

RESOLUTION NO. 23-999

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A CONCEPTUAL DESIGN MEMORANDUM
FOR A COMMUNITY PATH PROJECT**

WHEREAS, Rockaway Beach was awarded funding for planning and refinement of a cycling and pedestrian path from Washington St to Beach St. that shall be aligned predominantly within the Port of Tillamook Bay right of way; and

WHEREAS, in preparation for this work, Rockaway Beach contracted with Destination Management Advisors (DMA) to conduct widespread community engagement, inform the public, collect public input and draft a conceptual design memorandum for this upcoming project; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this design memorandum is to provide a guiding document with recommendations for creating a path in Rockaway Beach, Oregon that reflects the community, attracts state and federal funding, and expedites the project timeline; and

WHEREAS, DMA has now completed this work and has incorporated their findings into the "Community Path Project Conceptual Design Memo," dated August 2, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to adopt this guiding document.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Rockaway Beach City Council hereby adopts the Community Path Project Conceptual Design Memo, attached as Exhibit A.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL, AND EFFECTIVE THE 9TH DAY OF AUGUST 2023.

APPROVED



Charles McNeilly, Mayor

ATTEST



Melissa Thompson, City Recorder

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

Community Path Project

August 2, 2023

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN MEMO

SOMETHING
SPECIAL STARTS
HERE.

DESTINATION
MANAGEMENT
ADVISORS

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

COVER LETTER

Community Path Project

Luke Shepherd
citymanager@corb.us
City Manager
CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH
PO Box 5, Rockaway Beach, Oregon 97136
(503) 374-1752

Dear Mr. Shepherd, and City Council Members,

Our team spent the last five months listening to your community. We have learned that Rockaway Beach likes to blur the lines between residents, second homeowners, and visitors. It is proud to be accessible - to young and old, mobility impaired, day trippers and new transplants.

Rockaway's sense of place is defined by nature. The Pacific Ocean. Lytle Lake and the Big Tree. It is also defined by unique local businesses and the characters who run them.

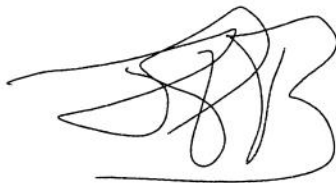
It is family friendly. A place where people connect with their siblings, children, parents, and grandparents - and have for generations.

The new community path will transform the city. The city's population and tourism will continue to grow significantly over the next 20 years.

Our goal in delivering this memo is to place Rockaway at the center of the path design. To help ensure that it creates more connection, helps businesses prosper, keeps people safe, and empowers the city to finally dress up the rail right of way.

Rockaway Beach is led by individuals who champion the community's best interests and are committed to transparency.

Thank you for allowing us to contribute.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon-Paul Bowles', with a horizontal line underneath.

Jon-Paul Bowles

Principal, Destination Management Advisors

PURPOSE

The purpose of this conceptual design memo is to provide recommendations for creating a path in Rockaway Beach, Oregon that reflects the community, attracts state and federal funding, and expedites the project timeline.

More importantly it provides a glimpse of the values and aspirations of this community. Rockaway's past is palpable. Its future is bright.

The memories, hopes and concerns shared by hundreds of people inform the insights and recommendations below. They also point to practical ways elected officials, public servants, and other local leaders can help pull the best of the past forward in time while addressing the needs of today. To help make it easier again for people to connect with nature, and each other, in Rockaway Beach.

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

Community Path Project

Conceptual Design Memo

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INTRODUCTION

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH**Community Path Project****Conceptual Design Memo****INTRODUCTION****INTRODUCTION**

The City of Rockaway Beach, Oregon is launching a legacy project. A new paved cycling and pedestrian path will cement Rockaway's transition from a community that people love to live and visit to one of the most livable communities on the north Oregon coast.

The path will make it safer and more convenient to live an active lifestyle. It will nudge people to replace short drives with short walks and rides. It will lead to trailheads, kayak launches and the beach and to local businesses. It will provide a safe route to and from Neah-Kah-Nie schools and other public services residents depend on.

Most of the path will be 10'-12' wide and built within the rail right of way owned by the Port of Tillamook Bay. It will likely narrow to 8' downtown in order to accommodate the active rail line, streets, buffers, parking and parking access compressed within the 60' corridor between S 3rd Avenue and N 3rd Avenue.

The path will span 2.7 miles between Washington Street to the south, and Beach Street, to the north. It will also include safer east-west highway crossings.

Once built, the Rockaway community path will be a model for other rural communities with the vision to deliver big projects.

Benefits

Active transportation infrastructure benefits communities in many ways. Rockaway's community path will enable

- Physical health and wellness that accompanies more active lifestyles, easy access to nature, and social connection.
- Sustained local businesses and attract new entrepreneurs
- Property appreciation, especially for commercial buildings adjacent to the path and those north and south of downtown that lacked sidewalks and nearby crossings
- Reduced motor vehicle congestion at the wayside, especially in the high season
- Organic community connections from Nedonna Beach to the Big Tree Trailhead. From the Pacific Ocean to N Palisades Street. And the places in between.

Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders addressed in this memo are Rockaway's **community members**, and the **City of Rockaway Beach (CORB)** elected officials and staff.

The community path will be constructed in the rail right of way (ROW). Its design is dependent on approval from the land owner and lease holders.

The **Port of Tillamook Bay (POTB)** owns and manages rail right of way (ROW). Michele Bradley, Manager, is the lead contact for the port, which is governed by an elected board of commissioners.

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH**Conceptual Design Memo****Community Path Project****INTRODUCTION**

The **Salmonberry Trail Intergovernmental Agency (STIA)** holds a long-term lease for the rail right of way. The agency is administered by the **Salmonberry Trail Foundation (STF)**, convened by the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD), and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). Members include Tillamook and Washington Counties, the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde (CTGR), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Caroline Fitchet, Executive Director, STF is the lead contact for STIA and STF.

The **Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad (OCSR)**, also holds a lease for the ROW through Rockaway Beach. Rachael Aldridge is the director and lead contact for OCSR.

The **Rockaway Chamber of Commerce** also holds a lease for a portion of the ROW that houses its caboose office between S 1st Ave and S Nehalem Ave.

The **Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)** administers the Community Paths program, and also has decision making authority for the path design specific to highway crossings, and safety guidelines for active transportation infrastructure. Anita Muhly, Resident Engineer, is the lead contact for ODOT Region 2. Alan Thompson, Program Manager, is the lead contact for ODOT's Community Paths Program.

Timeline & History

The proposed path in Rockaway Beach was introduced in 2013 as part of an ambitious concept for an 80+ mile trail between Portland and Tillamook in northwest Oregon. In 2017 STIA published the Salmonberry Trail Coast Segment Report, which was produced by Parametrix.

Community Path Program

2020: CORB and DMA developed a Community Path (ODOT) proposal in partnership with Salmonberry Trail Foundation, the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad, and the Salmonberry Trail Intergovernmental Agency, including the Port of Tillamook Bay.

2021: ODOT announced a \$1.5 million award to build a 1.3 mile paved multi-use path. Award was later revised downward to a \$750,000 planning and design award (Refinement).

2021-2023: Ongoing bottlenecks delayed the release of project funds through 2021-early 2023.

2023: CORB hired Destination Management Advisors (DMA) to expedite the project timeline and lead community engagement.

2023-2024: Advanced planning and design

2026: Groundbreaking (anticipated)

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH**Community Path Project****Conceptual Design Memo****INTRODUCTION****Project Scope and Implications**

Destination Management Advisors was hired to achieve two outcomes:

1. Help steward and leverage resources to ensure that Rockaway Beach could submit a competitive construction grant application to the 2024/25 Community Paths Program, and,
2. Engage the community to ensure that the path's design works for Rockaway Beach.

DMA's work delivered

- Early release of Refinement funds relative to the previously delayed timeline, which will allow the Refinement team to produce inputs required for a \$4-\$6mm construction proposal before the deadline.
- A streamlined Refinement process that frees resources for advanced planning and design by establishing and vetting project objectives and design guidelines, narrowing the field of alignment options based on community engagement
- A conceptual design memorandum (this document) that places Rockaway Beach at the center of the path's design..

Limitations

This conceptual design memo is not a transportation planning document. The primary intent is to enable a streamlined Refinement process that builds on DMA's work and place the community and its leadership at the center of the design process.

It intentionally prioritizes Rockaway Beach's perspectives. We acknowledge that the POTB, STIA, and OCSR have decision making authority over most design elements and the ODOT staff and the Refinement team will bring sharper lenses to advanced planning, design, and engineering.

DMA's engagement with the community is intended to provide meaningful insights and recommendations about how the path design can work best for the community. It is not intended to be scientifically valid. Additional engagement is needed to clarify perspectives about how this and other planning can best anticipate growth while upholding community values.

COMMUNITY PATH OBJECTIVES

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

Community Path Project

Conceptual Design Memo**COMMUNITY PATH OBJECTIVES**

These objectives were established by CORB, then vetted and refined through two rounds of community engagement.

THE ROCKAWAY BEACH COMMUNITY PATH WILL:

- 1.** Increase safety and access between neighborhoods and Neah-Kah-Nie Schools, local businesses, workplaces, city hall, and other essential services by:
 - Including enhanced crossings on US HWY 101 that connect east-west Rockaway Beach
 - Providing safe separation between path users, active rail, and motor vehicles that connect north and south Rockaway Beach.
- 2.** Connect neighborhoods and lodging properties with the places people want to play, explore, eat, drink, and shop.
- 3.** Benefit local businesses, especially those north and south of downtown, by creating foot traffic friendly access where it does not currently exist.
- 4.** Empowers the City of Rockaway Beach to beautify the rail right of way and deliver public services.

The objectives were tested against four alignment concepts for downtown Rockaway Beach. Two rounds of feedback and listening sessions, and survey responses provided insights in how different stakeholder groups viewed potential impacts of each.

“

A path to
Rockaway,
not through it.

”

ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS

FULL ALIGNMENT

The full alignment shows the path route between Washington Street and Beach Street. Enhanced highway crossings are recommended at S 3rd Ave and N 3rd Ave to disburse users north and south of the wayside. A new enhanced crossings at N 12th will connect users to Lake Lytle and beach access. A crossing at 23rd Ave will provide access to a new path east of US101 between 23rd Ave and Neah-Kah-Nie schools.

DOWNTOWN PATH ROUTE OPTIONS

Alignments #1 and #3 evolved from the 2017 Coast Segment Report. Alignment #3 from the 2013 Salmonberry Trail Concept Plan. Alignment #4 was conceived by Luke Shepherd, City Manager of Rockaway Beach.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS****ALIGNMENT #1****STRAIGHT PATH**

PROS: Simplest to design and build, minimal disruption to existing traffic pattern, reduces congestion downtown, and scored well by ~50% of respondents.

CONS: Displaces 34 angled parking spaces between S 2nd Ave and S Nehalem Ave. and highest percent of last places votes.



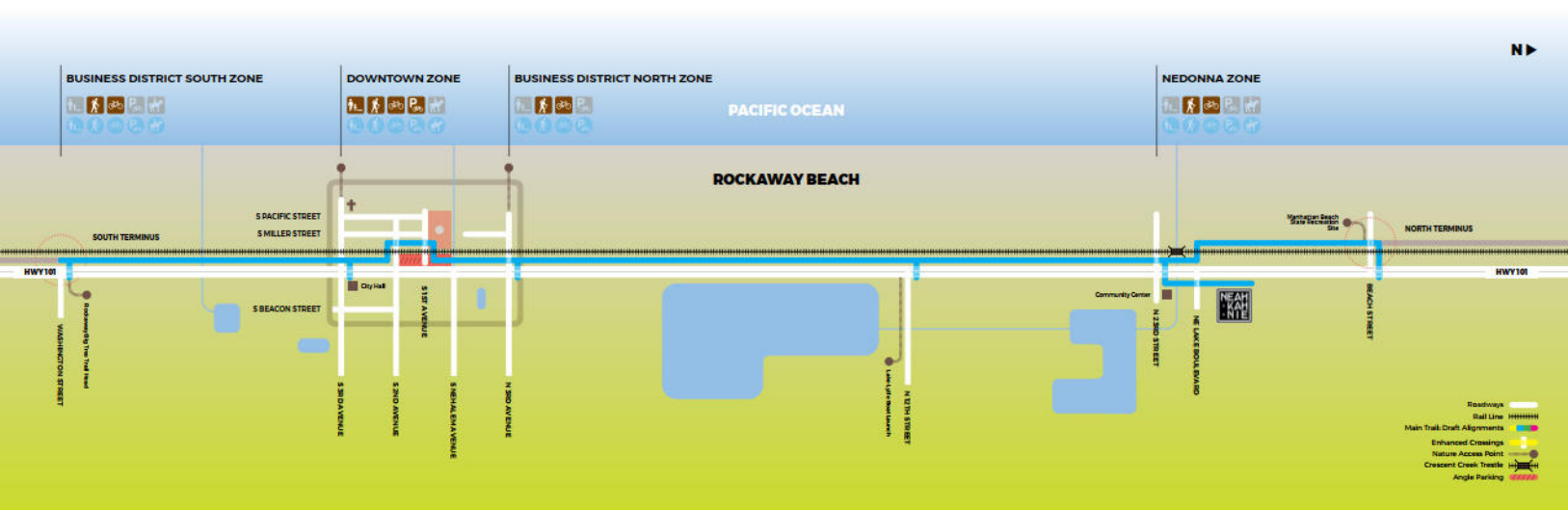
CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

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Conceptual Design Memo**ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS****ALIGNMENT #2****MILLER STREET**

PROS: Reduces loss of angled parking spaces to 22 spaces relative to #1: Straight Path and resurface S. Miller Ave.

CONS: Reduces vehicle access to commercial and residential properties on S Miller, displaces parallel parking between S 2nd Ave and S 1st Ave., and highly favored by multiple adjacent property owners.



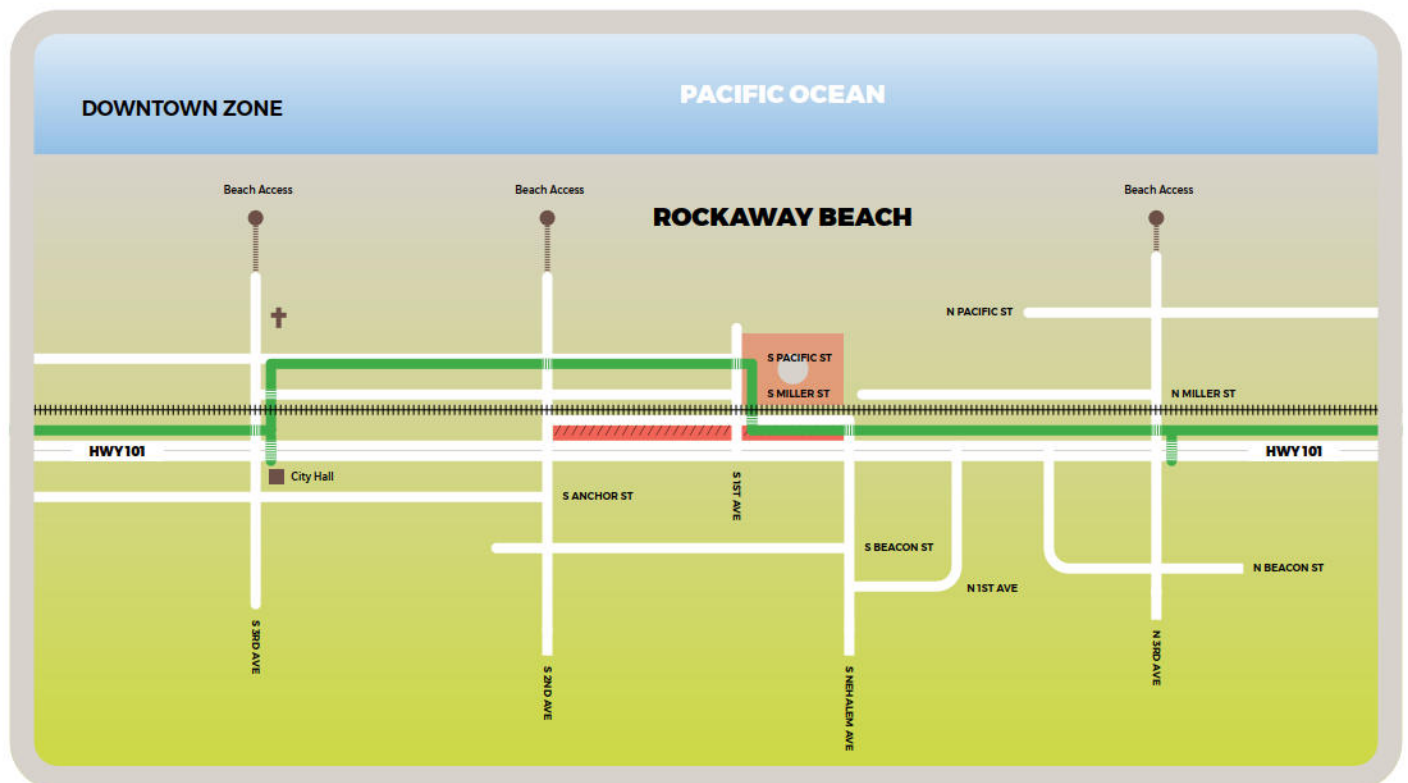
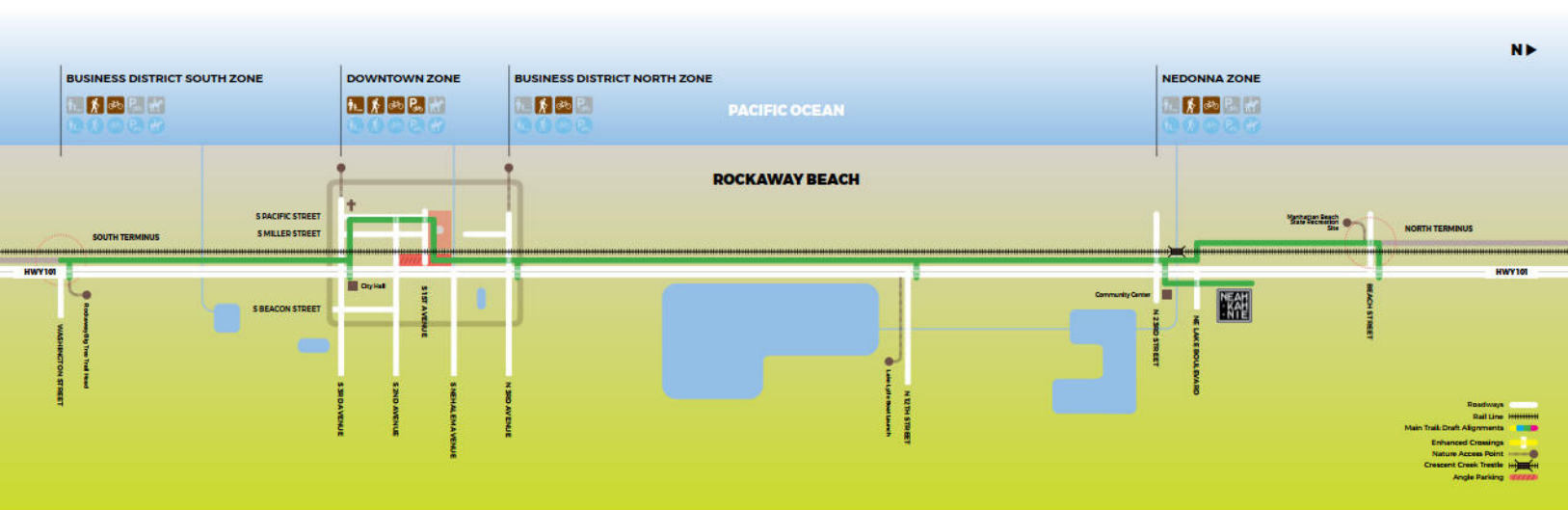
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Conceptual Design Memo**ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS****ALIGNMENT #3****PACIFIC STREET**

PROS: Minimizes loss of angled parking between S 3rd Ave and S 1st Ave (potentially to S Nehalem), leads to expansion of downtown south to S 3rd Ave between Pacific St and US101, and is highly ranked.

CONS: Requires coordinated planning efforts that may not be feasible in the near-term.



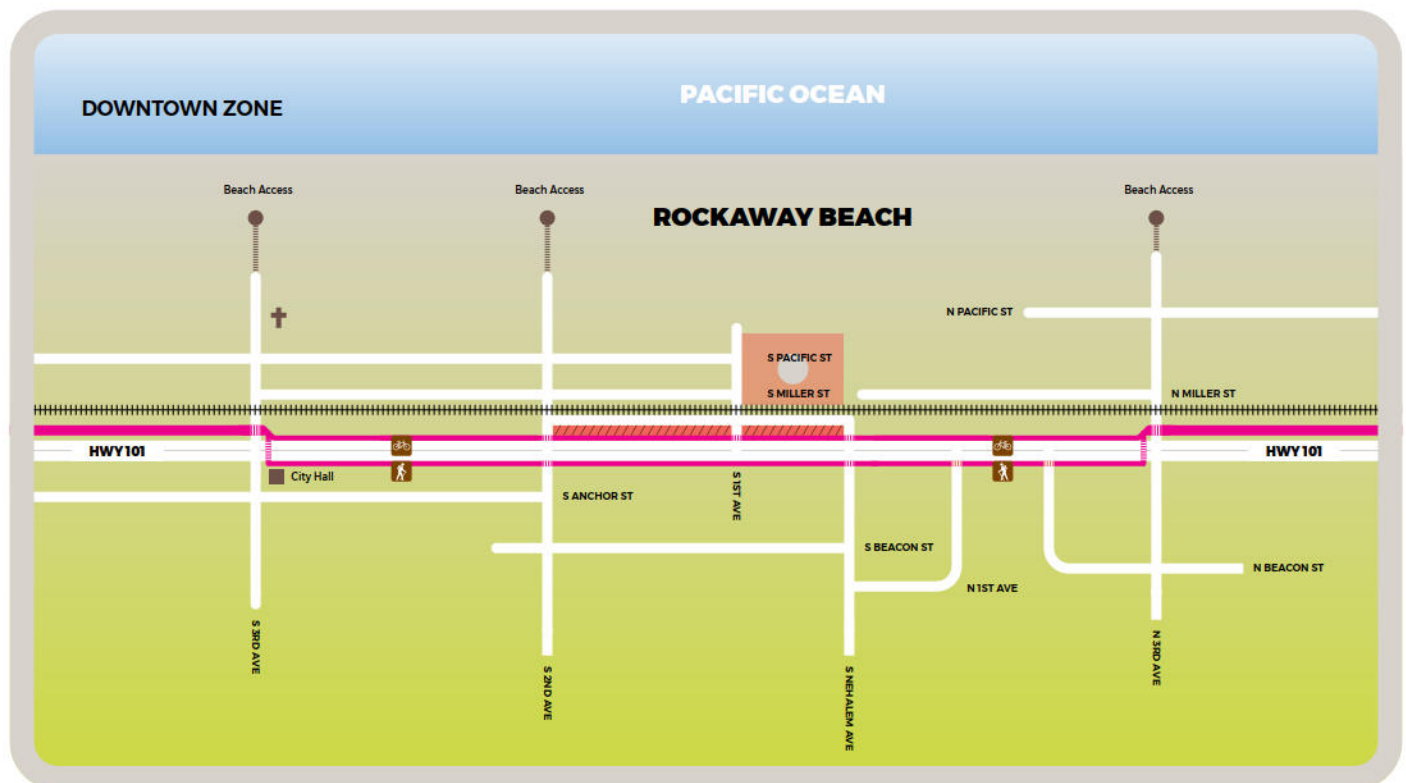
CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

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Conceptual Design Memo**ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS****ALIGNMENT #4****SPLIT PATH**

PROS: Minimal disruption to existing parking and traffic patterns, leaves door open for expanded pedestrian infrastructure downtown, and is a top ranked option.

CONS: Requires exemption for minimum path width, likely cycling only between N 3rd Ave. and S 3rd Ave. requiring pedestrians to divert to existing sidewalk east of US 101 at S 3rd Ave and N 3rd Ave, and may not be feasible due to spacing and buffering requirements for active transportation infrastructure.

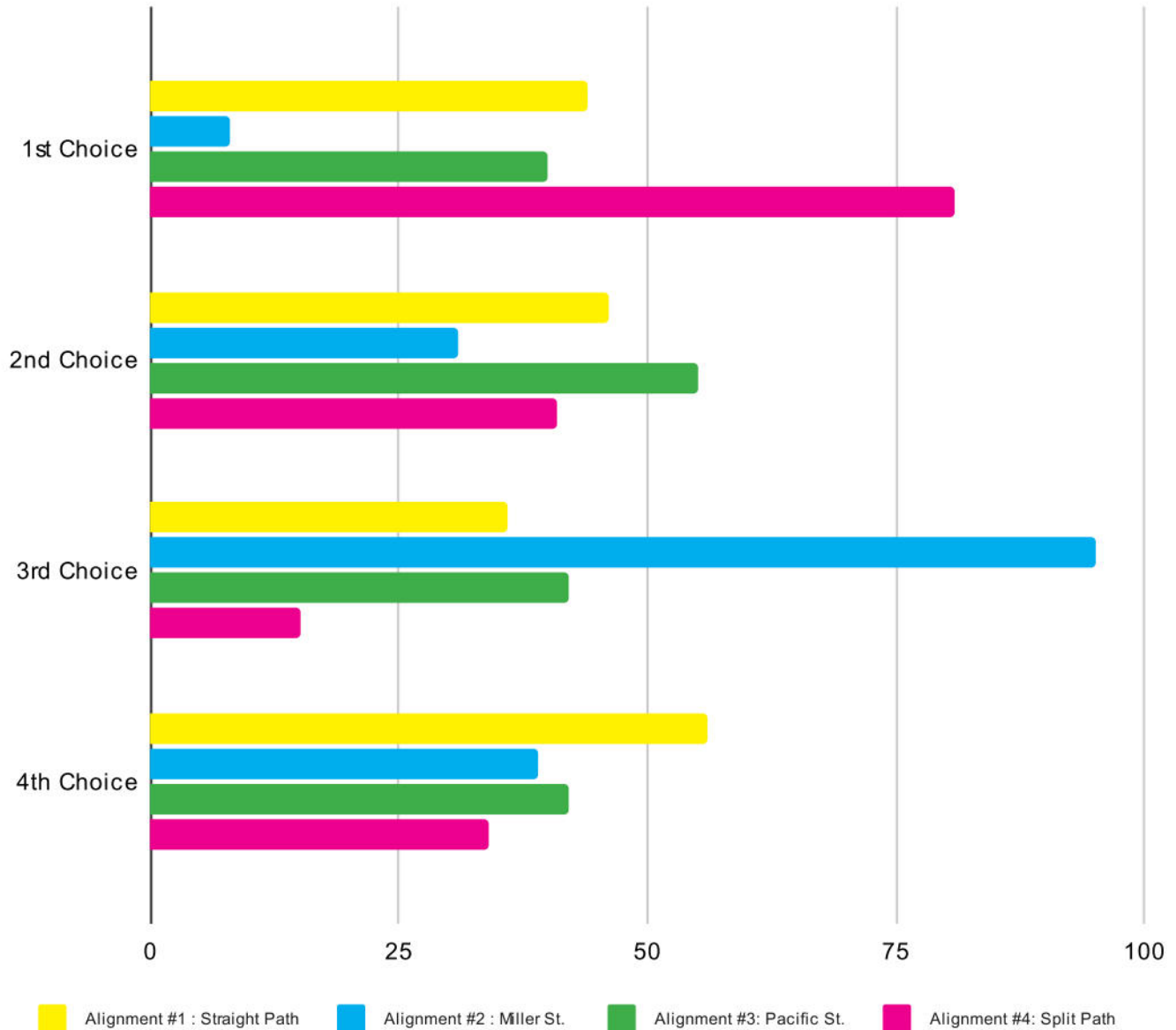


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Conceptual Design Memo**ALIGNMENT CONCEPTS****ALIGNMENTS:**

Ranking of Options



ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

CITY OF ROCKAWAY BEACH

Community Path Project

Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY - OVERVIEW**

The consultant team convened a series of engagements with elected officials, city staff, and stakeholder groups within Rockaway Beach to understand the community's priorities, aspirations, and concerns about the path.

The team also created multiple channels to share information about the project, solicit feedback, and listen, including:

- ☑ 30+ one-on-one stakeholder interviews
- ☑ 12 small group presentations and listening sessions
- ☑ 2,600 mailers to residents and second home owners
- ☑ Three public gatherings
- ☑ A project page on the city's website
- ☑ Online feedback form and 200+ responses
- ☑ 30 printed posters
- ☑ 100 fliers with QR code to webpage and feedback form
- ☑ Project specific email address
- ☑ Eight articles in The Tillamook County Pioneer
- ☑ Two articles in Tillamook Headlight Herald
- ☑ Five public council presentations
- ☑ Eight site visits
- ☑ One "visitor for a weekend" experience
- ☑ One video and podcast interview

Recommendations are grounded in the themes we heard from the community during five months of ongoing conversation between March-July 2023.

Insights have been developed through the lens of the project's objectives and themes and rooted in best practice for destination management and placemaking.

Definitions:

Themes reflect community sentiment and priorities related to the path design.

Insights are grounded in community sentiment, oriented to the project objectives, and informed by industry best practice for destination management, design, data driven forecasting.

Design Recommendations are intended to inform city council endorsement of conceptual alignment (August 2023) AND the strategic allocation of resources during the Refinement process (August 2023-December 2024).

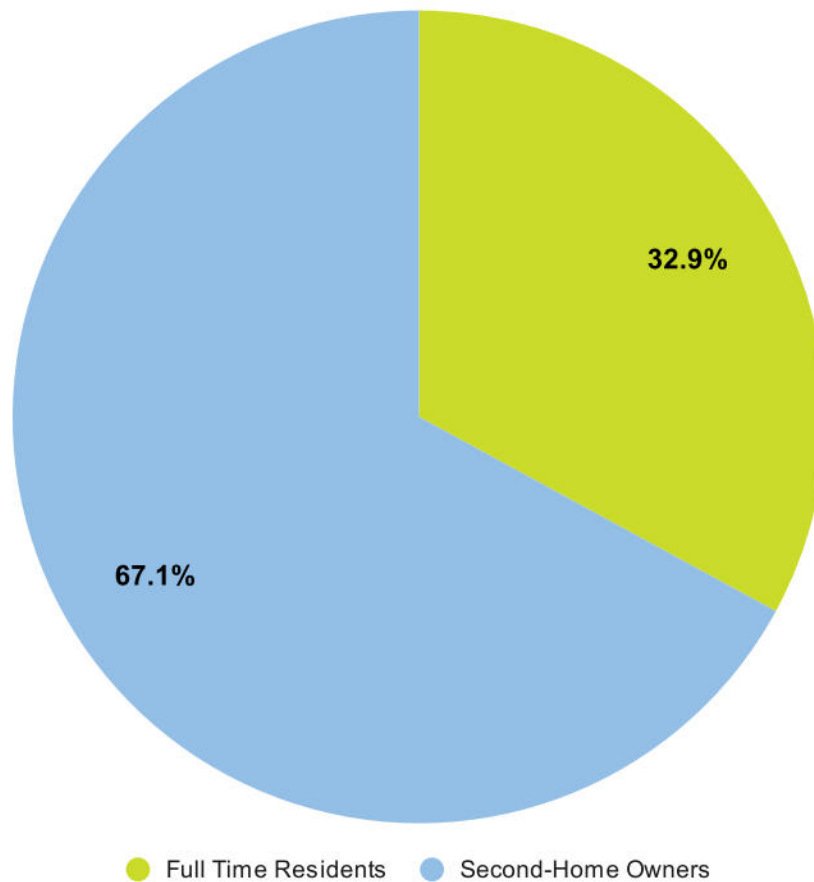
Needs describe opportunities for the city to anticipate, lead, and expand benefits of the path under mid-long-term strategy. Future recommendations should be prioritized based on existing needs, and opportunities and constraints uncovered throughout the Refinement process.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****RESIDENTS AND SECOND-HOME OWNERS:**

Respondent Percentages



Two-thirds of homes in Rockaway Beach are second homes and a third occupied by residents and is reflected in the survey response rates.

However, many second home owners identify as residents or locals and may live the majority of their time in Rockaway Beach despite listing a primary address in another area.

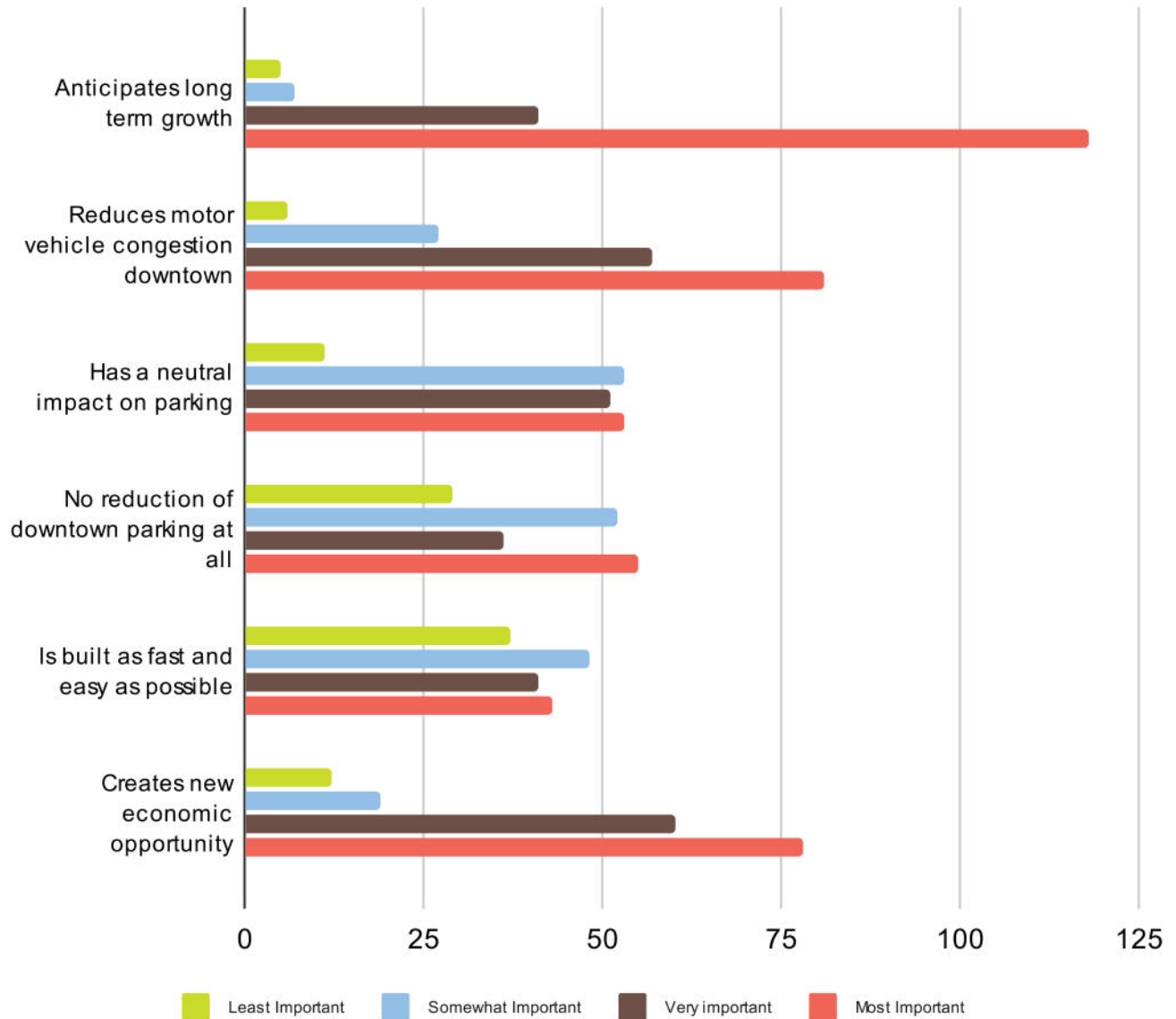
Rockaway's population trended younger in the wake of COVID-19 as families relocated, reversing a long-term trend of aging population. The survey did not ask for respondents' age. Additional engagement is recommended to determine if respondents preferences for alignment options and ranking of objectives correlates to age.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****SURVEY QUESTION #2:**

How important are the following design considerations?



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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****THEMES, INSIGHTS, AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS**

THEME 1:*Path design should anticipate long-term growth.***INSIGHTS:**

- ★ The path project enjoys near universal support and reflects well on city hall.
- ★ The path is seen as an important solution to manage growth.
- ★ Deeper engagement is needed to better understand preferences for active transportation and motorized vehicle infrastructure now - and in the future.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- #1: Prioritize construction readiness for a low-hanging subsection of the path to ensure that a competitive proposal can be submitted in the 2024 Community Path grant cycle.
- #2: Prioritize the Split Path alignment for advanced planning at the start of the Refinement process and create an aggressive timeline for yes/no decision on feasibility, which is dependent on adequate separation between rail, motor vehicles, and the path.
- #3: Explore the Pacific Street alignment for potential expansion of the Split Path concept AND to advance a downtown alignment in case the Split Path concept is not feasible.

NEEDS:

- i. Deepen community engagement to clarify what it means for the city to successfully anticipate long-term growth.
- ii. Assess how long-term growth will impact the natural environment, local economy, social fabric, and demands on local government.
- iii. Create a cohesive strategy to anticipate Rockaway's long-term growth. Invest in comprehensive plan refresh and prioritize complementary planning efforts that leverage the path and manage growth.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****THEMES, INSIGHTS, AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS** continued...**THEME 2:***Reduce motor vehicle congestion downtown.***INSIGHTS:**

- ★ Parking is a symbol of a bigger issue and a fulcrum for long-term planning.
- ★ Potential trade-offs between motor vehicle and non-motorized vehicle infrastructure downtown merit additional study and engagement.
- ★ Parking needs may be addressed by actions outside the current project scope, such as spaces for users with special access needs and zoned parking.
- ★ A majority of lodging properties in Rockaway are located within two blocks of the path. Many visitors who now drive between lodging and experiences will walk or ride once the path is built, reducing high season congestion.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- #4: Design for user-friendly access between new and future parking lots east of US HWY 101 and amenities to the west more evenly dispersed visitors and increase incidental spend in the short walk between parking lots and the beach.
- #5: Use Refinement resources to assess and improve downtown traffic flow; implications of creating one-way traffic patterns on S 1st Avenue, S Pacific Street, and S Miller Street.
- #6: Improve layout of diagonal parking or convert to parallel parking to create space needed for the Split Path alignment and minimize parking loss.
- #7: Advocate for innovative enhanced crossings that are timed to minimize pedestrian interference of motor vehicle traffic.

NEEDS:

- iv. Update the downtown transportation plan and invest in a parking study under a refreshed comprehensive plan.
- v. Deepen engagement to draw out assumptions and potential solutions to competing perspectives on downtown parking.
- vi. Create a 20-year vision for Rockaway that frees future decision making and planning from existing tension by documenting a consistent and transparent approach to manage growth.
- vii. Communicate the rationale and implications of the long-term vision to constituents. Use insights gleaned from visioning to galvanize support.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****THEMES, INSIGHTS, AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS** continued...**THEME 3:***Create new economic opportunity.***INSIGHTS:**

- ★ Rockaway's vibrant business community will profit from increase foot traffic.
- ★ The path will create an incentive for overnight visitors to minimize vehicle use, which will decrease leakage (money spent outside Rockaway per trip).
- ★ Growth trends indicate that the city should anticipate the need for more commercial and retail businesses.
- ★ There are ways to solve the problem about cars left for train rides.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- #8: Pinpoint enhanced crossings on US HWY 101 that funnel path users to business, experiences, and amenities north and south of downtown to connect beach access points and lodging properties with businesses, attractions, and amenities to the east and west.
- #9: Site gateways on S 3rd Street and N 3rd Street that serve as north-south boundaries for a "town square" that is inviting to pedestrians and cyclists. Include covered bike racks, repair stations, drinking water, and storage to incentivize visitors to linger longer.
- #10: Prioritize the north business district zone for 2024/25 construction grant and include enhanced crossings at N 3rd and N 12th connecting to businesses east of US101.

NEEDS:

- viii. Incorporate S Pacific Street into an expanded town square between S 1st Avenue and S 3rd Avenue to incentivize new retail businesses in commercially zoned properties.
- ix. Invest in Main Street planning to revitalize and expand retail business.
- x. Pursue funding for expansion of sidewalks east of US101 between S 3rd and Washington Street, and N 3rd Avenue.

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Conceptual Design Memo**ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS****THEMES, INSIGHTS, AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS** continued...**THEME 4:**

Elevate the prominence of Rockaway Beach among Oregon coast towns.

INSIGHTS:

- ★ Community pride in Rockaway remains pure—and welcoming.
- ★ There is a strong desire in defining, or creating, a Rockaway “theme.”
- ★ Belief is strong in the power of aesthetics in driving livability and economic development.
- ★ Rockaway is uniquely, geographically suited to be the most beach accessible coast town.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- #11: Where ever possible, incorporate multi-modal, accessible trail use.
- #12: Integrate thoughtful entry, reassurance, amenity, and exit path wayfinding—for both the trail and Rockaway Beach’s respective identities.
- #13: Utilize landscape architecture for function, e.g. water management, and city beautification.

NEEDS:

- xi. Collectively define Rockaway Beach’s present and future vision through the lens of community values and perceived benefits.
- xii. Develop a comprehensive placemaking strategy based on the above, inclusive of phased development and urban growth strategies.
- xiii. Collectively define the “Rockaway theme” or “Rockaway aesthetic” and provide supportive, directional frameworks for immediate and long-term activations.



Rockaway Beach
can be the gem
of Oregon coast
towns.



