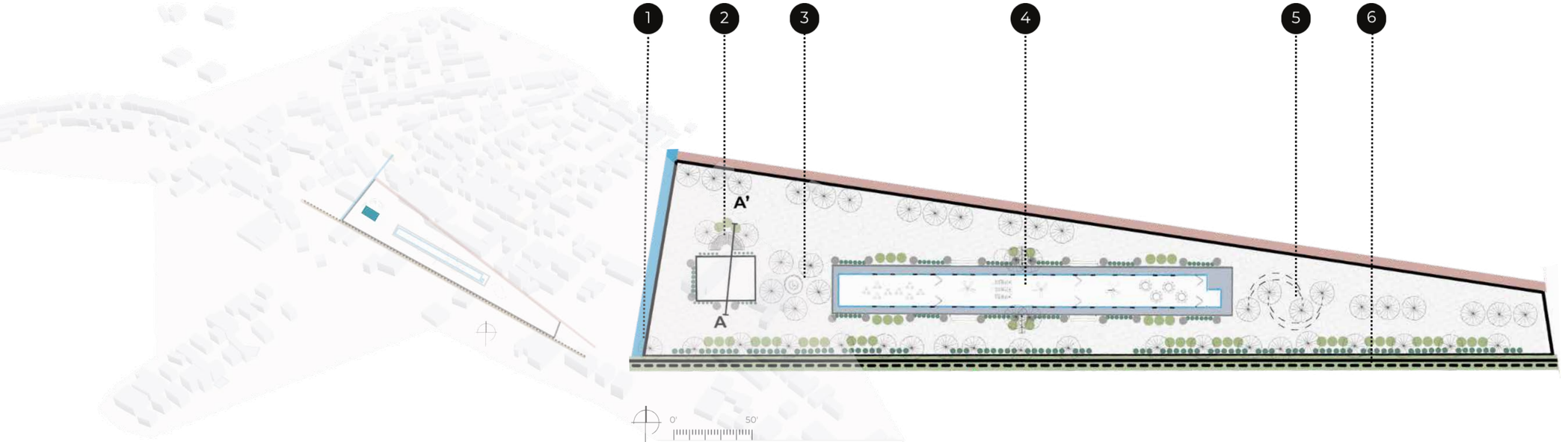
USER GROUP COLLAGE

This collage depicts the neighborhood's common users and energy and touches on their journeys to the site. Many of the site's daily users include fishermen, farmers, cyclists, and families.



SITE PLAN

This adaptive reuse project restores the station and its surrounding landscape as a living civic heart, designed to strengthen community identity, invite ecological health, and draw the kind of cultural tourism that puts economic power back in local hands. Every program is rooted in biophilic principles, treating nature not as decoration but as infrastructure for human and environmental wellbeing.



1. Heritage Path — An annual community painting tradition along the site's border, building cultural identity and local pride.
2. Amphitheatre — A terraced gathering space for performance, fitness, and community gardening with integrated garden beds at its uppermost tier.
3. Fountain — A communal water feature welcoming residents and local wildlife, designed as a place of rest, play, and daily activation.
4. Community Hub — The restored rail station reimagined as a shared home, offering communal kitchens, dining, and a library of things for the whole community.
5. Gallery Walls — Open-air brick walls where local artists display and sell their work, generating economic opportunity while enriching the site's cultural landscape.
6. Bike Lane — A dedicated cycling corridor connecting the site to the broader community and encouraging slow movement through the space.

1 HERITAGE PATH

Once a year, residents and local artists reclaim the road bordering the site with color. The Heritage Path is less a physical trail than a living tradition, a rotating canvas that builds cultural pride, marks time, and makes visible the identity of the people who call Caimalito home.



2 AMPHITHEATER

More than a performance space, the amphitheatre is a daily destination. Its terraced steps invite gathering, rest, and movement, while garden beds integrated into the uppermost tier put food production in the hands of the community. It is architecture that works as hard as the people who use it.



3

FOUNTAIN

The fountain anchors the site as a place of pause. Designed to welcome both residents and local wildlife, it is a shared threshold, where children play, neighbors linger, and birds come to drink. Water here is not ornamental; it is communal.



5

GALLERY WALLS

The brick gallery walls activate the site's edges as an open-air market for local art. Artists sell and display work directly to visitors, creating real economic opportunity while layering the landscape with cultural texture. The walls are the community's gallery, no admission required.



4

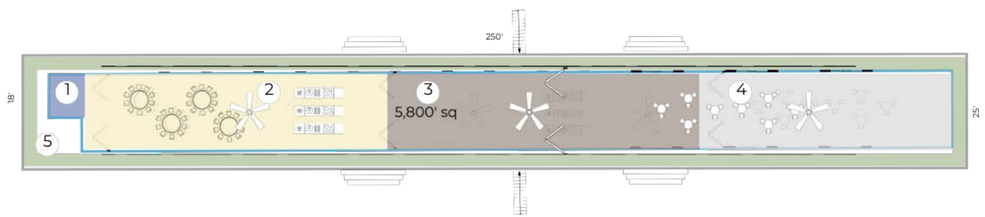
COMMUNITY HUB

The restored rail station becomes an extension of every home in Caimalito. Shared kitchens, communal dining, and a library of things, tools, gadgets, toys, games, books, make the station a place where resources circulate freely and neighbors become family. It is the village commons, re-imagined.

1 STORAGE
2 DINING/ENTERTAINING AREA
3 COMMUNITY KITCHEN

4 LIBRARY +
- This is a program that focuses on providing any household items or tools to the local community.
- The system works the same as checking out a library book and returning it within a given time period.

5 OUTDOOR DINING SPACE





02

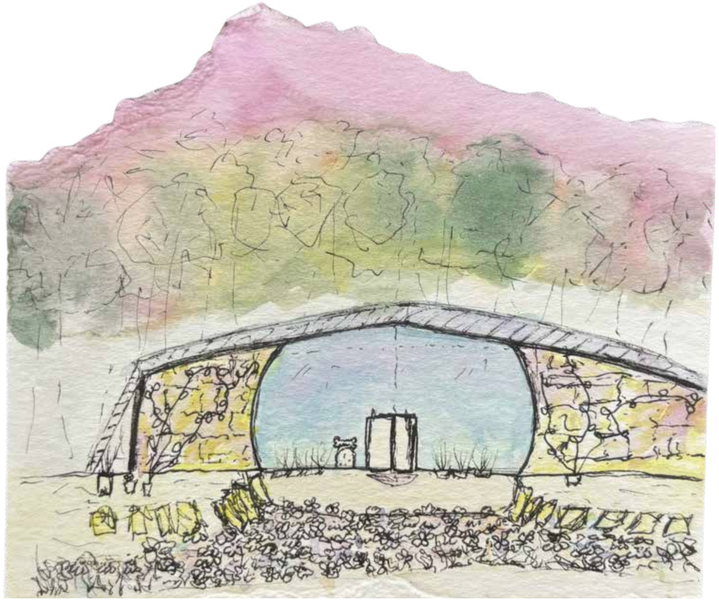
INTO THE CONTOUR

Author-Directed AI Rendering: Translating a Climate-Responsive Housing Concept Through xFigura.ai

Inspired by how bees negotiate landscape when building a hive, this project proposes a home shaped by the land it inhabits, earth-sheltered, biophilically driven, and built to absorb the pressures of climate change rather than resist them. Developed through an author directed AI rendering process in xFigura.ai, the work documents both the design vision and the deliberate creative decisions behind every image.



CONCEPT → XFIGURA PROMPTS → ITERATION → REFINEMENT → FINAL OUTPUT
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
RESEARCH/SKETCHES TEXT-TO-IMAGE FEEDBACK ADJUSTMENT CURATION

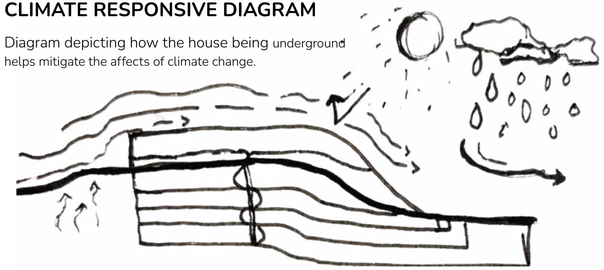


CONCEPT

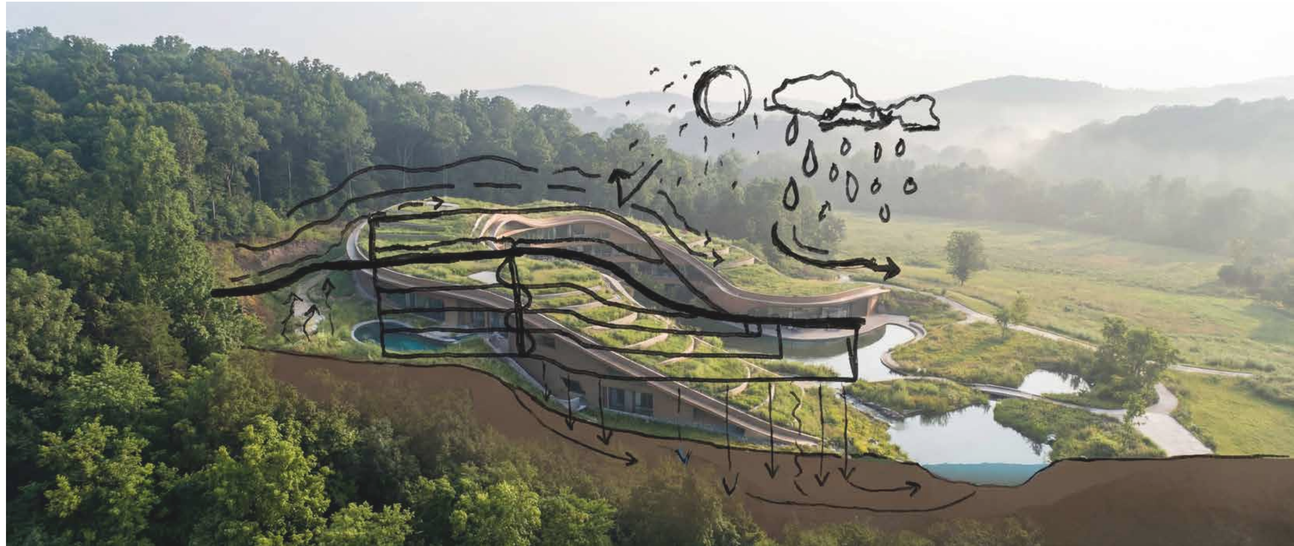
The concept is rooted in mimicry specifically, how bees locate and adapt to new hives by working with the landscape rather than against it. In response to intensifying climate conditions, this design proposes a home that merges with the land's natural profile: earth-sheltered, biophilically integrated, and shaped by the forces it must endure. Form follows ecology.

CLIMATE RESPONSIVE DIAGRAM

Diagram depicting how the house being underground helps mitigate the affects of climate change.









Core Prompt Template

SCALE:	Large-scale interior, multi-level organic architecture.
CONTENT:	A house with an emphasis in biophilic design elements. House is made from natural materials with a modern feel. Lighting and water are strong elements. Dog's may be present in the rendering to add to the home feel.
QUALITY:	Photo realistic 8K, architectural visualization quality, dramatic atmospheric lighting, high detail on organic textures and bioluminescent glow, cinematic depth of field.
(-) PROMPT:	Sterile, corporate, flat lighting, mechanical/industrial aesthetic, cartoonish, low resolution, blurry, dystopia tone, harsh artificial lighting.

Mountain View

Building Sustainable Living Communities

This project focuses on prioritizing safety and transportation needs. The overall design encourages a more sustainable way of living.



Site Analysis

This shows relevant site context that was taken into consideration when designing. What is important to mention is the photos of the surrounding site as well as the main roads and highways.

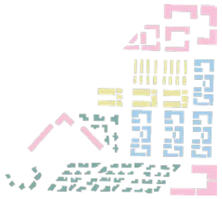


Building a Community

The site prioritizes views of the Flatirons for every resident, achieved through a high-density-back, low-density-front arrangement. Accessibility by bike, bus, and car was a core goal, anchored by a transit station in the upper-north corner with streets designed for all modes. Natural wetlands are preserved with bike paths threading through them, while a community park, amphitheatre, and farmers market provide multiple nodes of public gathering throughout the site.



1. Transportation Hub
2. Retail District
3. Community Park & Garden
4. Amphitheatre & Farmers Market
5. Community Trail



ZONING

- Multi-Use Buildings
- Town-homes
- Apartments
- Single Family





Perspectives

These three perspectives highlight different aspects noted on the site plan. They all portray the community and lifestyle that the design embodies. Most importantly, you can see how every building is granted a beautiful view of the Flatirons. Additionally, you see the path along the dry creek and how it encourages the inclusion of various biophilic design practices.

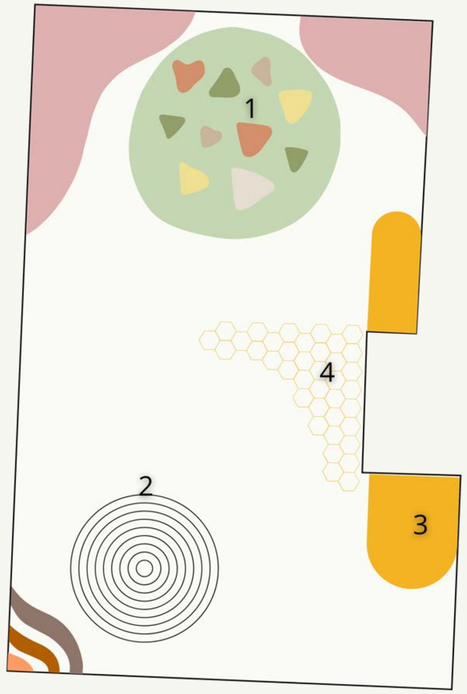


The Living Tapestry

A Native Planting Design for Multi-Generational Connection and Ecological Resilience in Upper Arlington, Ohio

The garden honors Ohio's ecological heritage while creating spaces for human connection. Native plants form the backbone, providing eco-system services while reducing maintenance. The layered structure, from groundcovers to small trees, creates habitat niches for diverse wildlife while offering year-round visual interest.





Design Concept

1. Canopy of Remembrance - Under the existing maple tree at the residence lies a rock path with little stones marking the grave of each lost pet.

2. Gazebo - A place to be emmersed in the natural environment and find peace.

3. Outdoor Patio - A brick patio that serves as an extension of the house helping blend natural and human made.

4. Pollinator Garden - A sanctuary that invites all pollinators. A place where beauty flourishes.

Planting Chart

Upper Arlington, Ohio | Zone 6b | Scale: 1" = 10'

ORNAMENTAL PLANTINGS								
Ornamental	3	Tc	Tiarella cordifolia	Foamflower	6-12" x 12-18"	Apr-May	Native, spring flowers, groundcover	Lady Bird Johnson
Ornamental	3	Hp	Heuchera 'Palace Purple'	Coral Bells	12-18" x 12-18"	Jun-Jul	Purple foliage, coral flowers	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Ai	Athyrium niponicum 'Pictum'	Japanese Painted Fern	12-18" x 18"	Non-flowering	Silver-burgundy, ornamental	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Nf	Nepeta x faassenii	Catmint	1-2' x 1-2'	May-Sep	Blue-purple, long blooming	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	He	Hemerocallis 'Stella de Oro'	Daylily	1-2' x 1-2'	May-Sep	Yellow, repeat bloomer	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Gr	Geranium 'Rozanne'	Hardy Geranium	1-2' x 2'	Jun-Oct	Blue flowers all summer	RHS
Ornamental	3	Ls	Leucanthemum x superbum	Shasta Daisy	2-3' x 1-2'	Jun-Aug	Classic white, reliable	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Sa	Sedum 'Autumn Joy'	Stonecrop	1-2' x 2'	Aug-Oct	Pink flowers, succulent	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Ic	Iris sibirica	Siberian Iris	2-3' x 1-2'	May-Jun	Elegant blue/purple, vertical	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Aa	Astilbe x arendsii	False Spirea	2-3' x 1-2'	Jun-Jul	Feathery plumes, shade	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Pl	Paeonia lactiflora	Peony	2-3' x 2-3'	May-Jun	Spectacular blooms, fragrant	American Peony Soc.
Ornamental	3	Cc	Caryopteris x clandonensis	Bluebeard	2-3' x 2-3'	Aug-Oct	Blue flowers, aromatic	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Hv	Hosta 'Frances Williams'	Blue Hosta	2-3' x 3-4'	Jul-Aug	Blue-green with gold edge	American Hosta Soc.
Ornamental	3	Ms	Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'	Maiden Grass	4-6' x 3-4'	Sep-Oct	Fine texture, graceful	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Ha	Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'	Smooth Hydrangea	3-5' x 4-6'	Jun-Jul	Huge white blooms, shade	Missouri Bot. Garden
Ornamental	3	Ar	Actaea racemosa	Bugbane	5-8' x 2-3'	Jul-Sep	White plumes, shade statement	Ohio State Ext.

Group	Qty	Abbrev.	Latin Name	Common Name	Size (H x W)	Bloom Time	Comments	Source
NATIVE PLANTINGS								
Existing Tree	1		Acer rubrum	Red Maple				
Native	11	Cp	Carex pensylvanica	Pennsylvania Sedge	6-12" x 1'	May-Jun	Groundcover, lawn alternative	USDA Plants DB
Native	8	Cb	Carex brevior	Plains Oval Sedge	1-2' x 1'	May-Jun	Low water, textured mound	USDA Plants DB
Native	6	Pa	Polystichum acrostichoides	Christmas Fern	1-2' x 1-2'	Non-flowering	Evergreen, reliable shade	USDA Plants DB
Native	7	Sh	Sporobolus heterolepis	Prairie Dropseed	1-2' x 1-2'	Aug-Sep	Fine texture, fragrant	Lady Bird Johnson
Native	5	As	Athyrium filix-femina	Lady Fern	2-3' x 2'	Non-flowering	Lacy texture, adaptable	USDA Plants DB
Native	7	Ss	Schizachyrium scoparium	Little Bluestem	2-3' x 1-1.5'	Sep-Oct	Bronze-red fall, birds	USDA Plants DB
Native	7	Ma	Matteuccia struthiopteris	Ostrich Fern	3-5' x 2-3'	Non-flowering	Dramatic fronds, moist shade	USDA Plants DB
Native	1	Cs	Cornus sericea	Red-osier Dogwood	6-9' x 8-12'	May-Jun	Red winter stems, white berries	USDA Plants DB
Native	1	Vt	Viburnum trilobum	Cranberrybush Viburnum	8-12' x 8-12'	May-Jun	White flowers, red fruit, fall	USDA Plants DB

POLLINATOR PLANTINGS								
Pollinator	3	Aq	Aquilegia canadensis	Eastern Columbine	1-2' x 1'	Apr-Jun	Red-yellow, hummingbirds	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Za	Zizia aurea	Golden Alexanders	1-2' x 1-1.5'	Apr-May	Yellow, swallowtail host	Lady Bird Johnson
Pollinator	7	At	Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed	1-2' x 1-1.5'	Jun-Aug	Orange, monarch host	Ohio State Ext.
Pollinator	4	Ls	Liatris spicata	Dense Blazing Star	2-3' x 1-1.5'	Jul-Sep	Purple spikes, vertical	Ohio State Ext.
Pollinator	3	Ep	Echinacea purpurea	Purple Coneflower	2-3' x 1-2'	Jun-Sep	Drought tolerant, butterflies	Ohio State Ext.
Pollinator	4	Rf	Rudbeckia fulgida	Black-eyed Susan	2-3' x 1-2'	Jun-Sep	Golden yellow, goldfinches	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	So	Solidago ohioensis	Ohio Goldenrod	2-3' x 1-2'	Aug-Oct	Late season, NOT allergenic	Ohio State Ext.
Pollinator	3	Mb	Monarda bradburiana	Eastern Bee Balm	1-2' x 1-2'	May-Jun	Pink-purple, pollinators	Lady Bird Johnson
Pollinator	3	Pd	Penstemon digitalis	Foxglove Beardtongue	2-4' x 1-2'	May-Jul	White tubular, hummingbirds	Lady Bird Johnson
Pollinator	3	Al	Asclepias incarnata	Swamp Milkweed	3-5' x 1-2'	Jun-Aug	Pink, monarch host	Ohio State Ext.
Pollinator	3	Mf	Monarda fistulosa	Wild Bergamot	2-4' x 1-2'	Jun-Aug	Lavender, aromatic, hummingbirds	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Ba	Baptisia australis	Blue False Indigo	3-4' x 2-3'	May-Jun	Blue spikes, structural	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Ss	Solidago speciosa	Showy Goldenrod	2-4' x 1-2'	Aug-Oct	Yellow plumes, elegant	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Oa	Oligoneuron rigidum	Stiff Goldenrod	2-4' x 1-2'	Aug-Oct	Yellow flat-topped, dry tolerant	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Pg	Pycnanthemum virginianum	Mountain Mint	2-3' x 2-3'	Jul-Aug	White, heavily visited	Lady Bird Johnson
Pollinator	3	Lp	Liatris pycnostachya	Prairie Blazing Star	3-5' x 1-2'	Jul-Sep	Purple spikes, butterflies	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Sn	Symphyotrichum novae-angliae	New England Aster	3-6' x 2-3'	Aug-Oct	Purple, critical fall nectar	USDA Plants DB
Pollinator	3	Ve	Vernonia fasciculata	Ironweed	4-6' x 2-3'	Jul-Sep	Purple, tall backdrop	USDA Plants DB

DESIGN INTEGRATION

✓ Consistent native plant palette throughout
✓ Naturalistic design language
✓ Seasonal progression across all areas
✓ Ecological principles at every scale

Family Narrative
🐾 Memorial honors beloved pets
🐦 Hummingbirds honor Dad's passion
🏞️ Wildflowers evoke national parks
🎉 Reflects environmental values
Maintenance Balance
High: Memorial garden (shade plants)
Medium: Patio area (containers)
Low: Meadow (annual cut-back)
Minimal: Pathway (permeable)

DESIGN GOALS

ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY
Prioritize native Ohio plant species that support local ecosystems, create habitat corridors for pollinators, and establish self-sustaining plant communities.

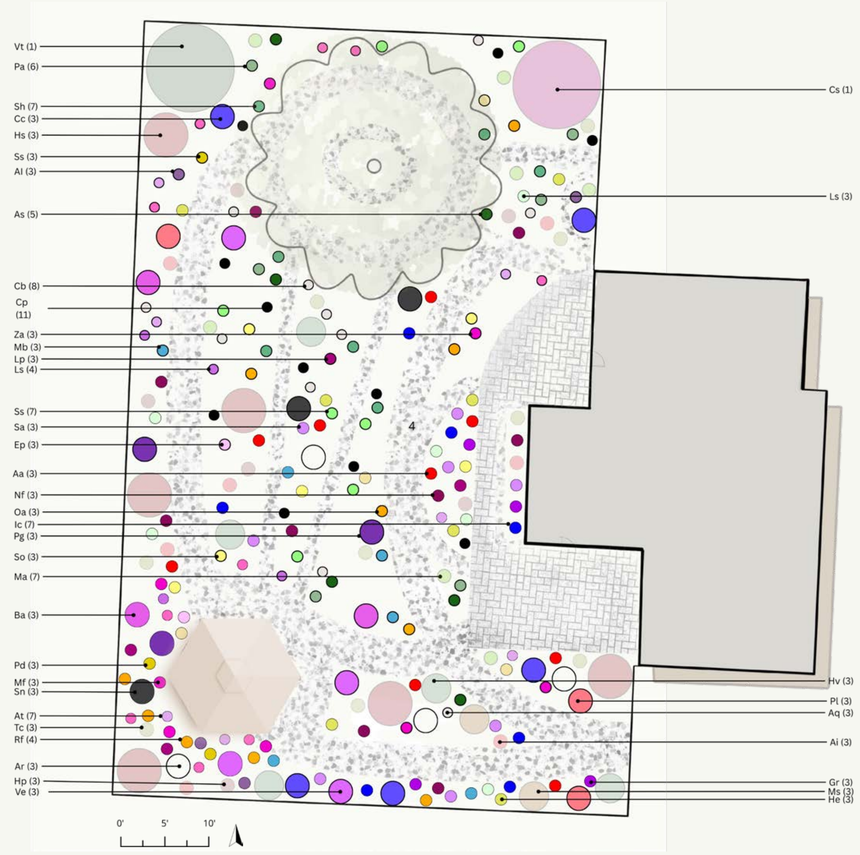
SEASONAL INTEREST
Ensure visual interest across all four seasons through bloom succession from early spring through late fall, integrating varied textures and fall color.

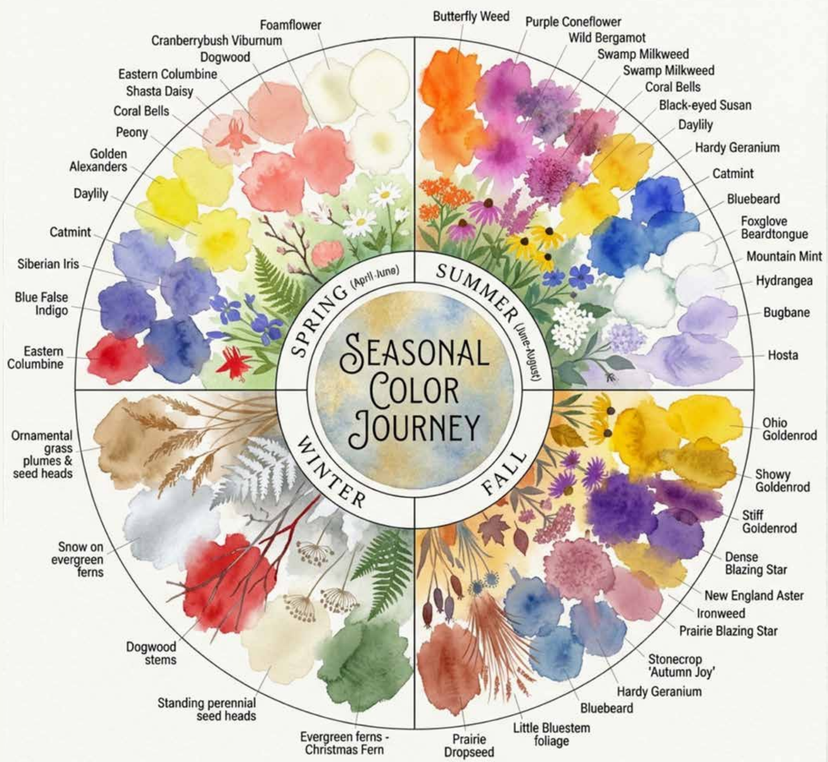
MULTI-GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT
Design contemplative spaces for family gathering, incorporate educational opportunities about native plants and wildlife, create accessible pathways.

POLLINATOR SUPPORT
Provide continuous nectar sources throughout growing season, include host plants for butterfly larvae (milkweeds), attract diverse pollinators.

RESILIENCE & ADAPTABILITY
Select drought-tolerant species capable of handling climate variability, use deep-rooted plants to improve soil structure and compete with invasives.

LOW-MAINTENANCE SUSTAINABILITY
Minimize irrigation needs through strategic plant selection, reduce chemical inputs by working with native adaptations, create self-sustaining plantings.





Perspective Collage

This collage embodies the liveliness of the planting design. The native plants provide a safe haven for lots of vital pollinators. And the gazebo serves as a place of reflectio, tranquility, and safety.



The Gathering Ground

A Community Landscape Redesign for the University Club at CU Boulder

The University Club sits at a prominent CU Boulder corner, yet its landscape was failing the people who used it. Oversized parking, poor circulation, and no meaningful gathering space left the site disconnected from campus life and its Flatiron views. This project reimagines the grounds as an active outdoor commons, one that frames the building, invites people to stay, and gives the landscape a reason to exist.

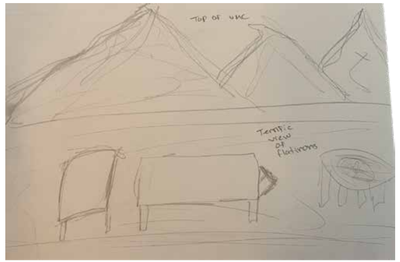


Site Context

The University Club occupies a triangular site at the intersection of Euclid Avenue, 17th, and 18th Street on CU Boulder's campus. Bordered by heavy traffic and backed by views of the Flatirons, the site held significant potential that its existing conditions actively undermined.

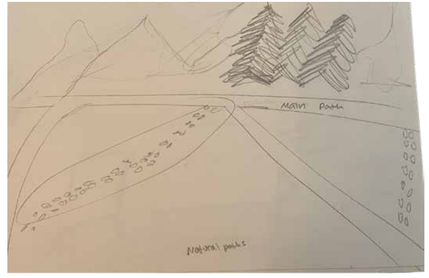
Annotated Sketches

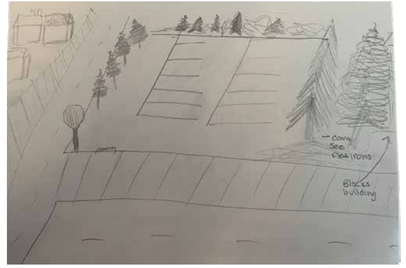
Early site visits produced a series of annotated sketches documenting key observations, blocked Flatiron views, poor framing of the University Club, and the lack of defined outdoor space. These drawings grounded the design in direct experience of the site.





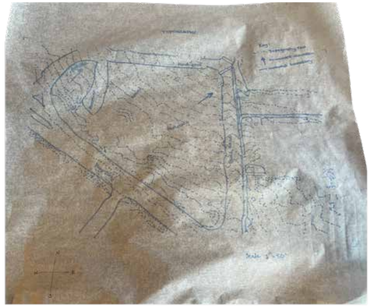


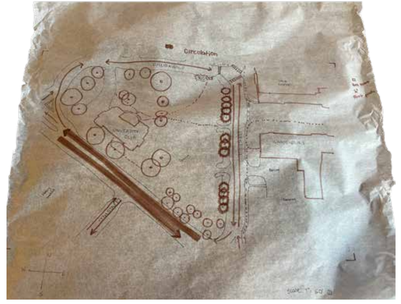




Topography Overlay

A traced topographic study mapped the site's grade changes and drainage patterns, informing decisions around stormwater flow and surface materiality.





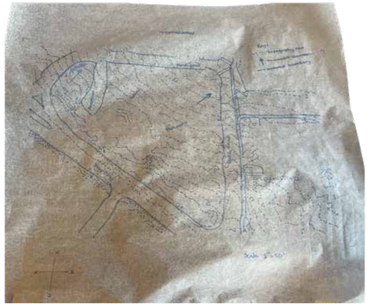
Vegetation Diagram

Existing vegetation was catalogued and assessed for its spatial and ecological value, identifying which trees to preserve, reposition, or supplement in the final design.



Circulation Diagram

This analysis mapped vehicular and pedestrian movement across the site, revealing conflict points and desire paths that exposed the failure of the existing layout.



Bubble Diagrams

Early program diagrams tested the size and placement of gathering zones, event space, and circulation before committing to form. Multiple iterations allowed spatial relationships to be tested quickly and adjusted.

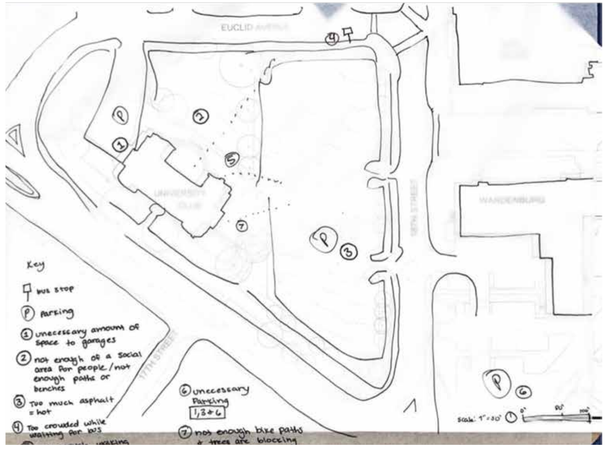




Design Response

Parking was reduced to reclaim the site's edges for people. Trees were repositioned to frame the building and open Flatiron sightlines. A CU Buffalo-shaped brick patio anchors the central gathering space, while a secondary node at the bus stop integrates seating and shade. Plant selection balances beauty with function, redbud, white leaf linden, and switchgrass provide habitat, direct movement, and offer year-round interest.







Site Analysis

Analysis revealed compounding issues: oversized parking, insufficient seating, excessive impervious surface, a crowded bus stop, and trees blocking Flatiron views. Desire paths worn into the grass exposed the failure of existing circulation. These findings drove every design decision that followed.



Final Hand-Drawn Site Plan

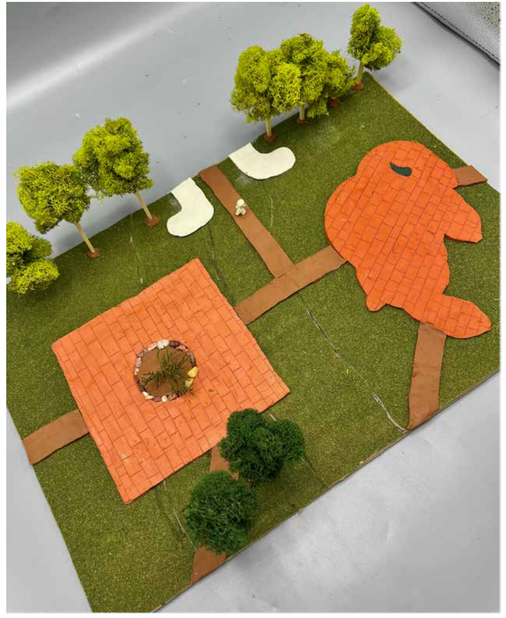
The final site plan resolved all program elements into a cohesive design, establishing the CU Buffalo brick patio, bus stop node, tree placement, and pedestrian circulation as a unified landscape.





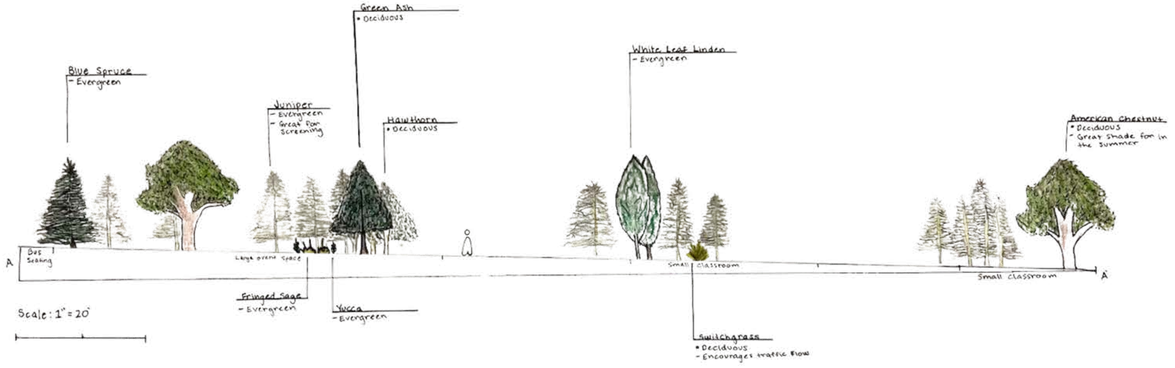
Physical Model

The scale model translated the site plan into three dimensions, allowing spatial relationships, canopy coverage, and material contrast to be read in full. Building it revealed how the brick surfaces and green space interact at eye level.



Final Section

The section cut reveals the layered planting strategy, from groundcovers and shrubs to canopy trees, demonstrating how vegetation creates spatial enclosure, habitat, and year-round visual interest.



Thank You!

These projects represent my commitment to landscape architecture as a practice of care, for ecosystems, for communities, and for the futures we inherit together. I am eager to continue this work at the graduate level, bringing curiosity, ethical intention, and a deep belief that design, done well, can be a form of advocacy.

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