



City of Delray Beach

Vision 2035 Strategic Planning Process Report

February 2026

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary..... 1
 - Process Overview..... 1**
 - The Work of the Steering Committee.....2**
 - Vision 2035 Community Visioning Conference.....2**
- Strategic Framework 3
 - Vision.....3**
 - Key Focus Areas.....4**
 - Strategic Goals and Actions5**
- How to Use This Plan 11
 - City Organization Strategic Plan11**
 - City Commission Agenda Items11**
 - Budgeting and Goal Setting.....11**
 - Communication.....11**
- APPENDIX A:..... 12
- APPENDIX B:.....13
- APPENDIX C:.....14

Executive Summary

In October 2025, the City of Delray Beach engaged Raftelis to support the City in the development of a community strategic plan – Vision 2035. This report summarizes each phase of the strategic planning process. The City of Delray Beach’s Vision 2035 Plan is intended to represent the community’s vision for the City and identify specific strategies that will help accomplish that vision.

Process Overview

The Vision 2035 strategic plan is a roadmap to move the community towards the vision of ‘a seaside city that celebrates its rich history and prioritizes a high quality of life’ by identifying the current state, desired future state, and goals to achieve the desired future state. To address these criteria and develop the Vision 2035 framework, the Delray Beach City Commission appointed the Vision 2035 Steering Committee to establish the basis for the plan. Additional community input was sought during the Vision 2035 Community Visioning Conference, where attendees finalized the Vision 2035 strategic plan framework. The timeline and objectives for each engagement are listed below:

November 7, 2025

The Steering Committee worked to develop crucial components of a draft vision by articulating the desired future for the community and identifying key focus areas for achieving that vision. The full synopsis of this engagement is included in **Appendix A**.



December 12, 2025

The Steering Committee finalized the draft strategic plan framework, consisting of the following elements: vision, key focus areas and success statements, and a list of prioritized strategic goals to achieve success in each key focus area. The summary of this engagement is included in **Appendix B**.

January 24, 2026

More than 100 community members convened for the Vision 2035 Visioning Conference to review the Vision 2035 draft strategic plan framework. As a result of this engagement, the Vision 2035 strategic planning framework was finalized and detailed in this report.



The Work of the Steering Committee

The City Commission appointed 25 members of the community to serve on the Vision 2035 Steering Committee, tasked with giving guidance and input on the future goals of the City. Steering Committee members were appointed and approved by the City Commission in the Fall of 2025.

Steering Committee members participated in two strategic planning workshops to develop the draft Vision 2035 strategic plan framework, including vision components, key focus areas, success statements, and strategic goals.

Steering Committee Members

- Dr. Jay Alperin
- Bob Burzynski
- Rita Rana
- John Miller
- Gayle Clark
- Christina Morrison
- Max Zengage
- Jim Chard
- Judy Mollica
- Chuck Ridley
- Carolyn Young
- Herman Steven, Jr
- Colson Zulmar
- Byron Jones
- Kyle Holder
- Lori Durante
- Harvey Brown
- Roger Cope
- Howard Ellingsworth
- Price Patton
- Gary Eliopoulos
- Kelly Barrette
- Mitch Katz
- Shelly Petrolia
- Sandy Zeller



As the foundation of their conversation, the Steering Committee shared what they love most about Delray Beach, as captured by the visual facilitator in the image below:



The full summary of the Steering Committee’s Workshop #1 and Workshop #2 is included in Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively.

Vision 2035 Community Visioning Conference

A strategic plan is best when touched by as many people as possible, so additional input was sought from members of the community during the Vision 2035 Community Visioning Conference on January 24, 2026. The City Commission invited approximately 100 members to the Vision 2035 Community Visioning Conference to review the Vision 2035 strategic plan framework as proposed by the Steering Committee and develop the final plan.

During the conference, participants worked in groups based on the five focus areas and vision statement to review and refine the Vision 2035 strategic framework. This report provides the final Delray Beach Vision 2035 strategic plan framework, as suggested by the community.

Strategic Framework

Vision

A vision is designed to be aspirational, capturing hopes and ideals for the City’s future. After reviewing the vision components proposed by the Steering Committee, community members shared their hopes for the future of Delray Beach and drafted a vision statement, as follows:

*Delray Beach - the Village by the Sea
a thriving community with a charming downtown and vibrant neighborhoods that celebrates heritage, values sustainability, and creates an inviting quality of life.*

Community members felt the vision statement should incorporate the following key themes, as captured by the visual facilitator in the image below:

- Economic development
- Diversity
- Parking
- Small, charming
- Heritage
- Quality of life
- Vibrant
- Sustainable
- Trees and clean water
- Arts and culture
- Best-in-class status



Key Focus Areas

Key Focus Areas are the “big buckets of things that must go well” for the City to be successful and achieve its vision. Based on the community feedback received during the Community Visioning Conference on the Steering Committee-proposed focus areas, the revised success statements are outlined below:

Economic Development



Delray Beach will attract new primary jobs, unique local businesses, entrepreneurs, and commercial and industrial development to our community that will enhance and preserve our small-town character. Our strategy will include investing in infrastructure such as roads, public transit, and sensible educational facilities; preserving land that is zoned appropriately for commercial and light industrial development; promoting the arts; and creating incentives to strengthen existing and new businesses.

Education



Delray Beach will support the various educational resources and programs available for our community, which include access to quality public schools, educational initiatives, technical training, and workforce development. The community will be well-informed about educational opportunities. All students will have high-quality, diverse learning experiences and pathways to success, including vocational training opportunities. Our focus on educational opportunities will rely on partnerships with our educational institutions, anticipating the future needs of our community of students, and reimagining our relationship with education.

Environment



Delray Beach will implement practices that ensure the well-being of current and future generations while maintaining an ecological balance. Our main focus will be on our beachfront as a key component of economic development, quality of life, and enhanced protection against weather-related events. We will also have programs to enhance and restore green spaces, shade canopies, and wildlife protection. Building long-term resilience to climate change, supporting maintenance and restoration programs, conserving resources, and limiting negative impacts on the environment through thoughtful development and zoning regulations are key components of our approach.

Historic Preservation



Delray Beach will protect and maintain our distinct historical districts, buildings, landscapes, natural areas, and structures of historic significance, in order to safeguard our unique cultural heritage and allow the community to connect with our history and identity. Protection will include strong legal frameworks, incentives, and support for funding opportunities to allow owners to preserve the historical integrity of properties. This will result in unique neighborhood characteristics, enhancement of our small-town nostalgia, heritage tourism, economic development, and an increase in property values.

Strategic Development

Delray Beach will create a cohesive and vibrant built environment that enhances the quality of life for our community. Thoughtful development through enhancement and preservation emphasizes good design regulations, comprehensive planning with long-term goals, integration of open spaces and parks, environmental sustainability, consistent enforcement, and historical preservation to ensure that every aspect of the community reflects our unique identity and character. Our approach will foster economic development across the community, effectively use technology, promote social interaction of all ages, and improve the balance of development and infrastructure necessary to support a healthy community.



The conversation amongst the Vision Conference attendees was captured by the visual facilitator, as shown in the image below:



Strategic Goals and Actions

During the Visioning Conference, community members also reviewed the Strategic Goals proposed by the Steering Committee and identified the most important actions to support the Vision 2035 Strategic Goals, outlined in the following section and categorized by Strategic Goal. Key concepts missing from the Strategic Goals, as identified by the Vision Conference participants, are also included.

The full conversation, including community members' comprehensive feedback about what was missing from the Steering Committee-proposed goals, the most important strategic goals, and the biggest challenges to overcome is included in **Appendix C**.



Economic Development

Strategic Goal 1: Advocate for economic development support

- Streamline permitting for new businesses
- Modernize and streamline the permitting process and other City applications to become more efficient
- Provide Incentives for companies to come here, e.g., roads, etc.
- Develop a local preference ordinance in contracting
- Support economic development without displacement
- Promote economic diversity small, medium, and large businesses, manufacturing
- Restore and properly fund an economic development department
- Establish a Florida Main Street program for historic NW 5th Avenue for economic development
- Match zoning on Congress Avenue to building design and current demand—light industrial
- Develop pocket commercial-mixed-use areas
- Adopt the development plan that the community created
- Focus on developing the Congress corridor/preserve for business and economic development vs. apartments

Strategic Goal 2: Promote the arts

- Ensure that the economic impact of arts/culture is recognized
- Support and grow the financial impact of arts and culture

Strategic Goal 3: Promote small businesses and entrepreneurship

- Provide funding and incentives for local small business owners
- Provide true small business support, not just job fairs
- Ensure “Yes, we can” attitude at City Hall, supportive and helpful!
- Reduce tax burden on small businesses
- Ensure education and support for small business owners
- Be a strong advocate for new business and start-ups

Suggested Additional Actions:

- Garages instead of open parking
- Partner with schools!!
- New schools

What’s Missing:

- Alternative transportation
- Safety
- Workforce housing
- Cohesive design/branding throughout the City



Education

Strategic Goal 1: Restore the Education Board

- Create a sustainable education plan in conjunction with the School Board

Strategic Goal 2: Encourage internships

- Provide trades and training in artificial intelligence (AI)
- Bring back electrical, plumbing, HVAC, etc., in schools

Suggested Additional Actions:

- Concentrate on early learning, literacy/financial literacy in after-school programs
- Best public school in Florida! (set a high bar!) Yes!
- Put information on the City website of existing education programs available in the City and County
- Incorporate our local non-profits that have volunteers eager to help
- Low birth rate

What's Missing:

- Before and after school community partners
- Parent/community involvement, incentives
- Dedicated City funds to education gaps





Environment

Strategic Goal 1: Maintain, protect, and expand open spaces

- Provide more garden space, including a community garden with sustainable maintenance
- Remove exotic species
- Require developers to use native plants
- Ensure land development regulations (LDRs) support environmental goals
- Provide for flood management
- Enhance flood management in the Set neighborhood – better drainage
- Fix flooding issues and maintain (better) landscaping

Strategic Goal 2: Increase and preserve the tree canopy

- Establish a goal of 40% tree canopy coverage
- Create tiny forests everywhere, including outparcels of parking lots
- Name and protect legacy trees

Suggested Additional Actions:

- Encourage micro transit electric bikes
- Underground electricity or solar panels
- Make each home efficient to receive natural energy
- Fix highways in the northwest and southwest areas of Delray
- Continue to maintain and fund beach restoration and reefs

What's Missing:

- Florida Friendly Landscape Standards
- Recycling program for commercial properties
- Allow and encourage bioswales
- Encourage self-sustainability
- Increase aquifer recharge





Historic Preservation

Strategic Goal 1: Increase historic designations

- Establish historical districts in the Set neighborhood – northwest and southwest areas

Strategic Goal 2: Create incentives for historic preservation

- Consider City tax incentives for historically registered owned homes
- Create a fund to upkeep homes/structures to prevent demolition by neglect

Strategic Goal 3: Preserve legacy trees

- Preserve natural environment

Suggested Additional Actions:

- Encourage staff to support the process and remove barriers

What's Missing:

- Educate the community on the various programs
- Facade programs





Strategic Development

Strategic Goal 1: Enforce appropriate zoning

- Support affordable housing
- Keep light industrial zoning/Congress
- Create clear development guidelines
- Pass Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance
- Preserve and protect existing neighborhoods/businesses by enforcing the comprehensive plan by following the LDR and not allowing so much relief
- Preserve legacy neighborhoods – stop unfettered building of "sugar cube" homes
- Ensure community-led development of 6, 7, 8 blocks West of Swinton
- Follow the rules
- Streamline the permitting process

Strategic Goal 2: Focus on Citywide transportation

- Consider trolleys to help with parking, and transport workforce, and patrons
- Convert open parking spaces into garages as a better use of space and land
- Create workforce parking with safe and free transportation
- Complete streets, more bicycle paths throughout the City to connect east, west, north, and south
- Design and landscape to promote safety
- Create a more pedestrian-friendly West Atlantic Avenue

Suggested Additional Actions:

- Consideration and inclusion of local businesses in development within the Black community
- Maintain existing infrastructure
- Scheduled maintenance

What's Missing:

- Include ecological issues such as seawalls and maintaining erosion
- Expand good design and development as it relates to all communities

How to Use This Plan

The Vision 2035 strategic plan provides a framework created by the community as a vision for the future of Delray Beach. The vision and key focus areas are intended to have a long-term view. The vision is a statement of what the community desires for the future, and the key focus areas are those big buckets of “things that must go well” in order for the City to achieve the vision, from the community’s perspective.

The key focus areas provide a lens for viewing and understanding the community’s recommendations. The Steering Committee and community stakeholders developed strategies within the key focus areas that, when accomplished, will move the City towards the vision.

The community’s Vision 2035 strategic plan can be integrated into City operations, including but not limited to:

City Organization Strategic Plan

- Based on the community vision and key focus areas, the City can develop a more comprehensive strategic plan in collaboration with the City Commission and staff to align City operations with the community vision

City Commission Agenda Items

- City initiatives, projects, and budget items can be connected to one (or more) of the five key focus areas. This can be included routinely as part of staff reports

Budgeting and Goal Setting

- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) encourages the inclusion of a strategic planning framework in the public budget document
- Budget initiatives can be connected to how they support one or more of the key focus areas
- When the governing body meets to adopt new goals, the Vision 2035 framework can be used to prioritize actions

Communication

- The City’s newsletter, website, and other similar communication tools can include updates on the implementation progress of the key focus areas to keep the public informed
- Copies of the community vision and key focus areas can be posted around City buildings

APPENDIX A:

VISION 2035 STEERING COMMITTEE WORKSHOP #1 SUMMARY REPORT

City of Delray Beach

Vision 2035 Steering Committee

Workshop #1 Summary Report

Held November 7, 2025

The City of Delray Beach, Florida, held a Vision 2035 Steering Committee Workshop on November 7, 2025. The workshop was planned and facilitated by Raftelis.

Welcome and Introductions

To kick off the workshop, Mayor Tom Carney welcomed the participants, and the facilitator shared the purpose of the workshop—to establish crucial components for the vision and identify Key Focus Areas to serve as the draft framework for the Vision 2035 strategic plan. After reviewing the agenda and meeting norms, the facilitator invited participants to introduce themselves by sharing how long they had lived in Delray Beach and what they love most about the Delray Beach community.

The conversation was captured by the visual facilitator, as shown below:



Vision 2035 Process Overview

A strategic plan answers three questions:

- What do we know to be true today?
- What do we hope will be true in the future?
- How do we get there?

Strategic planning is a process for defining the community vision and then allocating City resources to pursue this vision and achieve the goals.

Vision Ideas

As a first step, the facilitator led the Steering Committee through a visioning exercise to think about the future of Delray Beach, highlighting what members of the Committee hope to be true about their community in 10 years. Participants were broken into groups and asked to reflect on the series of questions listed below:

- What will Delray Beach **feel** like in the future?
- What will we **see** in Delray Beach in the future?
- What will we **do/experience** in Delray Beach in the future?

The list of individual responses is included in Appendix A. Overall themes from the conversation are captured below, along with the accompanying image, which was illustrated by the visual facilitator.

- Parks
- Sports
- Downtown
- West Atlantic
- Less Restrictive
- Affordable Housing
- Development
- Diversity
- Walkable
- Community
- Neighborhoods
- Vibrant and Safe
- Welcoming
- Future Oriented
- User-Friendly City Hall
- Arts
- Restoring Ecology
- Preservation
- Education





Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)



Next, the Steering Committee conducted a SWOT analysis to assess the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that could help and hinder Delray Beach's progress towards Vision 2035.

The conversation was captured by the visual facilitator, as shown in the following image.

STRENGTHS

- ◆ Beach access
- ◆ Weather
- ◆ Confronting racial injustice
- ◆ Walkability
- ◆ Historical Societies
- ◆ NFPs & Civic Orgs
- ◆ Public Golf Course
- ◆ Quality Musicians/Arts
- ◆ Historic Sites
- ◆ Schools
- ◆ Preservation of Historic Black Businesses



WEAKNESSES

- Communication
City ↔ People
- Lack of Oversight
- Internal Leadership Struggles
- Lack of timely follow through
w/Commission decisions
- LDRs limits property owners
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Roadway infrastructure



OPPORTUNITIES

- * AI
- * Taxes (incentives)
- * Artificial Reef
- * Environment
- * Pride
- * Grants
- * City Employee Morale
- * Attract Major Business
- * Revise top priorities
for Delray



THREATS

- ~ State legislation
- ~ Education lacking
- ~ State over-reach
- ~ Dissolution of Home Rule
- ~ Sea Level Rise & King Tide
- ~ Outdated Architecture Standards
- ~ Tree Ordinance/unprotected shade
- ~ Heritage destruction
- ~ Over gentrification
- ~ Unaffordability
- ~ Political polarization
- ~ Property Insurance
- ~ Displacement of Long Term residents



Key Focus Areas

Thinking more broadly, participants were asked to identify Key Focus Areas, the broad areas or “big buckets of things that must go well” in order for Delray Beach to be successful and achieve the vision. To do this, the facilitator first asked the participants to brainstorm key issues in the City. The full list is included in Appendix B.

Using the brainstormed ideas, the Steering Committee members were broken into groups and asked to identify common themes, which became Key Focus Areas. Participants then worked to define each Key Focus Area and identify successful outcomes, such as what would be different, improved, or changed in 2035. The five Key Focus Areas in alphabetical order are as follows:

- **Economic Development**
- **Education**
- **Environment**
- **Historic Preservation**
- **Thoughtful Development**

Five Key Focus Areas

Through this exercise, the Steering Committee identified five Key Focus Areas. The definitions and outcomes are outlined below:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Definition	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry • Education • Arts • Culture and cultural • Hospitality • Street beautification • Businesses • Attraction and retention • Commercial • Programs • Tourism • Multi-use neighborhoods • Recreational facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street beautification • 5th Avenue business district • More diversity in restaurant offerings • Develop Congress Avenue • Federal highway development • Attract big primary employers and businesses • Parking solutions • Protecting locally owned businesses • User-friendly businesses • Local preference • More technology companies • Technical college • More start-ups • Incentivize • Accessible transportation • Preserving zoning for commercial and industrial • High-quality events • Public-private partnerships

EDUCATION

Definition	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First college • Grades • Taking control of K-12 • Charter • Homeschool • Technical school • Private schools • K-12 • Preschool • Local matrix (more than grades) • High school curriculum changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate demographic shifts • Reimagine schools based on demographics (e.g., technical schools) • Future education programs about technology (e.g., technical skills) • Choices • Parents being first educators • Safe schools • Increased staffing and graduation rates • Increased 3rd-grade level reading • Prepared for kindergarten and kindergarten readiness • Job readiness • Retention of graduates within the community • Public relations for educational successes • Tutorial programs • Better reputation • Job preparation and workforce readiness • Accountability and consequences • Continue Eagles Nest program

ENVIRONMENT

Definition	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Air • Beach • Parks • Wildlife • Infrastructure • Nature • Open space • Reef protection and restoration • Climate change • Rising sea level • King tide • Hurricanes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trees and shade (e.g., canopy) • More open and green • Healthier beach • Strong maintenance and restoration programs for wildlife and bees • Sea creatures • Hardened homes • Prevent pollution • Expansion of the clean and safe program • Hurricane preparedness • Green initiatives for development

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Definition	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically significant property • Buildings • Parks • School • Churches • Districts and neighborhoods (e.g., Frog Alley) • Native environment (e.g., trees) • Culture of the neighborhood (e.g., vibes) • Character of neighborhood • Nostalgia in the town • Small town feel • Adaptive reuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture the memory of our long-time citizen • Additional historic district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New district • Revisit matrix (e.g., war historic) • Encourage people to preserve homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Incentives • Eliminate destruction of old homes • No demolition by neglect • Local designation • Eliminate landlord renovation of historic homes

THOUGHTFUL DEVELOPMENT

Definition	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development • Open spaces and parks • Use of technology to reduce cost and be more efficient • Minimal effect on the environment • Right development in right places • Neighborhood enhancement and preservation • Historic preservation • Development without displacement • Balance of development and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better and updated LDRs • Allow creativity • Preserve commercial and industrial zoning • Address substandard housing • Incentivize public placemaking • Developing corridors and all sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ West Atlantic is undeveloped east of I-95, the historic red line • Use incentives • Outside resources • Grant funding • ROW beautification and art • Visible changes • Technology • Improve traffic patterns

Wrap Up and Next Steps

During the workshop, the Steering Committee identified three “parking lot” items listed below to consider at a later date:

- Timing of the next meeting
- Involvement of younger people (e.g., millennials, Gen Z)
- Streetlights in the northwest and southwest neighborhoods

As the workshop came to a close, the facilitator reminded the group that today’s work was only the first step in creating the draft Vision 2035, and shared that their valuable input from the day’s session would be synthesized in preparation for the next Steering Committee meeting.



APPENDIX B:
VISION IDEAS

Vision Ideas

The individual responses from the visioning exercise are included in the tables below:

Feel	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe • Each sector cared for • More smart growth • Native abundance • Easy to navigate • Easy in all weather • Move secondary streets like Pineapple Grove • History • Clearly feel history • A sense of history • Historic • Authentic • Innovative • Legacy • Like a community • Like home • Proud • Family • Welcoming • Vibrant • Artistic • Local • Safe • Love • Unique • Different • Alive and revived • Inclusive • Diverse culture • Tolerant • Friendly • Active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A special place • Family-oriented • Respected • Clean • Music • Fun • Cultured arts • Artsy • Exciting • Cohesive community • Strong community spirit • Civic • Community involvement • Sad losing mom and pop shops • Pride • Spiritually inspired • Environmentally friendly • Happy! • Fun • Walkability • Healthy • Energized • Outdoor • Environment healthy • Future-oriented and not sleepy • Community of thriving businesses • Authentic • Nostalgic • At home • Community rallying for local nonprofits • Cooperation and consensus-focused

See

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less restrictions by state government vs. City • Ethnic restaurants • Delray tax-paying businesses want to be involved • Local support of institutional nonprofits • Clear Delray personality • Family-friendly venues and development • Hotels • Police diversity • Vibrant neighborhood but ethnic • Completion of the renovation of the golf course with quality construction • Continue vibrancy downtown • New community center • More diversity • Local business growth • New facility at Veterans Park • Cultural entertainment that mirrors community • More civic involvement • Efficient City Hall • Not enough residents as City staff • New young professionals mixing with families • Employment opportunities • Prioritized residents in processes • Local-owned small business • Preserved downtown • Less traffic downtown • More neighbors downtown • See new tennis center • More cultural events • Benches on intracoastal • Beautiful beach • African American village • Family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More affordable neighborhoods • More pocket parks and gathering spaces • Fried chicken joint on West Atlantic • Walkers and bicyclists (e.g., currently lacking pedestrian and biking mobility) • More trees Citywide • More downtown parking • Active old-school square • Central Park • Fully walkable I95 to beach • Clean streets • Public art • Native plants • Open space • Protect homeless • See grocery and in-person bank on West Atlantic • Homes • Old buildings preserved • More mixed-use neighborhoods • Compatible architecture, not cookie-cutter • Better public schools • Walkable intracoastal and control sea rise • Sea • Pristine beaches • Old buildings preserved • Well-endowed university branch • Protect mangrove trees and green spaces • People embracing historic past • Great education opportunities • Historic buildings • Historic preservation adjacent to historic district • Building for Frances J. Bright Club • Historic preservation adjacent to urban growth |
|--|---|

Do/Experience

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer team • Minor league baseball • Play golf • Go to new tennis center • Workforce training • See culture outside downtown • Enroll in in-person college • Cutting-edge education lectures • University trade school • Free concert pass • Visit Delray college • Better public schools • Activate Veterans Park • Downtown pedestrian friendly • Affordable housing • Buildings for Black Woman’s Club and Frances J. Bright Club • Go to beach • Botanical garden • Go to downtown restaurant • Relax • Restore reef • Bike comfortably and safely • Shop • Encourage wine districts • Drink the clean and clear water • Go to City Hall and act • Visit small business • West I-95 development • Go to all local businesses • Attend happy hour to people watch • Take more responsibility for schools • Seeing more historic districts • Theme park in the “Set” • Go out in the 5th Avenue Black Business District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Delray Beach tax-paying businesses and vendors • In-person banking • Be active in planning and zoning • Better code enforcement and faster permit process • Frog Alley preserved • Visit renovated Veterans Park • Preserve culture and history • Art variety • Art events • Museum • Atlantic Avenue historic district • See shows/concerts • Jazz club • Theater • Visit gallery and studios • Visit dance company • Ballroom dance • Go to fairs, openings, and events • Classical, opera, ballet, symphony • Comedy entertainment • Go to a free concert at Old School Square • Visit Village Academy High School football team • City staff to improve personal pride • Vendor meet and greets hosted by City • Fund public art • Fund police patrol volunteers • Quota for resident City staff (e.g., more) • Beach banyan trail/skate park • Visit DSS • Visit village west - high school foundation |
|--|---|

APPENDIX B:
KEY ISSUES

Key Issues

To determine the Key Focus Areas, the Steering Committee brainstormed a list of key issues. The full list of key issues is listed below in no particular order.

- Preserving the character of the Town
- Smart growth in the downtown corridor
- Clean and safe Citywide
- Affordable for local businesses
- Need more open space
- Improve educational outcomes
 - College
 - Technical schools
 - Home schools
 - Opportunities for our children and our future
- Sense of community and small-town atmosphere
- Thoughtful community led West Atlantic development
- Hiring and retaining professional staff
- Designate Atlantic Avenue as a historic district (all of the Avenue)
- Develop City technology, processes, and policies
- Address future demographics (low birthrate, aging workforce)
- Develop an African American village
- Focus on arts and culture in West Atlantic
- Develop a matrix or standard for youth development
- Create opportunities for youth entertainment
- In-person brick-and-mortar bank on West Atlantic
- Easy navigation around the City, even in inclement weather
- Placemaking in public spaces throughout Town
- Address revenue reductions
- Economic development focus on supporting existing businesses and growing new businesses
- Eliminate predatory financial practices
- Increase tourism: prioritize locals while welcoming visitors
- Development planning west of 95
- Create a diverse, balanced community
- Preservation of historic spaces and places (this includes native environment such as reefs and trees)
- Dedicate resources to maintain the beach
- Smart and controlled development
- Infrastructure (roads, water, sewer)
- Update, modernize, or change the LDR's: revise the architectural standards, protect historic neighborhoods
- Advance arts and cultural development: innovative, creative, unique, one of a kind
- Each sector of our City is thriving, cared for, and developed
- Renovation and maintenance of public facilities (e.g., parks, tennis center)
- Development without displacement
- Development on West Atlantic Avenue
- Shop local

APPENDIX B:

VISION 2035 STEERING COMMITTEE WORKSHOP #2 SUMMARY REPORT

City of Delray Beach

Vision 2035 Steering Committee
Workshop #2 Summary Report
Held December 12, 2025

The City of Delray Beach, Florida, held a second Vision 2035 Steering Committee Workshop on December 12, 2025. The workshop was planned and facilitated by Raftelis.

Welcome and Introductions

To kick off the workshop, Mayor Tom Carney welcomed the participants, and the facilitator shared the purpose of the workshop—to finalize the draft Vision 2035 Key Focus Areas and identify potential initiatives to support each Key Focus Area. After reviewing the agenda and meeting norms, the facilitator invited participants to introduce themselves and share what stuck with them after the first workshop in November.

A few responses shared among the participants are included below:

- Commonality in thinking between the Steering Committee members
- Focus on the greater good and success for the City as a whole
- Diversity among the Steering Committee members that reflects Delray Beach’s diverse community
- Greater awareness of other perspectives and experiences within the community
- Shared desire for the City to be successful and to keep moving the City into the future



Review of Key Focus Areas

After recapping the first Steering Committee Workshop on November 7, 2025, and reviewing the five potential Key Focus Areas participants identified, participants broke into groups and discussed draft definitions for each Key Focus Area provided by the facilitator. During their discussion, groups were asked to share concepts that may have been missing from the draft definitions. The revised definitions for each Key Focus Area are detailed below:

Economic Development

Delray Beach will attract new primary jobs, unique local businesses, entrepreneurs, and commercial and industrial development to our community that will enhance and preserve our small-town character. Our strategy will include investing in infrastructure such as roads, public transit, and sensible educational facilities; preserving land that is zoned appropriately for commercial and light industrial development; promoting the arts; and creating incentives to strengthen existing and new businesses.

Education

Delray Beach will support the various educational resources and programs available for our community, which include access to quality public schools, educational initiatives, technical training, and workforce development. The community will be well-informed about educational opportunities. All students will have high-quality, diverse learning experiences and pathways to success, including vocational training opportunities. Our focus on educational opportunities will rely on partnerships with our educational institutions, anticipating the future needs of our community of students, and reimagining our relationship with education.

Environment

Delray Beach will implement practices that ensure the well-being of current and future generations while maintaining an ecological balance. Our main focus will be on our beachfront as a key component of economic development, quality of life, and enhanced protection against weather-related events. We will also have programs to enhance and restore green spaces, shade canopies, and wildlife protection. Building long-term resilience to climate change, supporting maintenance and restoration programs, conserving resources, and limiting negative impacts on the environment through thoughtful development and zoning regulations are key components of our approach.

Historic Preservation

Delray Beach will protect and maintain our buildings, landscapes, natural areas, and structures of historic significance, in order to safeguard our unique cultural heritage and allow the community to connect with our history and identity. Protection will include strong legal frameworks and support for funding opportunities to allow owners to preserve the historical integrity of properties. This will result in unique neighborhood characteristics, enhancement of our small-town nostalgia, heritage tourism, economic development, and an increase in property values.

Thoughtful Development

Delray Beach will create a cohesive and vibrant built environment that enhances the quality of life for our community. Thoughtful development through enhancement and preservation emphasizes good design regulations, comprehensive planning, integration of open spaces and parks, environmental sustainability, and historical preservation to ensure that every aspect of the community reflects our unique identity and character. Our approach will foster economic development across the community, effectively use technology, promote social interaction of all ages, and improve the balance of development and infrastructure necessary to support a healthy community.



Strategic Goals and Initiatives

Next, Steering Committee members worked in groups to identify potential initiatives to make progress in each Key Focus Area. The complete list of brainstormed initiatives is included in Appendix A.

From these brainstormed initiatives, participants then prioritized their top two from each Key Focus Area. The most prioritized initiatives were grouped into themes and used as the basis for each Key Focus Area's Strategic Goals. The complete list of prioritized initiatives is included in Appendix B.

The Strategic Goals identified by the Steering Committee are organized by Key Focus Area below:

Economic Development

1. Advocate for economic development support
2. Promote the arts
3. Promote small businesses and entrepreneurship

Education

1. Restore the Education Board
2. Encourage internships

Environment

1. Maintain, protect, and expand open spaces
2. Increase and preserve the tree canopy

Historic Preservation

1. Increase historic designations
2. Create incentives for historic preservation
3. Preserve legacy trees

Thoughtful Development

1. Enforce appropriate zoning
2. Focus on Citywide transportation



Through this exercise, the Steering Committee also identified guiding principles that were common throughout each Key Focus Area, such as health and safety and partnerships. These guiding principles serve as fundamental values and the basis for each proposed initiative.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

As the session concluded, the facilitators reviewed the next steps with the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will present its draft strategic plan framework to the broader Delray Beach community at the Community Visioning Conference on Saturday, January 24. This will be an opportunity for the community to review the work of the Steering Committee and finalize Vision 2035.

For the closing exercise, Steering Committee members shared what questions they wanted to ask and/or information they wished to share with the community during the Visioning Conference.

Responses are included below:

- What exactly do the residents want on West Atlantic? Must be realistic for that area.
- I want the community to provide input on their perspective of the LDRs as they think of the economic impact.
- Is Delray Beach in need of more development / less trees?
- What would you like to see for Delray Beach to get accomplished in the next 10 years with respect to:
 - Education
 - Historic Preservation
 - Thoughtful Development
 - Economic Development
 - Environment
- What are you personally willing to get involved with to improve our City?
- Do you want the City to designate Atlantic Avenue as a historic district to preserve the scale and charm for future generations?
- What is important to you as a resident?
- How can we affect education?
- Effects of AI and the rise in homeschooling and low birthrate.
- What is your number one concern for Delray Beach going forward, complaint in Delray Beach at this time, and hope for Delray Beach?

After the exercise, the facilitator thanked the Steering Committee for their participation and reminded the group that today's work would be synthesized and shared during the Community Visioning Conference on January 24, 2026, at the Old School Square Field House.



APPENDIX A:
INITIATIVES BY KEY FOCUS
AREAS

Initiatives by Key Focus Area

The complete list of initiatives identified by the Steering Committee is included in the following tables.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available, accessible, affordable parking • Work with DDA to address vacancies • Business ombudsman • Additional staffing for economic development • Encourage internships • Preserve zoning for light industrial uses • Technical higher education • Promotion of the arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better promote Delray Beach for conferences and events—size appropriate • Attract and focus on what attracts businesses and groups to our City • AI • Incentives (tax) to encourage entrepreneurship • Change zoning to preserve commerce • Air rights

EDUCATION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal pre-k/training/education • Bring back cursive writing • Encourage internships • Municipal responsibility for goals and outcomes • Track and adjust for rise in homeschooling • Encourage parental/community involvement for success • Identify at-risk populations of students • Provide early intervention • Explore charter schools • Rebrand public schools • Promote success • Strong Education Board to lobby for school enhancements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of low birthrate • Promote human interaction in education (e.g., between teacher and student) • Trades education and schools • Culinary school at OSS • Partnership—ILA between the City and the School Board • Promotion of arts • Agriculture trade school • AI training • Goal—best schools in PBC • Agriculture is the City's responsibility • Better communication about educational opportunities

ENVIRONMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand protections of open spaces and parks • Designate legacy trees • Zoning open spaces to conservation • Create bioswales • Reef restoration • Wildlife corridors • Restore canal and living seawall • Big open legacy spaces to designate • Tree canopy • Goal = 40% tiny forests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address sea level rise • Fund walls for those who cannot afford • Renourishment fund for beach • Hurricane relief fund • Restoration and preservation • More and better low-impact transportation options • Better education on the importance of open space and parks

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase enforcement for “demolition by neglect” • Improved communication and signage for existing historic districts • Communicate “personality” of districts • Outline and identify district personalities • Increase fines for destroying trees • Increase in lieu fine • Strictly adhere to zoning in historic district • Historic designation for Atlantic Avenue • Promote heritage tourism (DDA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic preservation for landscaping • Increase number of historic districts • Individual designation of homes • Ease and speed of historic designation • Add on more incentives for historical preservation • Streamlined permitting for appropriate projects as compliant with defined parameters and guidelines • Increased tax breaks for preservation |
|---|---|

THOUGHTFUL DEVELOPMENT

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address effects of low birth rate • Improve infrastructure • Clear delineation by district based on their needs • Enhance walkability and mobility throughout the City • Track effects of AI on age of buildings • Limit granting of variances • LDR changes needed • Air rights through incentive/density • Preserve/tighten regulations on height, mass, and density | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect/tighten regulations on setbacks • Encourage and incentivize entrepreneurs and small business • Maintain commercial zoning (hold back residential) • Affordable housing • Moratorium from changing commercial to residential • Super majority for zoning changes • Strengthen protections for old-growth trees • Improvements to recreational facilities |
|--|--|

APPENDIX B:
PRIORITIZED INITIATIVES

Prioritized Initiatives

The complete list of prioritized initiatives identified by the Steering Committee is detailed below:

Economic Development

Strategic Goal 1: Advocate for economic development support

- Business ombudsman
- Additional staff for economic development
- Increase the economic development department

Strategic Goal 2: Promote the arts

- Promotion of the arts
- Expand the arts districts

Strategic Goal 3: Promote small businesses and entrepreneurship

- Tax incentive to preserve entrepreneurship

Other Themes:

- Air rights
- “Air rights” and incentives
- LDR changed
- Promote and market more of what makes Delray unique
- Better schools

Education

Strategic Goal 1: Restore the Education Board

- Strong Education Board
- Strong Education Board to lobby the School Board
- New Education Board
- The City has goals and outcomes
- The City takes responsibility for outcomes and goals for education
- Lobby the Education Board with our goals

Strategic Goal 2: Encourage internships

- Encourage internships in all industries
- Trades - auto repair internship and construction
- Internships
- Increase and improve trade and technical training
- Trade and other programs being mindful of AI
- Trade/skill schools

Other themes:

- Promotion of arts
- Charter schools
- ILA with County
- Low birth rate
- Goal for Delray Beach to have the best-rated schools in PBC
- Rebrand public schools
- Rebrand schools
- Universal Pre-K
- Increase Pre-K
- Rise in homeschooling
- Auto trade school as ILA with the School Board, City, and industry
- Culinary school at Old School Square

Environment**Strategic Goal 1: Maintain, protect, and expand open spaces**

- Protection of open spaces
- Better education of open spaces
- Expanded protection of open spaces
- Convert open space to conservation
- Expand protection of open space and parks
- Expand and enhance green spaces
- More green space

Strategic Goal 2: Increase and preserve the tree canopy

- Increase/preserve tree canopy
- Legacy trees
- Trees!
- Designate legacy trees

Other Themes:

- Reef restoration
- Wildlife preservation
- Wildlife corridors
- Increased conservation zoning
- Low-impact transportation shuttle
- Address sea level rise
- Sea level rising
- Seawall fund
- Protect living seawall
- Renourishment fund for the beach

Historic Preservation

Strategic Goal 1: Increase historic designations

- Increase historic districts
- Individual designation homes
- Individual historic designation
- Make historic designation easier
- Increase the number of historic designations
- Increase the number of historic districts and ease the speed for designation
- Additional historic districts (e.g., Atlantic Avenue)
- Historic designation for Atlantic Avenue

Strategic Goal 2: Create incentives for historic preservation

- Incentive
- Add incentives for historic preservation
- Increase tax break for historic preservation

Strategic Goal 3: Preserve legacy trees

- Historic preservation of trees
- Increase fines for destroying trees and increase the use of canopy other than palm trees
- Incentive for legacy trees
- Creative incentives for legacy trees

Other Themes:

- Increase enforcement to encourage demolition by neglect
- Heritage tourism
- Historical character

Thoughtful Development

Strategic Goal 1: Enforce appropriate zoning

- Super majority on zoning changes
- Require a super majority to change zoning
- Super majority on variances
- Maintain zoning
- Preserving zoning on light industrial and commercial uses
- Preserve commercial use zoning
- Preserve space for commercial
- Protect commercial and industrial zoning
- Preserve industrial and commercial property and zoning
- Stop commercial to residential
- Maintain regulations on mass height and density
- Moratorium to change commercial to residential
- Preserve proper light industrial
- Strictly adhere to zoning in historical districts
- Strict rights on growth and setback
- Adhere to zoning

Strategic Goal 2: Focus on Citywide transportation

- Walkability
- Multi-modal
- AI
- Enhance mobility throughout the City
- Autonomous

Other Themes:

- Economic development partnerships for light industrial
- Improve parking in Central Business District (CBD)
- Improvements to recreation facilities
- Fried chicken joint

APPENDIX C:

VISIONING CONFERENCE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Education

What's missing from the strategic goals?

- Supplemental plans for literacy, especially financial literacy
- Early learning component
- Quality education is more important than names—world-class schools!!
- Before and after school community partners
- Parent/community involvement, incentives
- Bring back a strong Education Board with a clear focus, include parents (or rebrand to ambassadors)
- Assign a line item in our City's budget to address deficiencies

What's most important as a strategic goal?

- Marketing that effectively communicates programs
 - Refresh school names
- Refer back to the educational component of the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Delray has the best schools in Palm Beach County (PBC)
- Making sure Education stays in line with our Economic Development goals

What are the biggest challenges to overcome?

- Following the data-driven Comprehensive Plan
- Carver Middle School
- Under enrollment
- Poor academic outcomes
- Rise in charter schools
- Look into charter schools and co-ops

Environment

What's missing from the strategic goals?

- Mention of Florida Friendly Landscape Standards as part of new developments
- Invasive species control and management:
 - Plants – invasives taking over our parks and natural areas
 - Animals – iguanas are out of control
- Recycling program for commercial properties, e.g., restaurants, other businesses
 - Incentive program
- Clean and safe City – sidewalks/roadways
- Urban wildlife corridors
- Allow and encourage bioswales
- Encourage self-sustainability
- Croquet at Veterans Park
- Increase aquifer recharge

What's most important as a strategic goal?

- Take care of what we have left
- Legacy tree preservation
- Tree canopy coverage
- Sustainable buildings
- Replacing any trees removed with more coverage
- Cannot lose any more green space!
- Water resources – supply/saving
- Delray is the Greenest City in PBC, and there are trees everywhere

What are the biggest challenges to overcome?

- Not much open land left in Delray
- New developments
- Invasive plants and animals
- Landscaping: looks (palms) vs. benefits (hardwoods)
- Costs

Historic Preservation

What's missing from the strategic goals?

- Additional programs for funding to preserve historic structures/properties
- Educate the community on the various programs
- Facade programs
- Preservation District
- Individual property incentives
- Tax credits upfront

What's most important as a strategic goal?

- Preserve existing districts
- Review of expanding districts with criteria to justify it
- Grant writer
- Environmental materials for historic structures/new and old

What are the biggest challenges to overcome?

- Getting funding/grant programs
 - Funding upkeep to prevent demo by neglect
- FEMA Regulation
- To encourage people to put their individual properties
- Streamline approval process
- Preserve the atmosphere and history of the City, e.g., Atlantic Avenue, Frog Alley
 - Legacy trees
- Community interest in expanding historic districts

Thoughtful Development

What's missing from the strategic goals?

- Include ecological issues such as seawalls and maintaining erosion
- Input/action from ALL communities east of I-95
- Expand good design and development as it relates to vacant property
 - Include all city limits, e.g., Congress Avenue Corridor
- Specify the areas in need of development
- Emphasize and enforce the LDR

What's most important as a strategic goal?

- Redefine our community to include the entire community, e.g., beach to I-95
- Include thoughtful development for all economic classes and safety throughout the City
- During development, address safety and infrastructure
 - Consistent attractive aesthetic per district (art district, Atlantic Ave, NW/SW community, West Atlantic Avenue)
- Following LDRs, the Comprehensive Plan, and goals
- Enforcement of zoning

What are the biggest challenges to overcome?

- Match appropriate LDR to neighborhood – residential or commercial
- State legislation gives the City constraints