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To the Heritage Trust Fund Grants Staff:

This letter of support is for Laurie Hamilton's application to the HTF grant program. Laurie is the owner of the Grimm-Schultz Farmstead Historic District in Wabaunsee County. I wrote the nomination to the National Register of Historical Places for this stunning 1800s farmstead. The property was listed in the National Register and in the Kansas Register in October 2020.

Since purchasing the property in 2020, Laurie has invested considerable time, energy and her own financial resources in the preservation of the Farmstead. She has restored and renovated the main house, restored the stone wash house/granary and improved the surrounding site. She has successfully pursued partnerships with the Wabaunsee County Historical Society and Museum and the Volland Foundation. Laurie's work on the Farmstead and her affiliations with these local organizations have brought this locally known property further into the public eye. The Farmstead has seen a steady increase in visitors, from groups of school children to tourists.

Just 18 properties in Wabaunsee County are listed in the National Register. The Grimm-Schultz Farmstead is one of just two farmsteads listed in the county. Its eight contributing buildings and structures tell the singular story of generational cattle ranching in the Flint Hills. The Farmstead is unique in its rural location, its intact collection of buildings and its accessibility to visitors. The preservation of this farmstead is extremely important to the history of the area that includes the towns of Volland and Alma.

The circa 1885 granary contributes to the critical mass of the farmstead. The building not only displays part of the Farmstead's history but contributes future valuable space for community collaborations. Restoration of the two-story building will bring together the completion of the Farmstead's core of extant contributing resources. With the restoration of building, the Farmstead's potential expands to further serve school groups, visiting artists and the Wabaunsee County community.

Please give this project your full consideration. Rural properties are the historic backbone of Kansas. The Grimm-Schultz farmstead is a Wabaunsee County landmark, well-known to those who travel along Old K-10. Its preservation brings pride to the area. The restoration of the granary using HTF funds will send a positive, powerful message about the importance of rural preservation in Kansas.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Susan J. Ford". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Susan Jezak Ford