

This example can be used as a starting point to create a policy or other document for your own land trust, but should be altered as necessary to reflect your organization's unique circumstances using guidance found in the *Land Trust Standards and Practices Guidebook* text and corresponding Standards and Practices Curriculum.

Please Note: If you are using this material for accreditation purposes, see also [the Land Trust Accreditation Commission website](#) for additional information. To search for policies from accredited land trusts, insert <<accredited>> along with the search term (e.g., conflict interest policy accredited).

° RICHMOND RURAL LAND PRESERVATION TRUST
RICHMOND, RI
STRATEGIC PLAN for
INITIAL PRIORITY GOALS
November 2004

Priority Goals:

- I. Rural Preservation: Protect cores ecological systems and scenic corridors that define Richmond's character.
- II. Community Participation: Solidify public support and actively involve the community in the trust's conservation efforts.
- III. Stewardship: Ensure that properties protected by the land trust are appropriately managed and maintained.
- IV. Funding: Ensure adequate funding to meet the program goals of the trust.
- V. Operational Competence: Develop personnel, facilities, policies and procedure's to achieve a "model" municipal land trust.

The following sections address the key elements that will be addressed to reach each goal.

I. Rural Preservation.

I.a. Comprehensive priority listing.

Create a comprehensive priority listing of all parcels greater than twenty acres. A comprehensive listing will be used as a decision making tool and for long term strategic planning analysis. This activity has already been initiated. Past and present trustees and interns have all been involved identifying parcels and collecting pertinent data. Trust interns will implement the raw factual data collection activity. The priority listing will be generated by the Trustees taking into consideration all factors deemed

important by the survey of town residents and consistent with the purpose of the law that created and governs the Trust activities.

I.b. Land Preservation.

Acquire, preserve or assist in protecting two or more properties each year. Two properties are the minimum goal upon which to plan and work towards preserving. The trust will strike a balance between assigned acquisition priorities and opportunistic opportunities that present themselves to the trust.

I.c. Landowner awareness.

Increase landowner’s awareness of conservation options. If landowners know about these options, such as land donation, development rights donation or sale, willing of rights or land they will be more likely to contact the land trust themselves – further improving our land protection efforts. The trust will put together educational brochures and a land trust section on the town’s web site with reference material that will highlight the benefits, procedures and outcomes for each conservation option. In addition the Trust will make educational presentations to community groups and individuals. Materials need to be developed.

I.d. Acquisition guidebook.

Develop an acquisition guidebook for board members. This guidebook will include resource materials, RRLPT procedures and requirements of affiliated organizations and will serve as a tool to be used before, during and after discussions with landowners.

Timeline

Element	Start Date	Evaluation Date	Target Completion Date
I.a.	Already in progress	December 05	ongoing
I.b.	Ongoing	Annual in December	2 properties per year
I.c.	8/1/05	11/30/05	1/1/06
I.d.	In progress	6/30/05	6/30/06

II. Community Participation.

- II.a. Public awareness.
Develop and distribute collateral materials, including a general-purpose brochure. Develop and maintain mailing database. A public awareness plan and budget will be put in place. Support of this initiative will be provided by trustees and volunteers from the community.

- II.b. Website
Expand, update and promote website. Development to include the addition of a feedback page, link page, resource page, volunteer page, what's new page and other useful modifications to promote public awareness and foster opportunities for the trust.

- II.c. Display Materials.
Develop multipurpose display and booth materials to use at public events.

- II.d. Educational Outreach & Public Presentations
Develop an education program on land preservation/conservation and the RRLPT. A comprehensive list of schools, organizations and contacts will be generated; we will make presentations to community groups, service clubs and other public groups.

- II.e. Abutter Awareness.
Contact abutters to RRLPT lands to educate them on the trust's mission and to enlist their support in stewardship and other RRLPT priorities. Direct contact, letters of introduction and public awareness materials as vehicles to drive awareness. Periodic contact with abutters each as needed to update them on trust activities and any items pertaining to their abutting trust property.

- II.f. Special Events.
Hold special events on RRLPT land to promote awareness.

- II.g. Friends of RRLPT.
Create Friends of RRLPT group to encourage passive involvement. This would be an extension of the volunteer arm of the trust and would encourage donations of time, effort, funds and public awareness.

II.h. Citizens preference survey

Conduct updated citizen's preference survey. An updated survey will be conducted to guarantee that the public interest is properly being conveyed in the trust's priorities. The trust will evaluate the best means to obtain this information. Outside funding and or collaboration with URI will be considered.

Timeline

Element	Start Date	Evaluation Date	Target Completion Date
II.a.	Ongoing	6/15/05	Ongoing
II.b.	Ongoing	1/31/05	Ongoing
II.c.	6/1/05	10/1/05	6/1/06
II.d.	1/1/06	3/31/06	Ongoing
II.e.	Ongoing	Semiannually	Ongoing
II.f	1/1/05	6/30/05	Ongoing
I.g.	4/1/04	4/1/05	Ongoing
II.h.	1/1/06	6/30/06	6/30/07

III. Stewardship.

III.a. Stewardship fund.

Identify/establish a permanent stewardship fund. A budget will be created for each property owned by the trust. This will cover current and anticipated recurring needs. Projections for future needs, in line with acquisition goals, will be made to determine a minimal level of investment in this fund. Outside sources will be considered for contributions to this fund. The intent is for the costs of stewardship to be covered without taxpayer burden (as soon as possible).

III.b. Signage.

Design, produce and install appropriate signage on all RRLPT properties. In compliance with town zoning restrictions signage to be implemented for RRPLT properties. A guideline for signage to be

established such that the content of the sign is consistent with appropriate use of the property.

III.c. Site Management Plan.

Develop a management plan for each RRLPT property. Obtain current survey, title history, procure title insurance and audit titles/deeds to guarantee legality of preservation for perpetuity.

III.d. Scouting Project

Identify and assist in the design of volunteer Boy Scout/Eagle Scout and Girl Scout projects. The intent is to establish an ongoing tradition for local scouting groups. This will also help public awareness and contribute to good public relations.

III.e. Nature Trails

Design and establish self guided nature trails on appropriate RRLPT properties. Criteria will be defined to determine if a property is appropriate for this activity, and a plan will be put in to place appropriate for each situation.

III.f. Public Use Policy.

Develop a public use policy for RRLPT properties. Address trash control/pick-up and policing activities and trail maintenance.

III.g. Cooperation with Town Entities.

Develop partnership with Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission as applicable to RRLPT properties.

Timeline

Element	Start Date	Evaluation Date	Target Completion Date
III.a.	3/1/04	10/31/04	Ongoing
III.b.	1/15/03	6/30/04	Ongoing
III.c.	1/15/03	9/30/04	Ongoing
III.d.	3/1/04	10/1/04	3/1/05
III.e.	9/01/04	3/1/05	Ongoing
III.f.	3/1/05	9/1/05	3/1/06
IIIh.	Ongoing	03/31/05	Ongoing

IV. Funding

IV.a. Annual Operating Budget.

Develop operating annual budget. Establish trustee liaison with town Treasurer.

IV.b. Funding Sources.

Identify potential sources of funds. A comprehensive listing of known funding sources and contacts to be updated and consolidated. A calendar of deadlines and application availability will be established and set as a permanent agenda item. Outreach program to other Land Trusts and entities will be set up to help identify other funding sources.

IV.c. Grant Funding.

We will pursue and secure grant funding from DEM, US Fish & Wildlife, Private foundations and other sources.

IV.d. Bond Issue.

Design and execute town bond issue from June 2002 through 2007; suggested amount of five million dollars. Break out budget elements for land/CE acquisition, land donations, stewardship costs (surveying, trails, signage, security, maintenance, etc.) and acquisitions costs (legal fees, surveys, etc.). Elaboration on this item will include the budgeting, by year for the items listed in the preceding sentence from town funds including projections of town contribution percentages to be drawn from the bond issue to match other funding sources.

Timeline

Element	Start Date	Evaluation Date	Target Completion Date
IV.a.	Ongoing	12/31/04	Ongoing
IV.b.	Immediately	6/30/05	Ongoing
IV.c.	Immediately	3/31/05	6/30/05.
IV.d.	1/1/05	6/30/05	CY06

- V. Operational Competence
 - V.a. Land Trust Coordinator/Executive Director
Consider hiring or appointing a land trust coordinator/executive director. Address the consolidation of the intern and clerical funds towards this goal. Investigate cooperative hiring with one or more other land trust entities in South County.
 - V.b. Policy & procedures manual.
Develop a board policy and procedures manual.
 - V.c. Land Trust Office.
Secure land trust office in Town Hall with dedicated computer to conduct land trust business, including web site maintenance, research, meetings with citizens and partners. Increase accessibility of database. Upgraded database as central resource for trusts activities.
 - V.d. GIS Capability.
Expand and enhance in-house GIS capability and training. A needs analysis and recommendations with costs will be preformed. A budget line item for next budget period will be set up. Outside funding sources and/or resource sharing with other trusts will be explored.
 - V.e. Expand active membership.
Add volunteer non-board members to committees. Trust is considering meeting with committees on the second meeting of the month chaired by trustees who report results at first meeting of the month. The trust will form committees and utilize community participation to expand and accelerate the implementation of the priorities in this plan. Guidelines for the volunteer program will be established to clearly outline the expectations, responsibilities and demands on volunteers.
 - V.f. Town Council.
Improve relationship with Town Council. Send regular communications/updates to council on a monthly basis. Secure a spot

on the agenda of town council meetings every three months.
 Coordinate a workshop with the town council to discuss land trust’s mission.

V.g. Legal Council.

Secure access to legal council. We will meet semi-annually with the Town Solicitor to discuss procedural recommendations and to field questions from trustees in open forum.

V.h. Training Program.

Identify additional training needs and hold training programs for the board and volunteers twice each year. Develop training program for board members in land protection skills including landowner contract negotiations, funding, strategic planning and working with conservation partners. This will include in house training, training with hired third parties and training sessions offered by third parties including such as TNC, DEM and others. A comprehensive recommended training regimen will be put together for all trustees that will outline training topics that are to be completed. A record will be kept on the training that each trustee participates in and a training goal is to be committed to by each trustee prior to each calendar year.

Timeline:

Element	Start Date	Evaluation Date	Target Completion Date
V.a.	3/15/06	9/15/06	3/31/07
V.b.	4/1/06	9/30/06	6/30/07
V.c.	On hold	6/30/06	
V.d.	Completed		
V.e.	4/1/05	9/30/05	9/30/06
V.f.	Ongoing	6/30/05	Ongoing
V.g.	In progress	3/30/05	Ongoing
V.h.	On hold	6/30/05	

° This material is designed to provide accurate, authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that the Land Trust Alliance is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional counsel. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of competent professionals should be sought.