



## STRATEGIC PLAN REFRESH 2023-2028

APPROVED JUNE 27, 2023

### Situation Summary

- ▲ In the past five years, Bayou Land Conservancy has developed into a strong, mature organization and made strides in conservation, stewardship, and community conservation
- ▲ Its strategic conservation plan outlines the highest priority lands to be conserved over the next 20 years and sets a goal of conserving 15,000 of those acres, however:
  - The avenues for land conservation are changing as mitigation projects wind down
  - Projected population growth and resulting development activity create great urgency
  - Montgomery County's environment for land conservation is dramatically different from northern Harris County
- ▲ To stay on track to meet the conservation plan's 20-year vision, BLC must:
  - Expand the efforts of and adapt its approach to conservation, stewardship, and community conservation to succeed in such a different environment
  - Continue to grow and adapt its capacity to do the work
  - Introduce itself and deliberately position for influence



## **Mission and Vision**

- ▲ The mission of the Bayou Land Conservancy is to preserve land along streams for flood control, clean water, and wildlife
- ▲ BLC's vision is a protected network of green spaces that connect people and nature

## **Desired Impact**

- ▲ Protect high priority land from development and sprawl for enhanced water quality, preserve wildlife habitat, and impact flood control other conservation values
  - Public access is a critically important strategy BLC uses to demonstrate its impact and connect with and grow supporters to ensure a sustainability for protected lands

## **Geographic Focus**

- ▲ Watersheds that feed into lake Houston, over 4000 square miles
  - Most of the 100,000 high priority acres identified in the Strategic Conservation Plan are located in Montgomery County

## **Role**

- ▲ Facilitator: bring together landowners, funders, and other partners to complete complex deals and conserve highest priority land (success = highest priority land is conserved, whether BLC or another entity owns it or holds the conservation easement)
- ▲ Influencer: trusted and credible by a variety of stakeholders and positioned to make a convincing case for how conserving highest priority land meets their needs and interests; effectively advocating for conserving land, funding, and support
- ▲ Steward: ensure stewardship of conserved land and enabling access when/ where appropriate
- ▲ Connector: connecting people and organizations to the land to educate, build and sustain financial and volunteer support, and increase equity and access

## **Position**

- ▲ The only accredited, local land trust in northern Harris and Montgomery counties
- ▲ The 'go-to' expert on how to protect and conserve important lands in Montgomery County

## **Value Proposition**

- ▲ Bayou Land Conservancy protects what draws people to live here (greenspace, recreation, clean water, wildlife, nature) while minimizing the impacts of flooding

## Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives
<p><b>Staff Goal:</b> We invest in our staff team to secure and retain top talent and grow our capacity to increase our impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Hire a staff leader who is competent, passionate, and well-respected in the community</li> <li>▲ Adequate fundraising, stewardship, and conservation staff capacity</li> <li>▲ Benchmark at or above land trusts nationally and local non-profits to be an employer of choice</li> <li>▲ Overseen by Governance Committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conservation Goal:</b> We build our conservation program and focus on high-priority lands in our focus area resulting in at least 2,000 acres preserved of high-priority land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Update/ align Strategic Conservation Plan and related outreach strategy</li> <li>▲ Build knowledge, relationships, and capacity regarding relevant funders, financial partners, developer community, government agencies etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Including learning what metrics each stakeholder cares about and setting up systems/ process for gathering and reporting needed data</li> </ul> </li> <li>▲ Identify and acquire a landmark project in Montgomery County</li> <li>▲ Overseen by Lands Committee</li> </ul>
<p><b>Positioning Goal:</b> We are recognized as the expert on how to protect and conserve important lands and we attract supporters, influence decision-makers, and operate as a trustworthy and credible partner in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Specifically define who BLC must position with, the image we will project, and identify any changes or alignments needed to update communications, look, feel, etc.</li> <li>▲ Create and execute broad public relations strategy to raise BLC's profile and positive reputation in Montgomery County (soften the ground)</li> <li>▲ Create and execute focused positioning/ partnership strategy to develop trusted, productive collaborative relationships to enable conservation and fundraising work (soft power)</li> <li>▲ Overseen by Governance Committee/Executive Director</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ <b>Funding Goal:</b> We raise at least \$725,000 annually in unrestricted funds by diversifying and growing our supporter base, while also providing a conservation-focused fund for interested donors.</li> <li>▲ Diversify donor base</li> <li>▲ Expand financial resources – significantly increasing donor base</li> <li>▲ Maintain positive Fundraising trend</li> <li>▲ Fund a conservation opportunity fund</li> <li>▲ Overseen by Development Committee</li> </ul>

**Organizational Development Goal:** We strengthen, adapt, and expand our capacity to secure necessary human resources and build an organization that reflects the community it serves

- ▲ Maintain Land Trust Alliance accreditation in good standing and be held accountable to good stewardship practices
- ▲ Update volunteer model to attract and retain the volunteers we need
- ▲ Continue to expand and diversify the board
- ▲ Identify financial and operation Key Performance Indicators to measure goals/ accomplishments (dashboard to monitor status and progress towards goals)
- ▲ Overseen by Governance Committee/Executive Director

**Stewardship and Community Conservation Goal:** We sustain and adapt our stewardship and conservation programs to meet our community's needs.

- ▲ Get to know new landowner types and prepare to meet their needs
- ▲ Update current and/ or develop new community conservation approaches to provide access to the land and BLC's impact
- ▲ Maintain LTA accreditation in good standing and be held accountable to good stewardship practice
- ▲ Overseen by Lands & Community Conservation

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access Committee will have input in all organizational areas to ensure that our DEI&A Plan goals are met.