
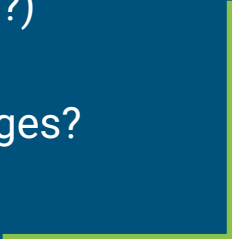




Stronger Together: What Makes a Successful Land Trust Merger

Connecticut Land Conservation Conference
March 22, 2025

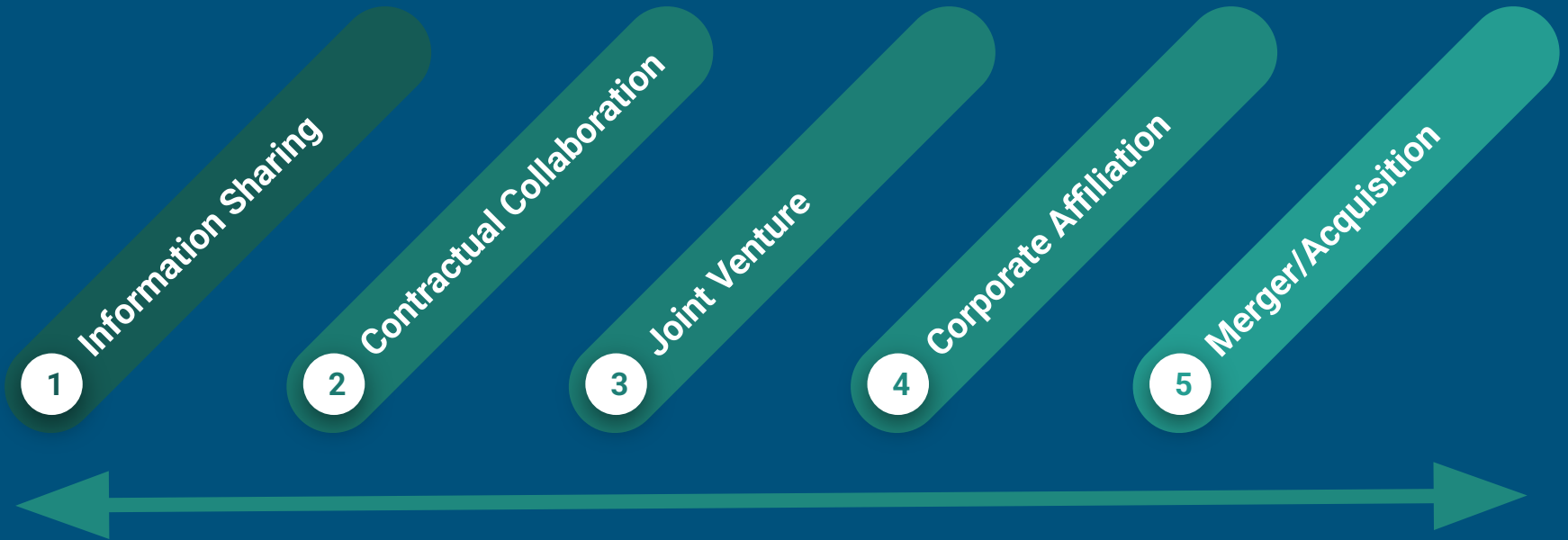


1. What is your land trust's origin story? (Who started it? Why?)
 2. What opportunities and/or challenges are you facing?
 3. How could a collaboration help with opportunities/challenges?
 4. If you were to merge, what are your non-negotiables?
- 

Agenda

- Overview & Introductions
- Activity 1
- What Goes Into a Merger?
- What Happens After a Merger?
- Activity 2
- Question & Answer
- Funding Opportunities
- Closing

The Collaboration Spectrum



5 Merger/Acquisition

- Combining Organizations
- Shared Vision & Goals
- Resource Consolidation
- Stronger Together

Presenters



Tyler Archer

Attorney

Shipman & Goodwin LLP



Aaron Lefland

Deputy Director

Connecticut Land
Conservation Council



Christopher Shepard

Board Member

Traprock Ridge
Land Conservancy

Activity 1

Individually, consider the following:

1. What is your land trust's origin story? (Who started it? Why?)
2. What opportunities and/or challenges are you facing?

With a neighbor, discuss the following:

1. How could a collaboration help with opportunities/challenges?
2. If you were to merge, what are your non-negotiables?

Share with the group...

What Goes Into a Merger?

1. Organizational Dating

- Identifying common vision and goals - “Socialization”
- Evaluating internal and external culture
- Decide to proceed

2. Assessing Organizational Readiness

- Due diligence: recordkeeping, finances, land issues, etc.
- Legal: how merger gets approved, separate representation
- Accreditation considerations
- Decide to proceed

3. Planning to Merge

- Type: merger, acquisition, dissolution
- Governance: updating bylaws, policies, merger vote
- Legal: Plan of Merger, certificate of incorporation, Sec. of State, IRS, etc
- Operations: how/which systems & processes to merge, and when
- Approve proceeding!

Tools & Resources

- Funding through CLCC & PCLB
- Pro Bono Partnership
- CLCC & LTA Resource Libraries
- Consultants for:
 - Meeting/Project Facilitation
 - Recordkeeping
 - Mapping
 - Management Plans & BDRS
 - Accounting
 - Other...

What Happens After a Merger?

- Announcing the new organization
 - Roll out plan
 - Rebranding
- Community building
 - Engaging stakeholders and community
 - Exploring shared values and goals
- Merging systems
 - Bank accounts, databases, communications, etc
- Continued capacity-building & planning
 - Volunteers: gain some, lose some
 - Activities: beloved hold-outs, new ideas
 - Make space to continue aligning cultures, governance, and operations

Tools & Resources

- Funding through CLCC & PCLB
- CLCC & LTA Resource Libraries
- Consultants for:
 - Recordkeeping
 - Management Plans & BDRS
 - Communications
 - Other...

Activity 2

In groups of ~5, design a new candy bar

- Choose ingredients
- Consider taste, texture, color, shape, etc.



Share your new candy bar *and* the process for getting there

- How did you make a group decision?
- What were your non-negotiables?
- What characteristics were valued?

Questions and Answers

What would YOU like to know more about?

- Setting up your organization for success?
- Revisiting the merged organization's definition of success?
- Growing pains, and more on post-merger work?
- Re-evaluating mission and governance in relation to larger service area?
- When to leave behind the mission/values of the legacy organizations?
- How can collaboration or merger be a tool for your land trust?
- What is holding you back? What would you like to know?

Funding for Land Trust Mergers

Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC): *Advanced Collaboration & Merger Assistance Program*



Peter & Carmen Lucia Buck (PCLB) Foundation: *Building Enduring Land Trusts (BELT) Program*



Implementation Grants: Generally up to \$50,000 for due diligence, legal, and other merger expenses

- Prerequisite: Board resolution to enter into good faith attempt to merge

Post-Merger General Operating Grants: Varied, depending on operating budget of new organization

- Prerequisite: Successful merger

More info: ctconservation.org/programs/advanced-collaboration-merger-assistance

Thank You for Participating!

More Information on Mergers

ctconservation.org/resources/sub-topic/collaborations-mergers



Conference
Overall

Share your thoughts!
**Scan the QR codes to fill out
evaluations online:**



Workshop
A13 Stronger Together