

## Case Study

**Project Name:** City of Rockaway Beach, Tsunami Resilience Planning Project

**Location:** Within the Urban Growth Boundary of Rockaway Beach, OR

**Hazard(s) Addressed:** Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) tsunami; by addressing this hazard directly, other hazards will be addressed indirectly (such as flooding and sea level rise).

**Tsunami Risk:** The geography, older infrastructure, and human settlement patterns in Rockaway Beach have created challenges for timely evacuation from a local tsunami. Coastal lakes, non-retrofitted bridges, manufactured homes, residents over 65 years of age, and visitors who tend to stay close to the ocean all create evacuation concerns for the city.

### **Adaptation Strategy**

Address tsunami vulnerability and increase preparedness and resilience through land use planning measures, with the goal of promoting life safety and successful evacuation in the event of a CSZ earthquake and tsunami.

**Final Deliverables:** A Tsunami Hazard Overlay Zone and a Tsunami Evacuation Facilities Improvement Plan (TEFIP), both of which were adopted into the Rockaway Beach Zoning Ordinance through a plan amendment process.

### **Adaptation Action**

The City of Rockaway Beach undertook a risk-based and community-specific approach to tsunami resilience planning, which resulted in adopted updates to their land use ordinance that will benefit the community in both the short- and long-term.

**Short-term:** This project helped increase awareness of ongoing preparedness efforts in the city, and led to greater coordination between city departments and community groups working towards emergency resilience and preparedness. Recommendations and findings in the TEFIP will guide the City as they pursue funding opportunities and begin undertaking projects identified in the TEFIP, especially those identified as high priority.

**Long-term:** The project will create a more tsunami-resilient Rockaway Beach. New development will be required to conform to the requirements of the Tsunami Hazard Overlay Zone. The TEFIP has recommendations for physical improvements, City administration and policy, and tsunami education, outreach, and training strategies to not only improve physical infrastructure year after year, but also to promote an ongoing culture of preparedness in the community.

### **Lessons Learned:**

**Coordination with state agencies is key to success.** These partnerships provided research findings, socioeconomic data, and experience working with other communities on similar projects, which ensured a thorough, accurate, and clear planning process and final documents.



*Tsunami evacuation improvement planning meeting, January 2019. Credit: Cassandra Dobson.*

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**Learn from the community you are planning for.** Because the plan will serve community members, incorporating their knowledge and input will lead to a plan that is well-supported and useful for the City. It was especially helpful to engage with community members already working in emergency preparedness, to learn about their ongoing efforts and the weakness they see in the City's existing evacuation facilities.

**Conduct thorough existing conditions research.** Because the plan has detailed, location-specific recommendations, it was absolutely critical to conduct an accurate inventory of existing facilities. It was important to budget enough time for this exercise; there were no records of existing signage in the City, so every street needed to be traveled to create an inventory. Additionally, reviewing plans from other communities and tsunami resilience best practices was helpful in making recommendations for the TEFIP.

**Ensure a transparent adoption process.** To help facilitate a smooth adoption process, the planning team committed to providing the public with highly-accessible information. Planning documents were available online, along with an FAQ, presentations from public meetings, and posters from the Open House. The goal was to provide the public with the information they needed to ask questions and provide feedback to the planning documents throughout the adoption process with Planning Commission and City Council.

**Project Team and Partners:** Project Advisory Committee, DLCD, DOGAMI, City Manager, Public Works, Emergency Preparedness Leadership, and community members.

**Budget:** Approximately \$30,000 for the complete project, which included a \$14,000 grant from DLCD.

**Timeframe:** April 2018 through May 2019

### **Contact Information:**

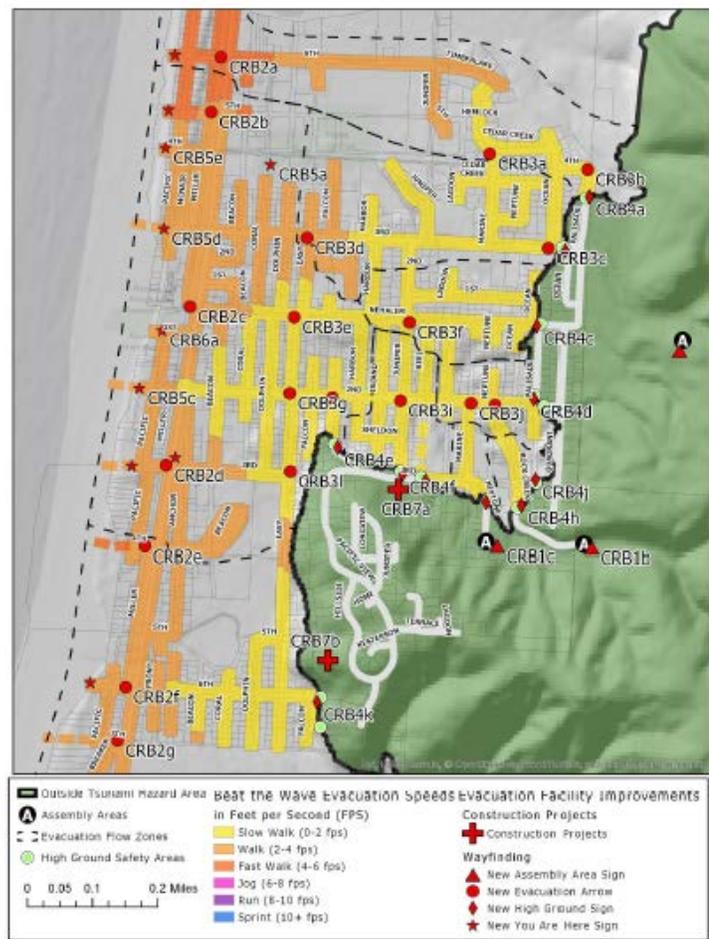
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*Evacuation Improvement Project Map for central Rockaway Beach, which resulted from community planning.*