



Strategic Plan

2012 - 2016

Our Leadership

Members of the Board

Bert Thomas	Chairman
Stephanie Graves	Director
Larry Holladay	Director
Bill Holmes	Director, Treasurer
Mark Leopold	Director
Steve McLane	Director
Linda Rankin	Director, Secretary
Jeff Sanders	Director
Trish Schroeder	Director
Bill Thomas	Director

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Our Mission, Vision and Logo	5
Our Roadmap	6
<i>Land Protection and Stewardship</i>	7
<i>Community Mindset, Action and Collaboration</i>	8
<i>Organization Success, Reputation and Influence</i>	9
Acknowledgements	11

Executive Summary

The Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy serves the community and its residents as a 501(c)(3) designated land trust dedicated to the protection and stewardship of natural areas and green space within the city of Fort Thomas, Kentucky.

Upon its founding and the writing of its mission, the Conservancy set forth to ensure the health and future of the forested hillsides and natural areas through practical leadership and the collaborative efforts of its members, the city administration, educational and civic organizations, and resident landowners.

Core to our Strategic Plan is ***Land Protection and Stewardship***, one of our three pillars of focus and truly the heart of our passion and work as an organization.

Community Mindset, Action, and Collaboration, our second pillar, and ***Organization Success, Reputation, and Influence***, our third, provide the organizational foundation upon which our success will be built and the vehicle through which we grow the community's commitment to natural heritage.

Natural Heritage and Legacy, Educational Excellence, Public Safety, and Tradition are the cornerstones of quality of life in Fort Thomas. They distinguish our community from all others in the region.

Recognizing the distinction and interdependence of these qualities, the Conservancy defined the following Roadmap for achievement of its mission and vision, including a series of goals, objectives, and initiatives that are specific, measurable, and synergistic.

Our collective success depends upon the talents, actions, and dedication of our 100% volunteer organization and the commitment and support of the community within which and for which we work.

We extend a heart-felt thank you to all those that brought us this far and to all those that take us from here.

Our mission, vision and logo

Mission

The mission of the Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy is to protect and conserve the natural areas that contribute to the vitality and unique character of Fort Thomas through land preservation, responsible stewardship, and the promotion of community awareness, understanding, and enjoyment for present and future generations.

Vision

Our vision for the community is one where the forested hillsides and significant natural areas of Fort Thomas are protected into perpetuity and the value placed on natural heritage by community leaders and residents is such that the need for a conservancy no longer exists.

Logo

The logo, a leaf within an oval, symbolizes the mission of the Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy and the beauty of the land we have around us. The oval is a symbol of abundance, creativity and fertility and represents the guiding principles of our city and its Conservancy. The leaf represents the forested hillsides of our city, the stem the magnificent river that defines our eastern border, and the blue background is the sky and water reflecting the hills. The colors of the leaf move from spring into fall symbolizing the perpetual changing of the seasons and the natural renewal of all life around us. Its pleasing shape and colors will remind us all of our mission and will be a part of everything we do.



Our Roadmap

The Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy serves the community and its residents as a 501(c)(3) designated land trust dedicated to the protection and stewardship of natural areas and green space within the City of Fort Thomas, Kentucky.

In line with our mission, we developed a set of Desired Outcomes as well as a series of Goals and Objectives and requisite Initiatives that form the Roadmap for achievement of that vision.

Our roadmap is built around three pillars:

Land Protection and Stewardship

Community Mindset, Action, and Collaboration

Organization Success, Reputation, and Influence

Desired Outcomes are intended to be specific reflections of our vision for the community, the ideal state.

Goals and Objectives are measurable targets intended to motivate us and guide our activities in line with our mission.

Initiatives and Activities are specific actions that will directly impact our ability to achieve our Goals and Objectives.

Although the pillars are fixed, our roadmap is not designed to be static but rather to be fluid and adaptable based on our achievement of objectives and the dynamic nature of the community within which we operate.

Land Protection and Stewardship

The Land Protection & Stewardship (LPS) program lies at the heart of the Conservancy's mission and strategic objectives. The success of the program is critical to the long-term vitality of Fort Thomas, including its natural heritage, high standard of living, and unique position as the most heavily forested of all Northern Kentucky river communities.

The LPS program was established for a single purpose – to assist Fort Thomas landowners who have an interest in preserving the natural state and integrity of their property and to support the long-term stewardship of that property.

Desired Outcomes

- The forested hillsides and significant natural areas of Fort Thomas are protected;
- The quality of the forests and natural areas is improved and well-managed;
- Fort Thomas is a habitat of thriving native plants, animals and people living harmoniously and sustainably.

Goals and Objectives

- Develop and implement a successful Land Protection & Stewardship (LP&S) program;
- Work with landowners to conserve and protect land into perpetuity and consistent with FTFC guidelines;
- Target, eradicate, and manage invasive species.

Initiatives and Activities

- Develop processes for land recommendation, review, approval, and management (and associated roles & responsibilities)
- Create a comprehensive list of priority land parcels for the LPS program;
- Develop public educational materials supporting the LPS program and FTFC mission and objectives;
- Develop a program to keep local officials, the business community and school and youth leadership informed of the LPS program and activities
- Develop and implement procedures for engaging landowners and neighborhoods;
- Develop and implement an Invasive Species Eradication program;
- Develop supporting digital technology and tools

Community mindset, action, and collaboration

The fate of Fort Thomas natural areas depends not on the actions of the Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy but rather on the actions of the community. The decision to make the right decision ultimately rests in the hands of each resident, each elected official, and each member of various stakeholder groups who value the long-term vitality of the community and the quality of life it supports.

The Conservancy holds that the only way to ensure this is through collaboration and alignment of the community's mindset and actions with our shared desire to protect the community's natural beauty, heritage, and integrity.

Desired Outcomes

- Fort Thomas residents naturally act in ways that fully support the protection and stewardship of the community's natural areas
- The business community, civic leadership, and residents promote and support Fort Thomas forests and natural areas as critical to the economic vitality of the community
- Residents connect with nature and their neighbors through the community's diverse offering of native gardens, trail systems, and natural areas

Goals and Objectives

- Grow FTFC membership to 1000 members by 2016
- Grow community support of FTFC programs and initiatives through volunteerism, participation, and donation
- Promote land conservation and stewardship principles and action throughout the community, including its residents, government and civic organizations

Initiatives and Activities

- Develop and implement a community outreach plan and create supporting marketing materials;
- Develop a plan for potential new trail systems and their stewardship
- Develop a model native garden and native garden promotional campaign
- Create and maintain current an informative website;
- Develop a program to increase and manage membership

Organizational success, reputation and influence

Success as an organization hinges on our ability to organize ourselves and operate in a manner that ensures our long-term viability. As a volunteer-based organization operating within a small community, we depend on the talents, commitments, and passion of a limited pool of people with limited amounts of time.

Our overall objective as an organization will be to maximize time spent by a rotational leadership group on activities that are closely aligned with our mission and key objectives and to minimize time spent on organizational minutia and other non-value-added activities.

Desired Outcomes

- FTFC is viewed as the gold standard for community engagement, civic collaboration, and local conservation success
- FTFC is a highly effective and financially sustainable organization
- FTFC is a magnet for grassroots community involvement, talent, and support

Goals and Objectives

- Develop and implement a successful operational model and supporting processes
- Develop a strategy for internal volunteerism and rotation, including Board membership and committee leadership
- Develop and implement a successful fundraising program that aligns with strategic objectives and budgetary needs of the organization
- Develop a strategy for operational engagement with community, governmental, and civic organizations

Initiatives and Activities

- Prepare structural and procedural documents that align with the organization's mission, programs and objectives;
- Create and maintain documentation on committees, their owners and teams;
- Manage committees by creating specific objectives and timelines for volunteers;
- Develop fundraising programs and campaigns;
- Develop supporting digital technology and tools for organization administration and fundraising;

- Develop a strategic advisory committee and program – key members and advisors
- Standardize meeting place and schedule – board, steering, and committees
- Maintain a board presence of an attorney and an accountant

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy and all of its supporters, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to our members and community of volunteers who share our appreciation of the forests and natural areas that distinguish our community from all others in the region.

We thank the City of Fort Thomas and administration for their support and collaboration on various initiatives and projects that support the protection of this community's valuable natural assets.

We thank the many educational and civic groups and organizations for their promotion of educational opportunities and outdoor experiences that further the community's appreciation for natural beauty and bio-diversity and their critical contribution to quality of life in Fort Thomas.