



**KAWARTHA LAND TRUST**

Protecting the land you love.

# Strategic Plan 2020-2022

Approved by the Board of Directors February 2020



## Contents

Land Acknowledgement .....	1
Our Vision.....	2
Our Mission.....	2
Our Values.....	2
Strategic Objectives .....	2
Strategic Objective 1: Secure and Protect Land.....	3
Strategic Objective 2: Practice and Promote Sustainable Land Stewardship.....	3
Strategic Objective 3: Enhance Engagement and Outreach .....	4
Strategic Objective 4: Grow Sustainably.....	4
Implementing the Strategic Plan .....	5

## Land Acknowledgement

*We, Kawartha Land Trust, respectfully acknowledge that we work and are located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.*

We offer our gratitude to First Nations for their care for, and teachings about, the earth and our relationship to it. Kawartha Land Trust honours these teachings through stewardship and respect for the land we protect.

### Note on the use of this document

This document is intended for internal planning and communications only. External messaging and communications materials will be developed as needed to share our strategic plan with external partners and stakeholders.



## Our Vision

A future where 30% of the Kawartha Region is characterized by protected natural spaces and connections that support healthy and representative ecosystems and landscapes.

## Our Mission

Caring for lands entrusted to us and helping others protect the land they love in the Kawarthas.

## Our Values

**Conservation:** Land conservation and protection of heritage matters deeply to people who live in the Kawarthas and beyond. The natural environment in this region has attracted people and sustained life since time immemorial. We acknowledge and honour the land stewardship of previous and current generations in protecting and caring for healthy and diverse ecosystems that support quality of life today. We are committed to making conservation efforts permanent by protecting and caring for ecologically important lands and the connections between those lands, so that current and future generations can thrive.

**Collaboration:** We know that working collaboratively can achieve greater impact. To protect a deeply-connected landscape we need a mix of privately and publicly-protected lands, private land stewardship, and supportive government policy. We actively nurture relationships with volunteers, donors, staff, and community partners whose mandates and undertakings complement our own. We value collaborations that are built on trust, respect, and accountability to each other and the land we protect.

**Transparency:** Earning the trust of the community means that we need to be transparent with our plans for the land we manage, with our finances, and with our stewardship not only of the land but also of the donations and volunteer contributions of our supporters. Above all else, KLT is a *Trust*, and we mean to keep that trust for generations.

**Integrity:** Leading with integrity means we implement high-quality, ethical programs that have long-term positive social and environmental impacts in our community. We are committed to protecting and conserving land using evidence-based standards, best practices, and being accountable to our volunteers, donors, community partners, and the land on which we work.

**Innovation:** Recognizing that our work is long-term, we value and encourage innovative ideas and solutions as we respond to changing social, political and environmental circumstances.

## Strategic Objectives

Four strategic objectives have been identified that will serve as our guide posts over the next three years. The objectives are broad to allow for flexibility as circumstances in the social and political environment change. These objectives will focus our core functions, align our resources and structures, and guide our decision-making as we implement evidence-based initiatives.



## Strategic Objective 1: Secure and Protect Land

In the face of encroaching development and a rapidly changing climate, our primary focus is to accelerate land acquisition and protection in ecologically important priority areas within the Kawarthas, while remaining responsive to all emerging land securement opportunities.

### Strategies:

- a. Review and refine our land acquisition process to ensure it is as efficient as possible, using tools such as the current land securement strategy and Kawarthas Naturally Connected (KNC) Preferred Scenario. The KNC Preferred Scenario is the result of a collaborative process that used the best available science to identify which areas of our landscape should be protected to maintain a functioning Natural Heritage System.
- b. Develop our land securement strategy to include both long term conservation goals and short to medium term practices and priorities for securement. The strategy will clearly identify the role other entities play in local conservation. Our strategy will be accessible and clearly communicated to stakeholders, partners and the public.
- c. Review our land securement policies and procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure they are up to date, and that they optimize timelines for efficient land securement.
- d. Intensify outreach to landowners within priority areas to ensure they are aware of KLT, and protection opportunities.
- e. Establish a land securement fund for donors who want to exclusively support securement activities.

## Strategic Objective 2: Practice and Promote Sustainable Land Stewardship

Responsible land stewardship plays a critical role in promoting and sustaining healthy ecosystems, diverse habitats, and clean air and water. We are committed to stewarding formally protected land with a focus on long-term sustainability.

### Strategies:

- a. Maintain rigorous standards for stewardship of protected lands including monitoring easements, maintaining records, and fostering strong relationships with landowners through regular contact.
- b. Ensure the land stewardship endowment fund is adequate to support the ongoing stewardship requirements of KLT protected lands.
- c. Empower volunteers in the stewardship of protected lands by enhancing stewardship capacity of individuals and groups.
- d. Build innovative partnership models of stewardship that bridge and enhance organizational capacities.
- e. Develop a robust policy around public access to KLT managed lands, taking into account landowner wishes, ecological values for protection and opportunities for recreation and education. Ensure opportunities for public land access is clearly communicated to members of our community.

### Strategic Objective 3: Enhance Engagement and Outreach

We are committed to being a trusted leader in conservation in the Kawarthas and beyond. We seek to build a culture of respect and value for the natural heritage of the land, and the importance of preserving it for future generations. To expand our capacity and achieve greater impact, it is vital that we broaden our engagement with the community to nurture and increase our partnerships.

#### Strategies:

- a. Develop a communication strategy and supporting materials to support the engagement of the board, trustees, and volunteers to participate in events and activities. Include an outreach strategy to increase awareness in the broader community about the importance of land conservation, including social and traditional media, community events, and presentations.
- b. Build and invest in new relationships with others in the conservation community to maximize our collective impact for natural heritage protection. Explore continued opportunities for meaningful partnerships with the Williams Treaties First Nations.
- c. Be a knowledge resource to the community by providing educational opportunities and creating resources. Develop partnerships with other conservation organizations to deliver educational programs using KLT protected land.
- d. Influence public policy development and planning by engaging with representatives from all levels of government on issues related to conservation and land protection.

### Strategic Objective 4: Grow Sustainably

KLT has experienced tremendous organizational growth and development due to the hard work of our staff and volunteers and the generosity of our donors. As an organization, we are committed to building a healthy network of people and infrastructure to support continued growth in protected properties at an accelerated but sustainable pace. We will continue to nurture our strong relationships among staff, volunteers, donors, partners, and the broader community.

#### Strategies:

- a. Invest in human resources as necessary to support the work of staff and volunteers. Ensure that staff has the appropriate expertise, training and support to oversee and deliver programs and services that meet our mission. Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and that staff and volunteers have sustainable workloads, and that health and well-being remain paramount.
- b. Update all existing policies and procedures and apply new policies as the needs of KLT grow. Ensure they continue to align with Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices and reflect emerging areas of interest.
- c. Invest in IT systems and infrastructure to maximize organizational efficiency (e.g. improved record-keeping, data collection, analysis, stakeholder relationship management, and remote working environments).
- d. Ensure financial sustainability of the organization by investing in our philanthropic capacity and exploring ways of diversifying revenue (e.g. non-traditional approaches to donation, membership models, granting streams, social enterprise opportunities and fee for service).

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- e. Optimize the trustee model of governance to ensure the long-term strength of the organization. Regularly engage the expertise of trustees in strategic thinking and broadening awareness of the organization.

## Implementing the Strategic Plan

KLT is excited to launch this new strategic plan.

Within two months of approval of this plan by KLT Board of Directors, an implementation plan with measurable goals, timelines, and roles and responsibilities will be developed by KLT staff in consultation with committees and the Board.

The board of directors commits to the following actions to ensure success in the implementation of the new strategic plan:

1. Support the Executive Director in the creation of a securement strategy, fund development plan, and operational plan by end of 2020.
2. Monitor and measure effectiveness of the operational plan on a quarterly basis.
3. Communicate progress to stakeholders on an annual basis.
4. Complete an annual review of the strategic plan to amend objectives and strategies as needed, and to ensure measures to meet objectives are reflected in the annual operational plans and budgets.