



LAND ACQUISITION, MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSITION POLICY

1. LAND ACQUISITION

- 1.1. ACRE will acquire lands located in the municipalities surrounding Gatineau Park, prioritizing lands found wholly or partially within the ecological corridors identified by Gatineau Park and the National Capital Commission. ACRE's primary area of land conservation is the Municipality of Chelsea.
- 1.2. ACRE may partner to obtain and own land from time to time, with municipalities, provincial and federal agencies, and other conservation organizations and agencies.
- 1.3. All letters of intention, offers or any other commitment to purchase lands, be they conditional or non-binding or otherwise, will be pre-approved by the Board of Directors.
- 1.4. All financial commitments to acquire a property will be approved by the Board of Directors.
- 1.5. For donations of land with a value expected to exceed \$ 25,000, ACRE will obtain an independent appraisal that meets the requirements of the Canadian Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice for all acquisitions of land or interests in land. The evaluation will include a full narrative report and will be prepared by a Canadian Institute Accredited Evaluator (AACI). For ecological gifts valued at less than \$ 25,000, a brief narrative report prepared by an AACI, Canadian residential appraiser or licensed real estate professional is also

acceptable.

- 1.6. The value of the land will be determined based on sales of comparable properties or available appraisals prepared for properties located near the land to be acquired. The rationale for determining the value will be documented. When comparable land values are not available, or when an appraisal is required for fundraising purposes, a brief narrative appraisal will be prepared by an AACI.
- 1.7. Legal review and technical expertise: ACRE will obtain a legal review of each land transaction and conservation agreement, appropriate to its complexity, by a lawyer or notary experienced in real estate law. If deemed necessary based on the specifics of a transaction, ACRE will retain the services of experts in taxation, finance, real estate, and land and water management.
- 1.8. ACRE and its directors will refrain from providing specific legal, financial or tax advice to any outside party involved in a land transaction, and will recommend that each party to a land transaction or conservation agreement obtain advice.
- 1.9. In cases where land is donated, ACRE will enter into a legally binding donor agreement, with the landowner.
- 1.10. Purchasing land from “Insiders” is subject to the following:
 - 1.10.1. “Insiders” include, without limitation: directors, staff, members; parties related to board members or staff or members; significant contributors within the meaning of the Income Tax Act; persons who have the ability to influence the decisions of the ACRE; and those who have access to information that is not available to the general public;
 - 1.10.2. when entering into transactions with insiders, ACRE shall document how the transaction meets ACRE's land conservation objectives, follow all transaction policies and procedures; and ensure that there is no unacceptable undue advantage; and
 - 1.10.3. for the purchase of lands from insiders, ACRE will also obtain a qualified independent appraisal.
- 1.11. Registration: All land transactions will be legally registered at the appropriate registry office in accordance with municipal and provincial laws.
- 1.12. Title and Subordination Investigation: ACRE will investigate the title of each property or interest in land that it intends to acquire, to ensure that negotiations take place with the correct owners and to identify all privileges, mortgages, mining leases, water rights, or charges against the property or other matters that may affect the transaction.

- 1.13. Subterranean rights: ACRE will investigate the ownership of subterranean rights for all real estate transactions and, to the extent possible, will endeavor to mitigate any impacts that future exercising of these rights may have on the conservation values of the property.
- 1.14. Environmental Due Diligence: ACRE will not knowingly acquire properties that are contaminated. Steps will be taken, where appropriate prior to completing the acquisition, to identify and document the presence or absence of hazardous or toxic materials on or near the property that could create future liabilities for the organization. These measures include at a minimum a physical inspection of the property and an investigation of the historic uses of the property. If deemed necessary, an environmental assessment will be carried out.

2. **LAND MANAGEMENT**

- 2.1. ACRE lands will be managed and used for purposes consistent with ACRE's mandate which includes education, recreation, conservation and preservation of natural habitat. The lands will not be used for mining, industrial, commercial or other activities that are inconsistent with the ACRE's Mandate.
- 2.2. The Board of Directors will approve land management plans as may be necessary for particular ACRE lands. These plans will guide activities on the land. The management plans may be updated as necessary to take into account new conditions or management issues relating to ownership.
- 2.3. ACRE will undertake to have a land stewardship / caretaker or a group of land stewards / caretakers who will work together as a team on land stewardship matters for particular lands.
- 2.4. The land steward/caretakers have an important role in successful land conservation that includes the following activities:
 - 2.4.1. perform at least two formal inspections per year of their assigned property, ideally in the spring and fall. More frequent informal inspections can be undertaken if necessary or desirable;
 - 2.4.2. maintain informal communications with adjacent landowners and other persons with an interest in the property;

- 2.4.3. notify ACRE of any use of the property inconsistent with ACRE's Mandate or the Land Management Plan associated with the particular ACRE Land;
 - 2.4.4. assist in the maintenance of the land, maintaining their ecological integrity, and public safety;
 - 2.4.5. contribute to updates or necessary revisions to the land management plan;
 - 2.4.6. contribute to ACRE's decisions related to the lands such as trail locations and maintenance, fences, rehabilitating or maintaining the ecological integrity of the lands; and
 - 2.4.7. meet with the Board of Directors as may be necessary to discuss any management issues related to the Lands.
- 2.5. Land stewards / caretakers will not incur any expenses or financial or any other commitments related to the Lands without seeking the prior approval from ACRE.
- 2.6. ACRE will maintain general liability insurance on all its Lands in the amount of no less than \$1,000,000.00.
- 2.7. ACRE will seek to place all conservation lands that it owns under municipal conservation zoning and examine other similar mechanisms to ensure the long term conservation of the properties.
- 2.8. ACRE will seek tax exempt status for all its properties.

3. SALE OF LAND AND MORTGAGES

- 3.1. ACRE's mandate includes the conservation of ecologically significant lands. As such, ACRE will not encumber, mortgage, sell or transfer lands in a manner that does not respect its mandate.
- 3.2. ACRE will not sell or transfer ecologically significant lands, unless the lands are sold or transferred to another land trust organization, government or agency that will maintain the ecological significance of the lands.
- 3.3. If ACRE has received a donation of lands without ecological value, ACRE may sell such lands in a manner that respects any stated expectations or understanding of the donor when the donation of the lands was made.

- 3.4. ACRE will not mortgage, encumber or use ecologically significant lands as security to finance the purchase of other lands or borrow money.
- 3.5. Before transferring ecological significant lands, ACRE will consider whether the recipient of the lands has the capacity to assume the long-term stewardship necessary to maintain the ecological significance of the lands.
- 3.6. ACRE will make efforts to obtain fair market value if it sells or transfers lands that have no ecological significance for fair market value. Before doing so, ACRE will obtain a report by a qualified ecologist confirming that the lands are not ecologically significant.
- 3.7. The Board of Directors must approve any sale or transfer of land by ACRE.
- 3.8. If a transfer involves lands that have been donated or purchased with funds raised by donations, ACRE shall make efforts to advise donors of the potential transfer and the rationale for doing so.
- 3.9. If a transfer involves lands held under the Ecological Gifts Program or other land trust program, ACRE will seek the necessary authorization before any transfer occurs.
- 3.10. While not anticipated, if ACRE were to sell a property to insiders, ACRE will obtain the services of a real estate agent to market the property widely to ensure that the property is being sold at market price and to avoid the reality or perception that the sale is inappropriately benefiting an insider.

Date of approval by Board of Directors:	ACRE President's Signature and Date of Signature:
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