

# Greenbelt Land Trust

## Strategic Conservation Framework

### Grounding

Greenbelt stands at a crossroads. The conservation work we've accomplished has been significant and important, but more is demanded from us.

The Strategic Framework outlined here reflects a series of conversations, workshops and retreats that Greenbelt board and staff collaborated on throughout 2020-2022, with the purpose of clarifying the organization's vision and priorities for the future ... leading us towards our 'north star'.

This process has been led by Greenbelt's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee, leveraging diverse perspectives within the organization through active collaboration. In addition, all staff and board have been thought-leaders in this process, and it is the collective contributions of all that are compiled here. We also recognize our colleagues Allison Handler, who skillfully facilitated this process, and Cliff Jones who guided our equity and justice learning journey.

The planning process has been both challenging and gratifying, as we grappled with new directions for the organization and the way we do our work. The way forward has not always been clear, and at times we felt overwhelmed by the complexities within the issues discussed. And yet, with a learning mindset and open hearts, Greenbelt board and staff have faced hard questions, opened our arms to new possibilities, and emerged with a vision for our shared future.

Our visioning and planning efforts have clarified the need to sharpen our focus in three areas: **climate resilience, social justice, and community well-being**. Through a 1.5 year long planning process, we identified these three focal areas as the most critical issues for Greenbelt to address and respond to through our strategic conservation planning for the next decade.

Our intention for this Strategic Framework is that it:

- Is used as a lens through which we conduct our conservation mission
- Is designed to be flexible, continually evolving as Greenbelt steps more fully into these three priority areas of climate resilience, social justice and community well-being.
- Serves as a road-map for Greenbelt. By knowing better where we are headed, we can maximize flexibility in the roads to get there, leveraging new opportunities and relationships as they arise.

### Vision

**We envision a thriving, healthy environment for all.**

*\*Vision adopted February, 2021*

To get there we will center:

- *Climate resilience*
- *Social justice*
- *Community well-being*

## Mission

**Conserving land and water in the Willamette Valley for a more resilient future.**

## Values

Values are the tenets that guide our work towards our conservation mission and vision.

- **Build relationships with humility**
- **Embrace change**
- **Seek root causes**
- **Be fearless change-makers**
- **Welcome constructive conflict**

## Strategic Approaches

### I. CENTER CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Climate change is an all-hands-on-deck emergency and, although climate resilience has been a driver of Greenbelt’s work, in response to this crisis we must do more. And we need to do it faster and better. We are not throwing out our current conservation work, but rather we are adding climate resilience as an overlay and focus.

*A Climate Resilience Lens:*

**Strategy 1: Overlay climate as a focal lens through which we prioritize our conservation and stewardship efforts.**

**Strategy 2: Advocate for climate resilience that centers communities of color and low-income communities.**

**Strategy 3: Increase the pace and scale of our conservation efforts.**

**Strategy 4: Expand the geographic priorities of our work to include a ‘rivers to ridges’ approach.**



## 2. CENTER SOCIAL JUSTICE

We in conservation have too often failed to understand how our work has perpetuated racial, social and economic injustice. As a result, efforts to conserve nature can continue to do harm by excluding or even displacing people from places that are culturally, spiritually, or historically significant to them. And the benefits of nature - the sustenance offered by green space and time outdoors - are not distributed equitably. *We can be part of the change.*

*A Social Justice Lens:*

**Strategy 1: Prioritize equity and inclusion at the individual and organizational level.**

**Strategy 2: Deepen relationships with organizations that work in service of social justice.**

**Strategy 3: Support expanding Indigenous ownership, access and stewardship of land.**

**Strategy 4: Work with and influence agencies, institutions, and organizations that hold power to pursue policies, practices, and funding that dismantle racism and center the voices of frontline communities.**

## 3. CENTER COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

A successful future hinges on Greenbelt's ability to recognize and tackle systemic issues through bold action and creative partnership that breaks out of the mold of 'traditional' conservation, integrating habitat protection and recreation with public health, housing, homelessness, and access to healthy local food.

*A Community Well-Being Lens:*

**Strategy 1: Ensure our conservation priorities consider the needs of the communities we are working within.**

**Strategy 2: Focus on equitable access to trails and the outdoors to enhance community wellbeing for all people, centering people with disabilities, people of color, and others who have encountered barriers to outdoor access.**

**Strategy 3: Expand cross-sector partnerships (examples may include houselessness, health, and food security), and share power with partners and allies.**



## **GREENBELT EQUITY LENS**

1. What assumptions have been made about this decision?
2. How would the outcomes of this decision impact (increase or decrease) equity?
3. Does this decision engage and/or account for multiple perspectives?
4. What barriers to engagement exist or may result from this decision?
5. Based on this discussion, what plan changes would you recommend to support more equitable outcomes?
6. What are the next steps to addressing findings?

