



# Strategic Plan

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**2019 – 2021**

**Adopted by  
Pines & Prairies Land Trust  
Board of Directors  
May 2018**

Heartfelt thanks to the Pines & Prairies Board of Directors, Past Board members, and staff for their vision and leadership in developing this 3-Year Strategic Plan.

Sincere appreciation to the Strategic Planning Team for their time and commitment to researching and analyzing information to lay the foundation for a successful planning session: Melanie Pavlas, Executive Director; Maria Alonso, President of the Board of Directors; Courtney Young, Staff Member; Carolyn Vogel, Founder/Stakeholder; Nikki Krueger, Development Consultant.

Equally as important, Pines & Prairies Land Trust's land conservation work would not be possible without the extraordinary commitment of its community volunteers, donors, supporters, and strategic partners.

Appreciatively,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MPavlas', written in a cursive style.

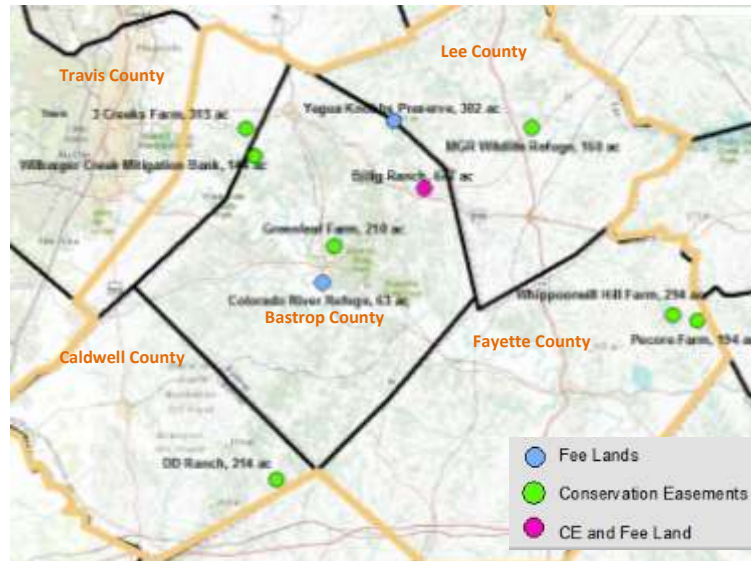
Melanie Pavlas, Executive Director

**Executive Summary**

Pines and Prairies Land Trust (PPLT) was founded in 2001 by a small group of community members wanting to make a greater impact on the area’s landscape. The organization grew with these founders, other volunteers and area landowners to protect over 2000 acres in Bastrop, Caldwell, Fayette and Lee Counties. In 2012, PPLT began working on becoming accredited by the Land Trust Alliance, and during the application process, the organization began maturing. From here, several key leaders identified the benefits of bringing PPLT into this next stage and began a journey to advance the organization into one that can meet the needs and challenges of the coming decades. While every founder has since moved on, their legacy is still honored by always circling our work back to the spirit of the vision and mission they created.

**The mission of Pines and Prairies Land Trust is to protect natural and cultural resources and promote sustainable agriculture through education and preservation of open space in Central Texas.**

Pines and Prairies Land Trust received national accreditation status in 2014. During that process, PPLT obtained one new conservation easement, hired its first, full-time executive director (ED) and later, a second, part-time staff member. In 2015, the Land Trust Alliance recognized the leadership potential in its new board president and ED, and invited them to attend their Wentworth Leadership Program. From this program, we were awarded grants over two years that supported our needs for financial restructuring, board development and strategic planning. PPLT also organized its first annual fundraising event, Bands for Lands™. From 2017 to now, PPLT obtained its seventh conservation easement, received a marketing plan, began formalizing a volunteer program, hired its first development coordinator and started work on this strategic plan.



**New Vision: Protecting Land. Connecting People to Land. Inspiring a Land Legacy.**

To continue our work in land conservation, Pines & Prairies Land Trusts must be a strong organization with committed leadership, talented management, and sustainable funding. We believe that Pines & Prairies Land Trust is a vital resource and go-to organization when it comes to conserving and stewarding land in Southeast Central Texas. It is our intent to connect to the community to better understand their interests which will allow us to attain our goals as outlined in this strategic plan. We hope you will join us in our journey to being the successful, outstanding land trust we have always strived to be, leading landscape wide conservation in our communities.

Sincerely,

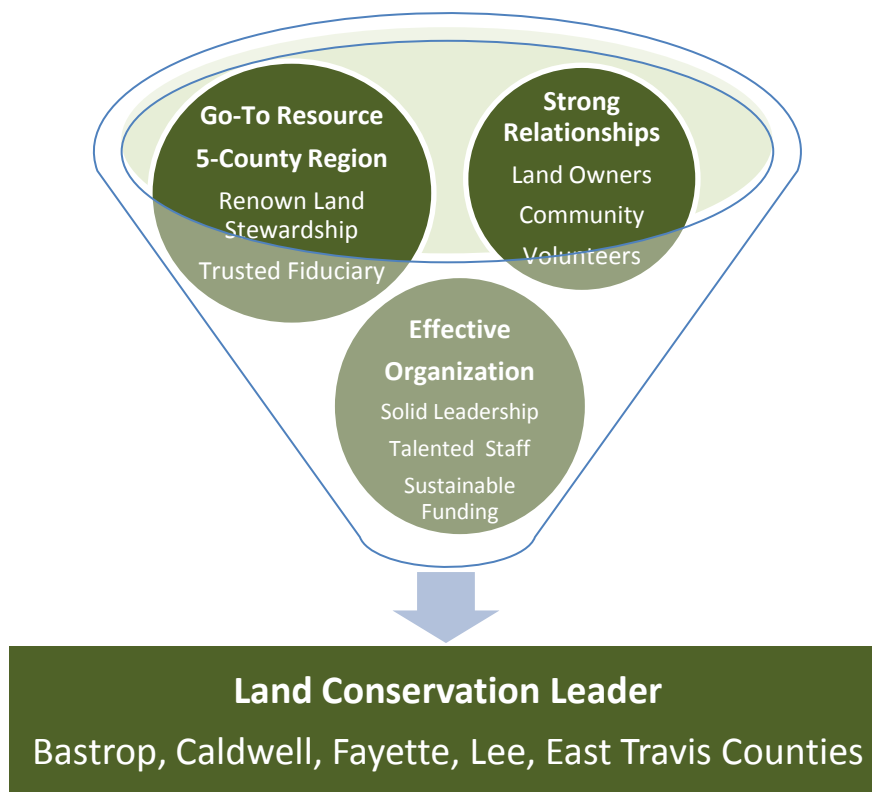
Melanie Pavlas, Executive Director

To accomplish our mission, this strategic plan identifies four specific focus areas:

- 1- **Land Conservation:** PPLT continues to evolve in its protection and stewardship of natural resources through education and preservation of open space in Central Texas.
- 2- **Community Engagement:** PPLT is a vital “go-to organization” with an educated and engaged base of support that participates in land conservation efforts throughout the five-county area which includes Bastrop, Caldwell, Fayette, Lee, and East Travis counties.
- 3- **Board Development:** PPLT establishes refined board of directors’ policies, procedures, and infrastructure to ensure long term sustainability.
- 4- **Development:** PPLT has sufficient funds to meet its land conservation goals, perform its stewardship duties, and support annual operations.

This plan details the goals, objectives, and actions to support these four focus areas as PPLT moves into the next three years to further substantiate our commitment to land conservation in the Bastrop, Caldwell, Fayette, Lee, and East Travis county region.

### What will SUCCESS look like?



**Strategic Goals and Objectives**

FOCUS AREA	PLAN YEAR	STRATEGIC GOAL(S)	OBJECTIVE(S)
<b>LAND CONSERVATION</b>	2019	Sustainably manage preserved lands to maintain and enhance the conservation value	Maintain preserves
		Increase health of natural resources	
	Foster relationships with conservation partners	Create conservation easement donor program	
	2020	Sustainably manage preserved lands to maintain and enhance the conservation value	Maintain preserves
		Increase health of natural resources on preserves	
		Foster relationships with conservation partners	Build strategic partnerships and alliances with local and regional communities and other conservation orgs
	Create conservation donor engagement program		
	2021	Sustainably manage preserved lands to maintain and enhance the conservation value	Maintain preserves
Increase health of natural resources on preserves			
Foster relationships with conservation partners	Create conservation easement donor engagement program		

**Strategic Goals and Objectives**

FOCUS AREA	PLAN YEAR	STRATEGIC GOAL(s)	OBJECTIVE(S)
<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	2019	Engage the communities of PPLT’s 5 county service area	Identify prospective strategic contacts in each of 5 counties
		Grow the PPLT volunteer base into long-term involved supporters	Identify both episodic and ongoing opportunities to support PPLT
			Create Volunteer Engagement Guidelines and Principles
		Identify volunteer management practices to recruit, match, ,train, and retain volunteers	
	2020	Expand PPLT staff bandwidth by engaging Volunteer Leaders (VLs) to support projects and events	Recruit, train, and deploy VLs to support PPLT events
		Expand educational and engagement of youth as future land conservationists	Engage generations of donors and volunteers Partner with home school organizations for nature walks, trail days
	2021	Establish and Engagement Advisory Council	Develop an engagement advisory council consisting of individuals and corporations
			Evaluate Advisory Council (strategic partner) experience

**STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

FOCUS AREA	PLAN YEAR	STRATEGIC GOAL(S)	OBJECTIVE(S)
<b>BOARD DEVELOPMENT</b>	2019	Refine board infrastructure to ensure long term sustainability of PPLT	Develop board processes to include recruitment and development
			Identify and develop board committees
	2020	Enhance board commitment and committee strength to ensure board growth and involvement	Develop board processes to include education and ongoing skills development
			Review and enhance committee structure
			Review Board Member job description
	2021	Strengthen governance role	Define board governance responsibility
		Review board recruitment and development strategies	

**STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

FOCUS AREA	PLAN YEAR	STRATEGIC GOAL(S)	OBJECTIVE(S)
<p><b>DEVELOPMENT MARKETING</b></p>	2019	Develop sufficient funds to support land conservation initiatives	Evaluate current fundraising events
		Develop event sponsorship packet	
		Survey existing donors for engagement satisfaction	
		Create a formal thank you process for donors	Recognize all donors and thank them for their contribution within 1 week
		Establish a strategic marketing plan	Create PPLT key messages
			Develop 1-Page leave behind for community outreach
			Ensure current website content is updated
	Create new Board member orientation packet		
	2020	Grow team in order to support revenue growth	Hire one permanent development staff
		Expand and engage corporate support	Develop list of 50 individuals/corporations to target for support
			Offer customized corporate days of volunteering based on CSR goals and PPLT mission alignment
	Develop newsletter communication strategy	Update schedule and layout of PPLT e-Newsletters	
	2021	Create giving society/leadership circle	Prioritize efforts to engage high net worth individuals and young donors through PPLT
Develop/launch an awards and recognition program		Recognize all volunteers, individuals, groups and corporations (event)	