



City of  
Rockaway Beach  
2025-2029  
Strategic Plan

November  
2024



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Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together.

Vincent van Gogh

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

I'm excited to share the City of Rockaway Beach's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan with you. This plan outlines our shared vision for the future, our goals, and the steps we'll take to achieve them.

Our strategic plan is the result of months of careful planning and community engagement. Throughout the process, we sought input from residents, visitors, businesses, and community leaders through extensive outreach efforts. Your feedback was invaluable in shaping the future of Rockaway Beach.

I'm confident that this strategic plan will guide our city toward a brighter future. It will help us prioritize our efforts, allocate resources effectively, and ensure that we're meeting the needs of the entire community.

Thank you for your participation in this important process. Together, we can build an even better place for all of us to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,

Luke Shepard  
City Manager, City of Rockaway Beach

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Rockaway Beach Mayor and City Council

Charles McNeilly, Mayor  
Penny Cheek, Council President  
Mary McGinnis, Council Position 1  
Tom Martine, Council Position 2  
Kristine Hayes, Council Position 3  
Alesia Franken, Council Position 4

## Strategic Planning Project Team

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# INTRODUCTION

*Together, we're building a bright future for Rockaway Beach.*

Rockaway Beach is a charming coastal town with a rich history and an active community. It also faces challenges, like many small beach towns, of balancing tourism with local needs, ensuring safety and infrastructure, and navigating a seasonal economy.

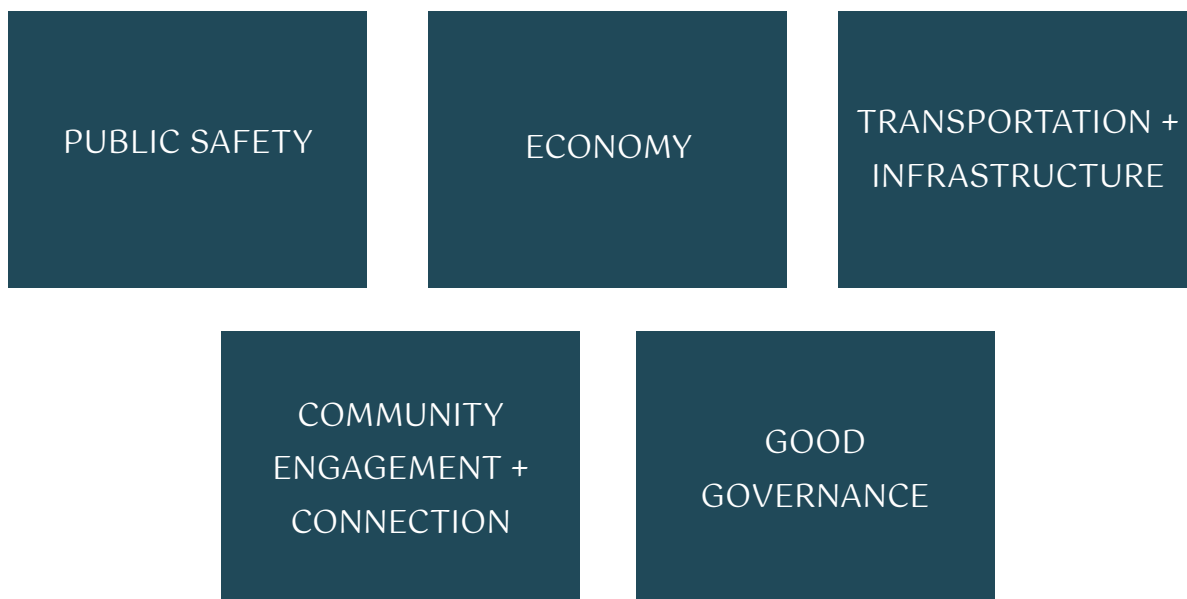
To address these challenges and build a bright future, our community worked together to develop a vision that would guide the city's efforts and create a cohesive, connected Rockaway Beach for all.

## PROCESS OVERVIEW

In the spring of 2024, the City of Rockaway Beach set out to develop a five-year vision and strategic plan. We prioritized community and staff engagement, gathering extensive feedback through surveys, workshops, interviews, and other outreach efforts. This inclusive approach ensured that the plan reflects our community's needs and desires. Their input helped us develop our mission, vision, values, and goals, guiding the future of Rockaway Beach.

## GOAL FOCUS AREAS

The Rockaway Beach community has identified the following areas of improvement to focus on over the next five years:



# STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

## WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

A strategic plan is a roadmap, guiding our city's actions and decisions for the next five years. It outlines our mission, vision, and values, as well as our goals and the steps to achieve them.

### *Why is strategic planning important?*

Strategic planning is essential for a city's direction, alignment, resource allocation, measurement, and communication. It gives us a clear path forward, ensures everyone is working towards shared goals, helps us allocate resources effectively, efficiently tracks progress, and keeps the community informed about the city's goals and achievements – guiding the delivery of city services and improving the quality of life for everyone.

### *Why is the City of Rockaway Beach developing a strategic plan now?*

Rockaway Beach is a wonderful place to live, work, and play. Our community has experienced growth and change in recent years, and as we think about our future, we want to make sure we're providing the best quality service for our residents. Now is a great opportunity to pause, reflect, and think about our vision, goals, and how to strategically align the resources to best serve our community.

### *How will the City use the strategic plan?*

Our strategic plan will inform our city's decisions, keep us accountable, and guide us to allocate resources effectively. We'll use it to prioritize projects, track our progress, and keep the community informed.

# CITY CONTEXT

**1,441**

TOTAL POPULATION  
UP 9.8% SINCE 2010

**50**

MEDIAN AGE  
STATEWIDE: 40.7

**1,980**

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS  
37% OCCUPIED

**44.1%**

EMPLOYMENT RATE  
STATEWIDE: 59.9%

**\$47,788**

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME  
STATEWIDE: \$80,160

**7.9%**

POVERTY  
STATEWIDE: 12.2%

DATA SOURCES: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS, 2022 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



# MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

## MISSION

*Our organizational purpose — why we exist*

Provide services that support a safe coastal community, fostering economic vitality, collaboration, and harmony among residents and visitors alike.

## VISION

*Our desired future state in the next five years*

A vibrant coastal community with small-town charm, where residents and visitors can safely live, grow, explore, and connect year-round.

## VALUES

*What will guide us in carrying out our mission*

### COLLABORATION

We build strong relationships and partnerships with staff, Council, and community partners to achieve our shared goals.

### SERVICE

We're dedicated to the safety and well-being of our residents and visitors.

### STEWARDSHIP

We are stewards of our community, using resources wisely and embracing innovation while also proactively caring for our natural resources.

### TRANSPARENCY

We're committed to honesty and accountability, ensuring that everyone has access to information and is treated fairly.

# GOAL: PUBLIC SAFETY

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

Rockaway Beach is an accessible and welcoming community

- 1.1 Update the Transportation System Plan (TSP)
- 1.2 Complete the Salmonberry Trail enhanced crossings
- 1.3 Inventory and plan for improvements for beach access
- 1.4 Continue Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) beach access and parking improvements and maintenance
- 1.5 Complete MOU with David's Chair

### ***What is a Transportation System Plan?***

A Transportation System Plan (TSP) is a long-term plan that describes a community's transportation system and the projects, programs, and policies needed to meet its transportation needs.

### ***Purpose***

A TSP helps communities implement a vision for their transportation system by assessing how people move through the area and identifying key goals for improvement.

### ***Developing a TSP***

TSPs are developed in coordination with city, county, regional, and state agency partners, transit providers, organizations that support walking and bicycling, and community members. TSPs should be updated periodically to reflect growth and change.

# GOAL: PUBLIC SAFETY

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

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People who live and visit here are safe

- 1.6 Fully staff Police/Sheriff to achieve full staffing for Rockaway Beach
- 1.7 Expand resources for code enforcement support and education
- 1.8 Explore options for improved law enforcement coverage
- 1.9 Increase awareness, education, and enforcement for fireworks

We are prepared for emergency response

- 1.10 Increase EMS training opportunities for Fire personnel
- 1.11 Develop formal emergency management program
- 1.12 Determine scope and find funding for High Ground project

# GOAL: ECONOMY

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

Year-round economic vitality

- 2.1 Support events and activities to draw people in during shoulder season
- 2.2 Develop downtown beautification plan
- 2.3 Explore financial options to improve downtown
- 2.4 Enhance partnerships with Tillamook Coast Visitor's Association (TCVA) for tourism workforce training + education programs
- 2.5 Continue to monitor short-term rental (STR) properties

Attract new and retain existing businesses

- 2.6 Build awareness to educate on existing resources for small businesses
- 2.7 Promote small business grants
- 2.8 Actively recruit businesses for Rockaway Beach
- 2.9 Develop an economic development strategic plan
- 2.10 Proactively pursue high-speed internet options for the city

Increase diversity of housing options

- 2.11 Complete update of zoning code
- 2.12 Evaluate system development charge (SDC) fees for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- 2.13 Explore partnerships with Tillamook County for affordable housing
- 2.14 Conduct an inventory of developable lands for affordable housing

# GOAL: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

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Safe and reliable infrastructure

- 3.1 Complete water and sewer capital improvement plan (CIP)
- 3.2 Implement street capital improvement plan (CIP)
- 3.3 Community planning for Jetty Creek watershed
- 3.4 Mitigate flooding through implementation of flood feasibility plan

Fund expanded infrastructure

- 3.5 Pursue federal and state grant funding opportunities
- 3.6 Update system development charge (SDC) methodology
- 3.7 Complete water and sewer rate study
- 3.8 Identify funding for Jetty Creek watershed acquisition

Preserve natural environment

- 3.9 Complete zoning code update for Flood Hazard Overlay (FHO)
- 3.10 Support implementation of new recycling programs
- 3.11 Evaluate dark skies policy options

# GOAL: COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND ENGAGEMENT

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

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Expand recreation opportunities

- 4.1 Explore partnerships and/or expansion of North County Recreation District
- 4.2 Complete Lake Lytle improvements
- 4.3 Support Salmonberry Trail completion
- 4.4 Complete Parks and Trails Master Plan
- 4.5 Conduct a feasibility study to explore opportunities to create community gathering spaces

Engaged community

- 4.6 Improve use of technology for communications and transparency
- 4.7 Develop communications and engagement plan

# GOAL: GOOD GOVERNANCE

## Goal Outcomes

## Action

Effective and efficient government

- 5.1 Update City Charter
- 5.2 Update Comprehensive Plan
- 5.3 Align staffing with community needs

### ***What is a Comprehensive Plan?***

A comprehensive plan is a city's official land-use planning document that guides how to develop the City.

### ***What it includes***

A comprehensive plan includes maps, policies, and implementation measures that guide land use, transportation, infrastructure, and other investments within and urban growth boundary (UGB). The UGB is the area into which the city is expected grow.

### ***How it's created***

Comprehensive plans are coordinated with other regional plans and Oregon law. Comprehensive plans are periodically reviewed and revised to account for changes in local, regional, and state conditions.

### ***How it's used***

Comprehensive plans are the guiding documents for local government land use decisions. They help create predictable outcomes for the community. They are implemented through local comprehensive planning, zoning, and land-division ordinances.

# STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

## PROJECT GOALS

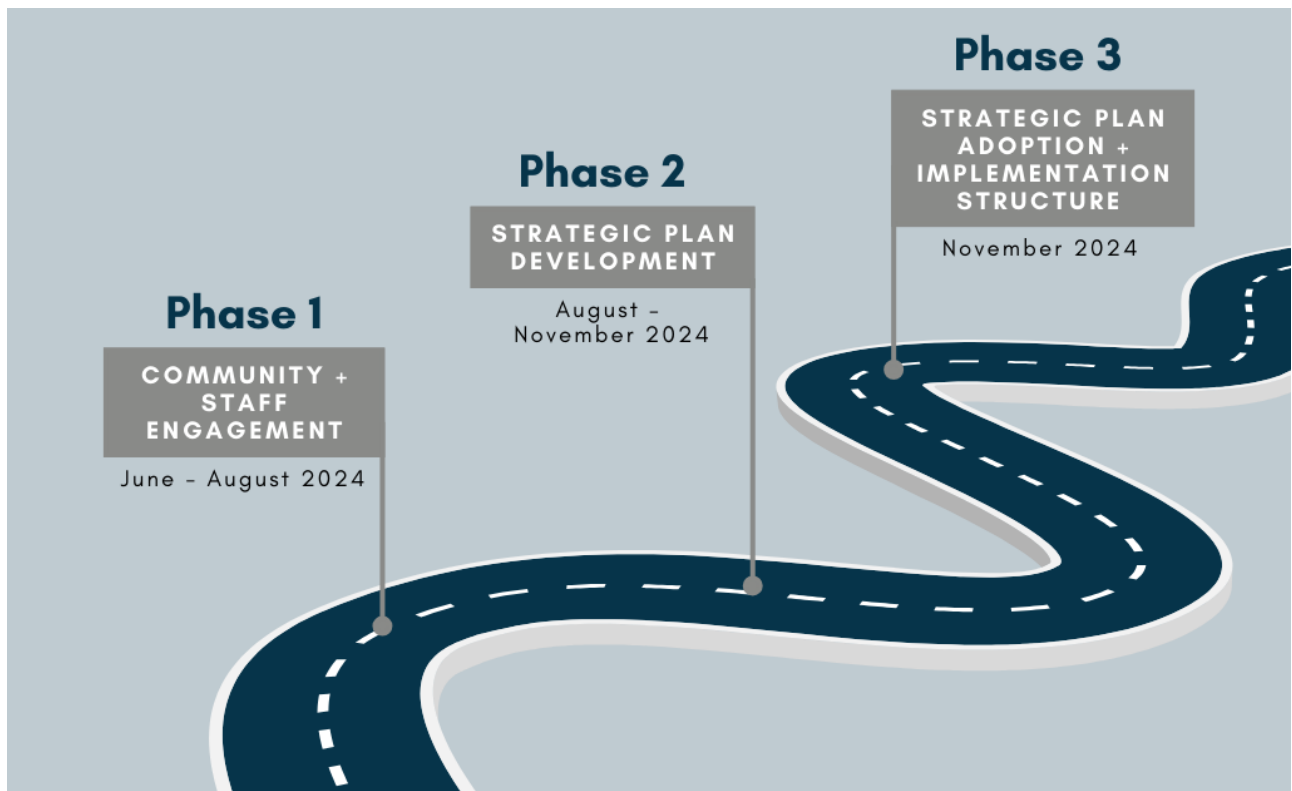
We set out to achieve the following goals through this process:

- Develop a five-year vision and strategic plan for the community
- Identify the values that will guide the organization in achieving the vision and supporting the mission
- Build a cohesive team amongst the organization and Council that is aligned around shared five-year goals
- Conduct inclusive community engagement to inform the development of the plan and build support for implementation
- Build a more connected community

## PROJECT TIMELINE

Our strategic planning process was organized into three phases:

1. Community + Staff Engagement: June–August 2024
2. Strategic Plan Development: August–November 2024
3. Strategic Plan Adoption and Implementation Structure: November 2024





## PHASE 1: COMMUNITY AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Community and organizational engagement are the foundation of the strategic planning process. The strategic plan engagement focused on facilitating inclusive opportunities to ensure the updated vision and values reflected the needs and priorities of the community and City leadership.

### *Council Workshop*

In June 2024, the Rockaway Beach City Council gathered for a strategic planning workshop. During the workshop, participants engaged in various exercises to build a shared understanding of the current organization and community, identify elements of a five-year vision for Rockaway Beach, and discuss ways to engage the community in the planning process.

### *Communication and Engagement Strategy*

To inform the development of the strategic plan, the project team conducted various forms of engagement, including:

- Online community-wide survey
- Paper survey distributed across the community
- Staff survey
- Outreach interviews with community leaders
- Presentations to community groups
- Social media
- Open house
- Economic development focus group

### *Communication + Engagement Goals*

The following goals and values guided the team's engagement efforts:

- Identify the values that will guide the organization in achieving the vision and supporting the mission
- Conduct inclusive community engagement to inform the development of the plan and build support for implementation
- Be inclusive of the current projects underway



\*The community survey received 432 responses from community members, accounting for 30% of the total population, as well as 204 responses from visitors.

\*\*The community leader interviews included representation from the Planning Commission, Nedonna Neighborhood Association, Neah-Kah-Nie School District, North County Recreation District, Vacasa vacation rentals, Chamber of Commerce, Rockaway Beach Business Association, and local camps and retreat centers.

## PHASE 2: STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

### *Engagement Summary*

In Phase 2, the project team analyzed community and staff feedback to identify common ideas and trends. We used that outreach data, and the vision ideas from the June strategic planning workshop, to create eight themes representing the organization and community's priorities:

1. Economy
2. Housing
3. Transportation and Mobility
4. Infrastructure
5. Community Safety
6. Recreation and Tourism
7. Community Connection and Engagement
8. Favorite Community Characteristics

These community engagement themes supported the development of the proposed mission, vision, values, and goals to guide Rockaway Beach over the next five years.

### *Drafting the Plan*

The project team worked with City staff to develop goal focus areas based on the community engagement themes. We defined success for each goal and created supporting actions to achieve each outcome. We also used community input to draft the mission, vision, and values.

### *Regular Check-Ins with Council*

Throughout the process, we kept the Council informed on our progress and engagement efforts, and sought their feedback on the mission, vision, values, and goals.

## PHASE 3: ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

### NEXT STEPS FOR OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Once the Rockaway Beach City Council adopts the strategic plan, they will prioritize actions for implementation based on available resources and capacity. City staff will assign leads for each action who will be responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation
- Developing a project charter (including team, stakeholders, timeline, key performance indicators)
- Identifying necessary resources
- Engaging and updating the Council, Boards/Commissions, organization, and the community
- Reporting progress, challenges, and opportunities
- Recommending updates as needed

The City will integrate these prioritized actions into the budget development process to identify and allocate any needed resources.

At the end of 2025, City staff will provide an annual progress report on the strategic plan. This report will document our progress, identify challenges and opportunities, and recommend updates to the actions as needed. It will also serve as a way to keep the Council and community informed and accountable.

# Fostering a Culture of Strategic Management

The intention of a strategic plan is to foster a culture of strategic management and guide the organization in developing a more efficient, effective, and transparent system of providing public services. Regular engagement from the community, City Council, and the organization are essential to fostering a system that is responsive and accountable. It is recommended the strategic plan be updated annually to ensure the goals and actions remain relevant in meeting current community and organization needs. Additionally, annual updates maintain alignment among the strategic plan, budget, and department work plans.

The strategic plan should undergo a complete update every five years to conduct more comprehensive engagement, review the mission, vision, and values, and examine the broader community context. These major updates will ensure the five-year vision continues to serve as a North Star in guiding the community and organization. These community engagement efforts also help to foster strong relationships with the community and partner organizations to build support for implementing the goals.



Report prepared by:



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