

2025-2028

STRATEGIC PLAN



The Story Behind the Photo on the Cover:

The Nemasket River



The Nemasket River holds deep meaning for our organization, rooted in the vision of our founding Executive Director, Lou Nisenbaum. Inspired by the river's natural rhythm and its historical role as a source of nourishment and renewal for the Wampanoag people, Lou imagined an organization that would similarly support and enrich the lives of those in our community. The Nemasket Group was born from this vision—a place grounded in values, flowing with purpose, and committed to a fuller future for all it touches. As we unveil our 2025–2028 strategic plan, the image of the river on our cover reflects both our origins and our ongoing journey: paving a new direction while staying true to our roots.



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Letter From Leadership

This strategic plan comes at an exciting and important time in the history of The Nemasket Group. Since our last strategic plan 10 years ago, the world and service delivery models to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have changed significantly. Autism rates have continued to spike, and there is a growing number of young adults who are entering the I/DD system post-high school who need an array of services and supports that far exceed capacity in our state.

At the same time, the broader world has undergone significant change, marked by the acceleration of technology in our lives, most recently including the advent of AI, and the experience of a once-in-a-lifetime global pandemic that altered our lives and communities. In addition to all the changes we have experienced to date, we also know that there are more to come, particularly in terms of Medicaid rules, regulations, and rates that fund the services and supports we provide.

Given this changing landscape, the strategic plan that will guide our work over the next 3 years aspires to transform our organization and our work. The plan calls for expansion and diversification of services, modernization of our infrastructure and practices, and a commitment to investing in our staff, all while holding true to our guiding principles.

Furthermore, our plan reflects a new mission and vision that elevates our commitment to person-centered and directed services and articulates a set of values that will guide our interactions with those we serve, each other, and our colleagues and family members in the community.

The strategic plan that will guide our work and focus our impact was informed through the input of many – our Board, our staff, persons served, family members, and community partners. It is the collective work of all of you that enables The Nemasket Group to continue to grow and thrive, and we look forward to our continued partnership over the next three years as we seek to grow, diversify, and change to meet the needs of those we serve.

Sincerely,



Jenny Duval
Executive Director



Jacqueline Einstein
Board President

Overview of Planning Process

The strategic planning process was conducted from June – August 2025, with the following initiatives to gather input and ensure inclusion of all voices and perspectives.

- June 2025: staff forums and a leadership team retreat.
- July 2025: family focus group and board strategic planning session.
- August 2025: family surveys, stakeholder surveys, employee surveys, individual interviews, leadership retreat, and board strategic planning session.

All of the input from these sessions has been consolidated and is reflected in the strategic plan document.

Key Learnings

Deep Organizational Commitment and Strong Relationships

The Nemasket Group's greatest strength lies in its mission-driven culture and long-tenured staff, many of whom have served for decades. Staff and leadership are described as deeply caring, flexible, and values-driven, fostering strong, trust-based relationships with the individuals and families they support. This loyalty has built a community reputation for inclusion and person-centered care.

High-Quality, Individualized Supports

Families and participants consistently highlight the individualized nature of services, from flexible residential support to employment services and community integration programs. The organization is recognized for its creative and innovative approach to service delivery, particularly in areas such as family support and individualized scheduling tailored to personal interests.

Service System Gaps and Evolving Needs

Despite strengths, there are growing service system gaps, particularly around:

- Transition planning for youth aging out of school services.
- Affordable and accessible housing for individuals with complex medical needs.
- Supports for the aging population as families and participants grow older.
- Increased peer and social connection opportunities to reduce isolation.

Infrastructure and Capacity Challenges

The Nemasket Group faces operational and structural constraints, including:

- Aging facilities, vehicles, and technology systems.
- Workforce challenges, including difficulty recruiting and retaining staff, aging leadership, and limited career pathways.
- Heavy reliance ($\approx 95\%$) on DDS funding, limits flexibility and growth while also placing the organization at potential risk if there are funding cuts from this significant source of revenue.

Communication and Coordination Needs

Families expressed a strong desire for better care coordination, resource hubs, and legal/financial planning support. Internally, staff noted opportunities for stronger cross-departmental communication, clearer policies, and better integration of Agency with Choice staff to prevent isolation.

Opportunities for Strategic Growth

Several opportunities were identified to expand impact and visibility, including:

- Diversifying funding through grants and partnerships.
- Strengthening community visibility via marketing and advocacy.
- Expanding innovative service lines, such as college support programs, self-directed services, and programs for aging populations.
- Leveraging the expertise of staff to lead trainings and thought leadership initiatives.

Need for Proactive Succession and Strategic Planning

Concerns were raised about succession planning for key leaders and the need for a clear strategic roadmap to address organizational sustainability. Long-serving leaders are both a strength and a vulnerability, underscoring the importance of planning for leadership transitions.

External Risks and Funding Vulnerabilities

The organization operates in a volatile funding environment, with potential risks tied to Medicaid and DDS regulatory changes, competition from larger providers, and economic fluctuations. Families also worry that funding pressures could lead to a shift away from individualized supports toward more congregate models, challenging The Nemasket Group's mission.

Opportunities for Board Evolution

The Nemasket Group's Board of Directors is widely recognized as committed, mission-driven, and supportive, with members contributing valuable expertise and stability through long tenure. This strong alignment with the organization's vision of inclusion and person-centered care has been a core strength. However, opportunities exist to increase engagement and visibility, as well as to recruit individuals with expertise in fundraising, policy, and clinical services. Considerations were also identified related to navigating potential conflicts of interest that may arise when family members of individuals served by the organization hold Board positions, recognizing both the valuable perspectives they bring and the need for balanced governance.

Our Vision, Mission, & Values

Vision Statement:

The Nemasket Group envisions a vibrant, inclusive community where every person we support is regarded as the expert of their own life and is empowered to lead a meaningful, self-directed life, strengthened by connection, family, opportunity, and a shared sense of belonging.

Mission Statement:

The Nemasket Group empowers individuals and families of all abilities to live self-directed lives through innovative services, meaningful opportunities, and inclusive community connections.

Values:

Respect: We listen to each other and to the people we support with care and understanding. We speak kindly and treat everyone with dignity.

Collaboration: We share information and ideas so everyone stays on the same page. We help each other out and celebrate our wins together.

Passion: We show up with energy and a positive attitude every day. We try new ideas, cheer each other on, and go the extra mile for each other and those we serve and support.

Commitment: We do what we say we'll do and take responsibility for our work. We keep learning and growing, and we help others do the same.

Excellence: We do our best in everything we take on. We give and receive feedback to get better and to support each other's success.

Our Guiding Principles:

Autonomy and Choice

- Ensure that people exercise as much autonomy in their lives as possible.
 - Provide opportunities for people served and families to develop their capacity to speak for themselves and others, to initiate ideas, and to control what happens in their lives.
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Individualized, Person-Centered Support

- Ensure that supports and services are individualized and guided by a person's goals, preferences, skills and strengths.
 - Provide supports within the program's purview that will meet the needs of people in the actual settings that the person will function within. Supports should be provided so that the person's time is spent in meaningful ways and is image-enhancing, through age-appropriate roles, settings, and timing.
 - Acknowledge that it takes intention, perseverance, courage, faith, skills, and support to realize one's potential.
 - Provide opportunities to celebrate the ordinary and extraordinary events and rituals in people's lives.
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Inclusion and Community Connection

- Support people in settings with other community members, with occasions for interaction that will enhance the competencies each person has.
- Provide opportunities to develop/deepen relationships and valued social roles, while enhancing positive perceptions about the person's value, status, roles, and competency.
- Enhance the community's capacity to welcome and include people with disabilities.
- Promote inclusion, meaningful roles, and positive perceptions of people with disabilities.
- Ensure that people receiving employment supports have access to steady and regular work and are compensated and treated equitably in all regards.

Our Goals:

Goal 1: Strengthen Our Person-Centered Culture to Support Program Growth, Expansion, and Diversification

- Strategy 1: Expand Residential and Community Living Options
- Strategy 2: Develop Specialized Services for Individuals with Autism
- Strategy 3: Enhance Individual Voice and Choice

Goal 2: Increase Our Presence in Our Communities to Drive Awareness, Engagement, Partnership, and Impact

- Strategy 1: Build Community Awareness of The Nemasket Group
- Strategy 2: Deepen Our Community Partnerships
- Strategy 3: Serve as a Strong Voice for Advocating with and on Behalf of Those We Serve:

Goal 3: Increase Our Revenue by 5% Annually While Maintaining a 3% Operating Margin

- Strategy 1: Develop a Comprehensive Fundraising Plan
- Strategy 2: Diversify Our Funding Sources
- Strategy 3: Grow Revenue Through Program Expansion

Goal 4: Develop and Retain an Exceptional Workforce

- Strategy 1: Invest in Workforce Development
- Strategy 2: Strengthen Our Culture Through Improved Communication
- Strategy 3: Align and Strengthen our Organizational Structure to Support our Future Impact

Goal 5: Invest in Our Internal Infrastructure and Systems to Support Our Impact

- Strategy 1: Upgrade Facilities and Technology
- Strategy 2: Establish a Quality Management/Improvement Program to Drive Organizational Performance
- Strategy 3: Strengthen our Financial Practices and Systems to Broaden Transparency and Accountability for Financial Results

Goal 6: Continue to Develop our Board to Support our Impact and Champion our Cause

- Strategy 1: Strengthen Governance and Leadership Practices
- Strategy 2: Build Board Capacity for Advocacy and Fundraising
- Strategy 3: Align Board Focus with Program Evolution

Tracking our Progress/Measuring Our Impact

Implementation Approach

The Strategic Plan is a living document that is a road map by which the staff of The Nemasket Group should be held accountable. The plan should be utilized to create annual goals for the organization. Progress against annual goals can be monitored by ensuring regular updates on plan progress at Board meetings and consistent reporting on desired key results noted below.

In addition, an implementation plan will be used to track progress against the selected strategies and tactics for the first year and then updated accordingly for each successive year.

Key Results

The implementation of the Strategic Plan is envisioned to enact a set of measurable key results. For each goal, the table below outlines key areas of measurement and proposed key results. The proposed key results are based on areas of measurement that currently exist within the organization where progress can be tracked. In these cases, targets were developed by senior management.

In some areas, baseline data, as well as the management capacity to measure and report on progress, will need to be created as part of the first year of implementation. It is envisioned that a dashboard of key results would be created to track progress against key results and be reported out periodically throughout implementation.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS	AREAS TO MEASURE	PROPOSED METRICS
Goal 1: Strengthen Our Person-Centered Culture to Support Program Growth, Expansion, and Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Person-Centered Satisfaction• Program Reach and Growth• Community Engagement and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year-over-year increase in satisfaction scores from individuals and families (e.g., target 90%+ satisfaction).• Number of individuals reporting that they feel their choices and voices are respected in annual surveys or focus groups.• Percentage increase in the total number of individuals served across all programs annually.• Number of new programs, services, or service areas launched each year.• Number of meaningful community partnerships developed to expand opportunities for individuals.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of individuals reporting increased participation in community activities and relationships.
<p>Goal 2: Increase Our Presence in Our Communities to Drive Awareness, Engagement, Partnership, and Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Awareness • Community Partnerships • Advocacy and Visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase website traffic and newsletter subscribers by X% annually. • Grow social media engagement (likes, shares, comments) by X% each year. • Number of active partnerships with schools, employers, and community organizations. • Number of community events or recognition programs hosted annually. • Number of statewide or regional coalitions where The Nemasket Group is an active member.
<p>Goal 3: Increase Our Revenue by 5% Annually While Maintaining a 3% Operating Margin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising Growth • Funding Diversification • Program Expansion Revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual increase in total fundraising revenue (target: 5% or more). • Percentage of revenue generated from non-DDS sources (track year-over-year growth). • Revenue generated from new or expanded programs each year. • Increase in program census where capacity for growth exists (track by program type).

<p>Goal 4: Develop and Retain an Exceptional Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Development • Culture and Communication • Leadership and Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff retention rate year-over-year (e.g., target 85%+). • Annual staff satisfaction score from surveys, with year-over-year improvement. • Number of leadership staff completing development or succession planning programs annually.
<p>Goal 5: Invest in Our Internal Infrastructure and Systems to Support Our Impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities and Technology • Quality Management and Improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of technology and equipment upgraded annually (including fleet updates and IT systems).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Practices and Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of technology and equipment upgraded annually (including fleet updates and IT systems). • Progress milestones toward implementing an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system and developing the central Hub. • QI Plan results • Timeliness and accuracy of financial reports shared with leadership and program directors.