

HISTORIC VIRGINIA LAND CONSERVANCY
2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan
Board Approved October 6, 2022

MISSION

HVLC protects and preserves scenic, agricultural, and historic lands in the lower James, York, Rappahannock, and Chowan River(s) and surrounding watersheds.

VISION

HVLC strives to be the premiere community partner for protection of open land through sustainable stewardship.

VALUES (LTA's Standards of Practice can be used in my opinion; do not have values listed)

Sound finances
Ethical conduct
Responsible governance
Lasting stewardship

GOAL ONE: FUNDRAISING/ FINANCE & INVESTMENT

HVLC will invest and align resources for financial sustainability in furtherance of its vision and values.

Objective One

1.1 Engage and expand the fundraising efforts via donor and public outreach, meaningful collaborations, and a robust fundraising plan.

Action Items:

1.1a. Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan.

1.1b. Seek and expand corporate sponsorships.

1.1c. Increase grant research and grant requests, including collaborative efforts with other local and state government bodies and nonprofit organizations.

1.1d. Explore Legacy Giving and outreach to create a formal plan for seeking bequests and estate planning consideration.

1.1e. Seek continued growth in its membership base.

1.1f. Seek continued high retention of its membership base.

Measurements

- Events committee and Executive Director will begin talks in 2023 for a debut in 2024 season (1.1a)
- Advisory Board will create a Legacy Giving approach/ plan, and work with staff to develop marketing in 2023, with implementation in 2023 and 2024. (1.1d)
- Membership committee and business & donor development committee will together grow membership annually by 10%. (1.1e.)
- Business & Donor Development committee to solicit at least three high-end donors with one-on-one approach on annual basis. (1.1e.; 1.1f.)

Objective Two

1.2 Seek to generate alternative revenue through land protection and alternative streams.

Action Items:

1.2.a. Create a revenue strategy for fee-simple lands, to include collaborations (leasing, donating)

1.2b. Pursue alternative revenue streams that generate project fees.

1.2fc Update the stewardship funds matrix as needed.

Measurements

- Finance & Investment committee will continue exploring options for Hankins II property in 2023, and into 2024. (1.2d)

GOAL TWO: GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT

HVLC will strive for excellence in leadership and management.

Objective One

2.1 Build the Board needed in HVLC's future, ensuring effective governance and a rewarding experience for board members.

Action Items:

2.1a. Enhance the Board leadership life cycle, including recruitment, clear expectations, board portal, board engagement, and offboarding.

2.1b. Continue HVLC's non-partisan political stance, and remain in support of bi-partisan efforts toward conservation.

2.1c. Require 100% Board participation in HVLC membership with completed pledge sheet at orientation

2.1d. Formalize both stewardship with boots-on-the-ground and Board Director training,

2.1e. Create a Board succession plan and a business continuity plan that includes an Executive Director Succession Plan.

2.1f. Review committees and committee structure to mirror strategic priorities.

2.1g. Review Corporate Bylaws every five (5) years.

2.1h. Continue to maintain the Advisory Board and update their roles and responsibilities as needed.

Measurements

- Recruit two to three new Board Directors per year, Nominating Committee. (2.1a)
- Develop volunteer stewardship training, including on-site visits. Executive Director & Stewardship Manager. 2023: abbreviated into plan; 2024: final refined plan. (2.1d)
- Develop two documents: (2.1e)
 - Board Succession Plan, by Executive Director & Nominating Committee
 - Board Continuity Plan, to include Executive Director succession plan, by Executive Director, Executive Committee, & Outside vendor.
 - 2023: Draft plans of each
 - 2024: Implement plans
- Overall monitoring these documents to ensure they align with strategic plan goals will be included in job responsibility of Vice Chair, alongside annual review, and update of the strategic plan itself. (2.1e)
- Executive Director and Board Chair will review committees each year. (2.1f)
- Executive Committee/ Board Chair will review bylaws each year. (2.1g)
- Executive Committee will continue to maintain the Advisory Board and update roles and responsibilities (2.1h)
 - 2023: redefine role to include HVLC Legacy planning program/ approach

Objective Two

2.2 HVLC will strive to maintain statewide conservation affiliation, as well as its national accredited status, which requires abiding by the Land Trust Alliance standards and practices guidelines, as well as receiving official five-year renewal status.

Action Items:

2.2a. Maintain membership to Virginia United Land Trusts (VaULT) to serve as our liaison to Virginia's General Assembly for budget support of LPTC, and grant programs

2.2b. Maintain membership to Land Trust Alliance (LTA) to support involvement in legislative and educational opportunities on a state, and especially national level

2.2c. HVLC will maintain accredited status with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and will form a long-term accreditation committee.

Measurements

- Form long-term accreditation committee. Executive Director/ Full Board by end of 2023. (2.2c)
- Keep criteria current to industry standards (2.2d)

Objective Three

2.3 Enhance the employment experience, as well as the resources available to perform exemplary work in service to the HVLC mission.

Action Items:

2.3a. Review staff structure to determine if we need additional staff or contractors based on Land Trust Alliance standards and practices guidelines for the responsible operation of an accredited land trust.

2.3b. Continue to seek greater employee benefits structure

2.3c. Continue to encourage and offer professional development opportunities and participation in statewide and national conferences for the Executive Director and staff

Measurements

- Elevate Executive Director position to 40hr/ week, 5 days/ week status. (2.3a)

GOAL THREE: PROGRAMS

HVLC will work with landowners who desire to protect and preserve natural land and watersheds.

Objective One Land Stewardship

3.1 HVLC will conduct stewardship inspections to ensure landowner compliance with deed restrictions and allowances, as well as to maintain and strengthen the conservation partnerships with landowners.

Action Items:

- 3.1a. Further develop a volunteer lands committee that will help with stewardship and relationships in coordination with the staff.
- 3.1b. Hire a dedicated employee to conduct land stewardship and all related duties.
- 3.1c. Maintain industry insurances available for property violations such as Land Trust Alliances' Terrafirma's risk retention program that includes first dollar defense.

Measurements

- Hire a dedicated employee to conduct land stewardship. (3.1b)

Objective Two Land Protection

- 3.2 HVLC will continue to work with private landowners to protect land utilizing the tool of a conservation easement, working individually or collaboratively.

Action Items:

- 3.2a. Be proactive in land protection by allowing the lands committee to help with prospecting and stewarding properties.
- 3.2b. Continue workshops with other colleagues in HVLC territory to prospect land projects.
- 3.2c. Maintain updated materials to share with landowners and interested parties about easements and the processes surrounding them.
- 3.2d. Continue to be available to partner with local governments.
- 3.2e. HVLC will use land criteria, with emphasis on public benefit, as a guideline by which to evaluate easement fee simple potential, as part of the board's two-resolution approval process.

Measurements

- Develop the lands committee and accept the committee's recommendations

Objective Three Outreach, Public Benefits and Education

- 3.3 Continue to conduct mission awareness for general or targeted program marketing with individuals, civic groups, nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

Action Items:

- 3.3a. Maintain an updated website and social media campaign, including using a social media platform for easy membership sign-up.

3.3b. Maximize Donor Perfect software for more marketing uses or explore other software

3.3c. Define role, if any, with outside grass roots conservation organizations (such as Conserve York County Foundation and the Coalition for the Protection of Rural Lands.)

3.3d. Define role, if any, with outside professional organizations (such as W&Ms Institute for Integrative Conservation; W&Ms Coastal Resilience Research Center; Hampton Roads Dept. of Forestry & Green Infrastructure Center.)

3.3e. Create awareness among financial, estate planning, non-profits, civic and other service professionals of HVLC's work and mission to encourage additional referrals.

3.3f. Encourage HVLC representation on other non-profit Boards (such as Farmer's Market.)

3.3g. Expand visibility of HVLC within our territory to varying segments of the population, including disadvantaged areas to promote involvement in local and nationwide events. (Some examples include Friends & Family Fall Festival, Conservancy Awareness Family Bike Ride, and the 2024 Nation's Guest).

3.3h HVLC will pursue efforts to put the public on conserved lands annually to promote public benefits of protection.

3.3i HVLC will continue to align, collaborate, and cross-market with the Williamsburg Farmers Market, including the *Power of Produce* program designed for children.

Measurements

- Executive Director & Lands committee will be responsible for these action items. (3.3c., 3.3d)

Revised 9 21 2022

PPS tweaked 9 22 22

Revised 10 3 22, by strategic plan committee

Approved 10 6 2022 by Board of Directors