

CITY OF FOSTER CITY

Community Annual Report

2020-2021



fostercity.org



Vision of the City Council

Create a sustainable Foster City through smart, inclusive, and efficient actions to enhance our quality of place for current and future generations.

Mission Statement

The mission of the City of Foster City is to deliver equitable services that are customer-focused with an emphasis on public safety, neighborhood livability, smart planning, a vibrant economy, infrastructure improvements, innovation, and a sustainable environment. In pursuit of this mission, we use community engagement and data to make decisions and measure progress based on economic, social, and environmental factors.

A Message from the Mayor

Dear Foster City Family,

Difficult times produce opportunities for leadership and shine a bright light on the level of commitment of individuals who work as a team for our community. We have made significant progress at City Hall from “simply surviving” through a pandemic toward an environment we can thrive in. I am proud of the culture of teamwork that is being nurtured at City Hall, and it is critical that we preserve this culture to meet our collective potential.

Staff and Council have put forth a significant effort to deliver an exceptional performance across six strategic priority areas. Everyone had to “step up and step in.” One metric of output is the number of ordinances, resolutions, and minute orders approved by Council. The number this year was 373 which is approximately 30% higher than 2020 and approximately 50% higher than 2019. Over the next year, a combination of a fully staffed team leveraging newly implemented scalable systems will result in enhanced services for all of us to enjoy.

We ended our Fiscal Year with \$52.9 million in General Fund Reserves and remain fiscally strong.

For the first time in our City’s history, we actively sought to strengthen our legislative advocacy arm. One notable effort included our collaboration on Assembly Bill 1029, sponsored by Assemblymember Kevin Mullin, which was recently signed into law. This new law recognizes the importance of affordable housing preservation for residents across California. Another first this year was the formal Sister City relationship established with Inagi City, Japan, marking a historic and unique cultural milestone for us.

In the first year of construction, we made significant progress on the Levee Improvements Project – the City’s largest infrastructure project to date. With regards to our health and safety, we implemented Automated License Plate Readers at ingress and egress points to deter crime, extended affordable housing protections and relocation assistance to tenants at risk of being displaced, and took bold action to address concerns impacting cleanliness at our parks and water quality near our beaches.

We prioritized community engagement and deployed creative ways to stay connected. We were one of the first cities in San Mateo County to transition to hybrid meetings and we introduced the Mayoral Minute video series to supplement the sharing of critical information via the City’s social media platforms and e-newsletter. To top it all off, we celebrated our 50th Anniversary through a variety of fun community events which included the return of our beloved Rubber Ducky Race.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor and am extremely proud of us coming together as neighbors to put our community first. I would like to personally thank my fellow members of the City Council, Foster City Staff, Commission/Committee Members, and the community for making 2021 a success!

Sincerely,



SANJAY GEHANI
Mayor



LEFT TO RIGHT: Councilmember Jon Froomin; Mayor Sanjay Gehani; Vice Mayor Richa Awasthi; Councilmember Sam Hindi; Councilmember Patrick Sullivan

Through the Years

- 1958

T. JACK FOSTER PURCHASES BREWER ISLAND
- 1961

FOSTER BREAKS GROUND ON CONSTRUCTION OF FOSTER CITY
- 1971

FOSTER CITY BECOMES INCORPORATED
- 1997

NEW FOSTER CITY LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER OPENS
- 2002

NEW FOSTER CITY CIVIC CENTER OPENS
- 2005

MASSIVE REFURBISHMENT OF LEO J. RYAN PARK IS COMPLETED
- 2021

FOSTER CITY CELEBRATES 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



Golden Anniversary

This year, the City of Foster City celebrated 50 years since its official incorporation in 1971. The City Council, staff, and volunteers prepared a collection of community events that would last throughout the year. A special anniversary logo was revealed, and shortly after, banners were placed along the boardwalk in Leo J. Ryan Park and down East Hillsdale Boulevard. As excitement ramped up, a cake cutting ceremony was pre-recorded in a commemorative video that was shared with the community on Incorporation Day, April 27.



Cake Cutting Celebration



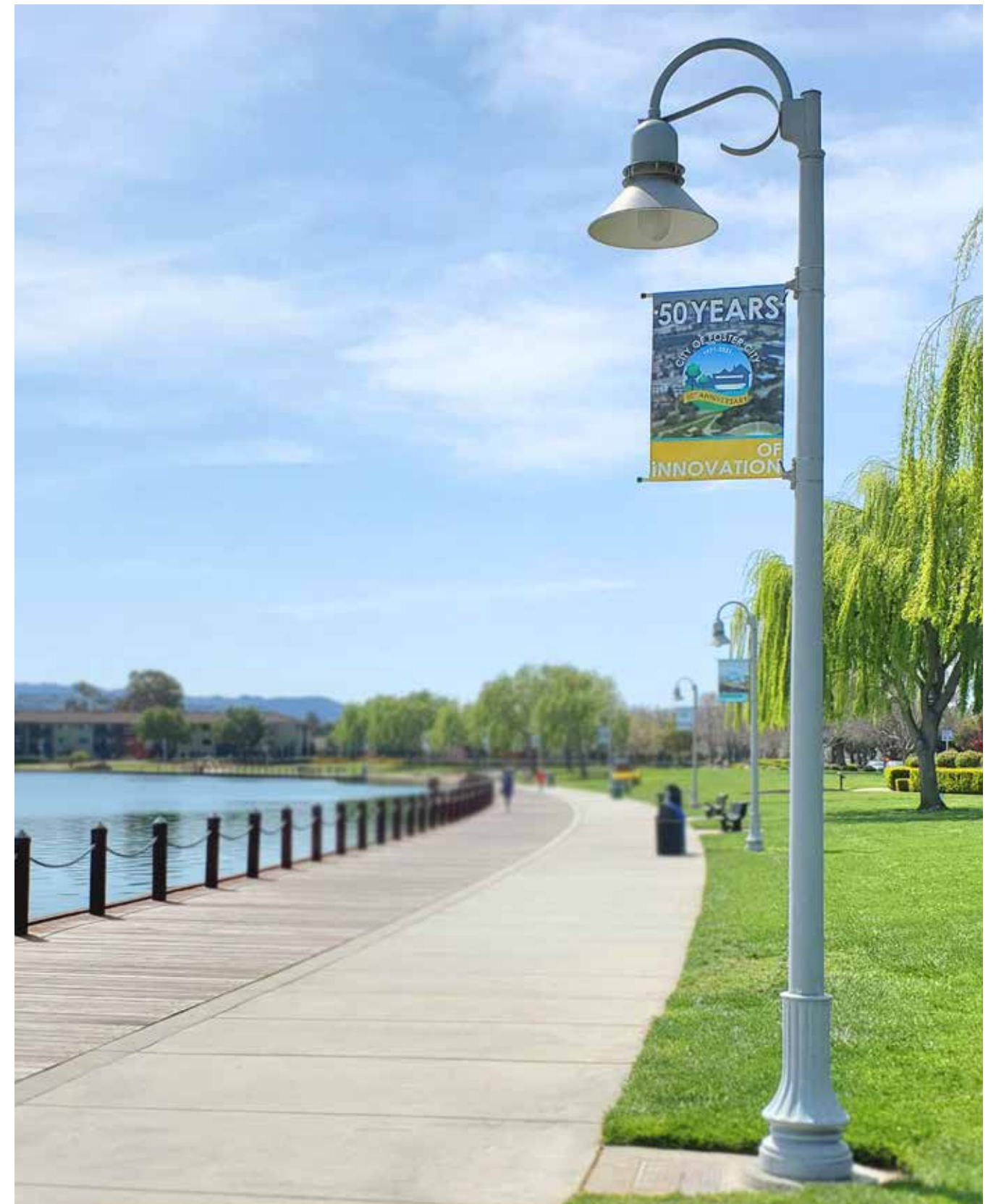
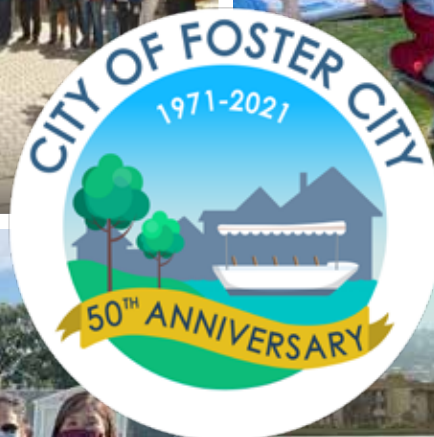
Paint in the Park



National Make a Difference Day



Rubber Ducky Race



Following the cake cutting event, the City hosted a Community Car Parade and cookie giveaway, Kite Day in the Park, the Anniversary Concert Series, the return of the Rubber Ducky Race, and more. Additionally, the San Mateo County History Museum announced the opening of "Foster City Through the Years," a photographic timeline of the history of the City, open through January 2022. Throughout the year, commemorative merchandise has been available for sale on the anniversary website, FosterCity50.org.

Strategic Focus Areas

Early in 2021, the City Council held its annual Vision & Policy Summit as well as a series of meetings thereafter where key priorities and initiatives for the coming year were discussed. Alongside identifying critical policy items and evaluating how to allocate staff resources on those items, the City Council adopted its Vision and Mission statements.

The Vision Statement is designed to provide direction on the higher-order perspective of the City Council's policy intent, while the Mission Statement is intended to guide the City's daily work and serve to align staff work with current priorities. These statements together help communicate the purpose and principles of the organization and seek to facilitate more positive relationships with the Foster City community. The following pages highlight just a few of the accomplishments for each Strategic Focus area.

Facilities & Infrastructure

Smart Planning

Community Engagement

Innovation & Sustainability

Social Equity & Public Safety

Operational Excellence

Facilities & Infrastructure

Foster City commits to maintaining a standard of excellence with regards to infrastructure, including the City's streets, lagoon, levee, parks, water supply system, wastewater system, storm water collection system, and facilities to preserve and enhance quality of life for future generations.

Levee Improvements Project

Tremendous progress was made on the Levee Improvements Project – the City's largest-ever infrastructure project. Sheet pile installation and grading in the Phase 3 area has finished, marking the installment of all permanent sheet piles for the entire project and bringing the historic initiative that addresses future sea level rise one step closer to completion.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Advancement continued on the Clean Water Program/Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, including improvements needed to ensure reliable wastewater treatment plant services and compliance with federal regulations. Funding for the project, done in collaboration with the City of San Mateo, is available through a combination of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act federal loan program and Wastewater Revenue Bonds and Notes.

New Fire Classroom

A new classroom facility was constructed for the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Training Division at Foster City's Corporation Yard through a generous \$178,000 grant from Gilead Sciences. The new classroom will provide space for continuing education classes for current Fire Department staff and intensive fire academies for future firefighters.

Pavement Conditions Index

The Pavement Conditions Index, which effectively measures the health of local roads, reached 80 in Foster City. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's assessment of roads in the City is significantly higher than the regional average of 67.

Traffic Relief Program

Efforts to relieve traffic congestion in Foster City moved ahead by awarding a construction contract for dynamic signage for the Traffic Relief Program. Once resumed, plans call for reducing cut-through traffic down the City's main corridor by permanently prohibiting left turns and u-turns from eastbound E. Hillsdale Boulevard onto Edgewater Boulevard and onto Shell Boulevard during peak evening commute hours, Monday-Friday from 4PM-7PM.





Smart Planning

Foster City commits to creating a long-term vision that protects, maintains, and enhances our community character through thoughtful planning and economic development policies.

Building Code Effectiveness

After an audit of the Building Division records by the Insurance Services Office, the City received a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule rating of Class 2. With 1 being the best rating, a good ISO rating demonstrates a commitment to excellence, as verified by a third-party review. Foster City property owners may benefit from insurance premium discounts or decreased deductibles with a lower ISO rating.

On the Horizon

Major projects approved, under construction or in the planning phases include development of an approximately 83,000 square-foot, seven-story hotel with 156 guest rooms at the vacant lot on the corner of Metro Center and Shell Boulevards; redevelopment of the vacant El Torito restaurant site into a new, Class A life sciences building; construction of a new approximately 5-acre private park with an amphitheater and a two-story Wellbeing Center on the Gilead campus.

Legislative Advocacy

Assembly Bill 1029, introduced by Assemblymember Kevin Mullin and crafted with the help of Foster City, was recently signed by Governor Gavin Newsom. The new law recognizes the importance of affordable housing preservation for residents across California. This effort and others were aided by partnership with Renne Public Policy Group, a legislative advocacy firm working at the state Capitol to defend Foster City’s best interest.

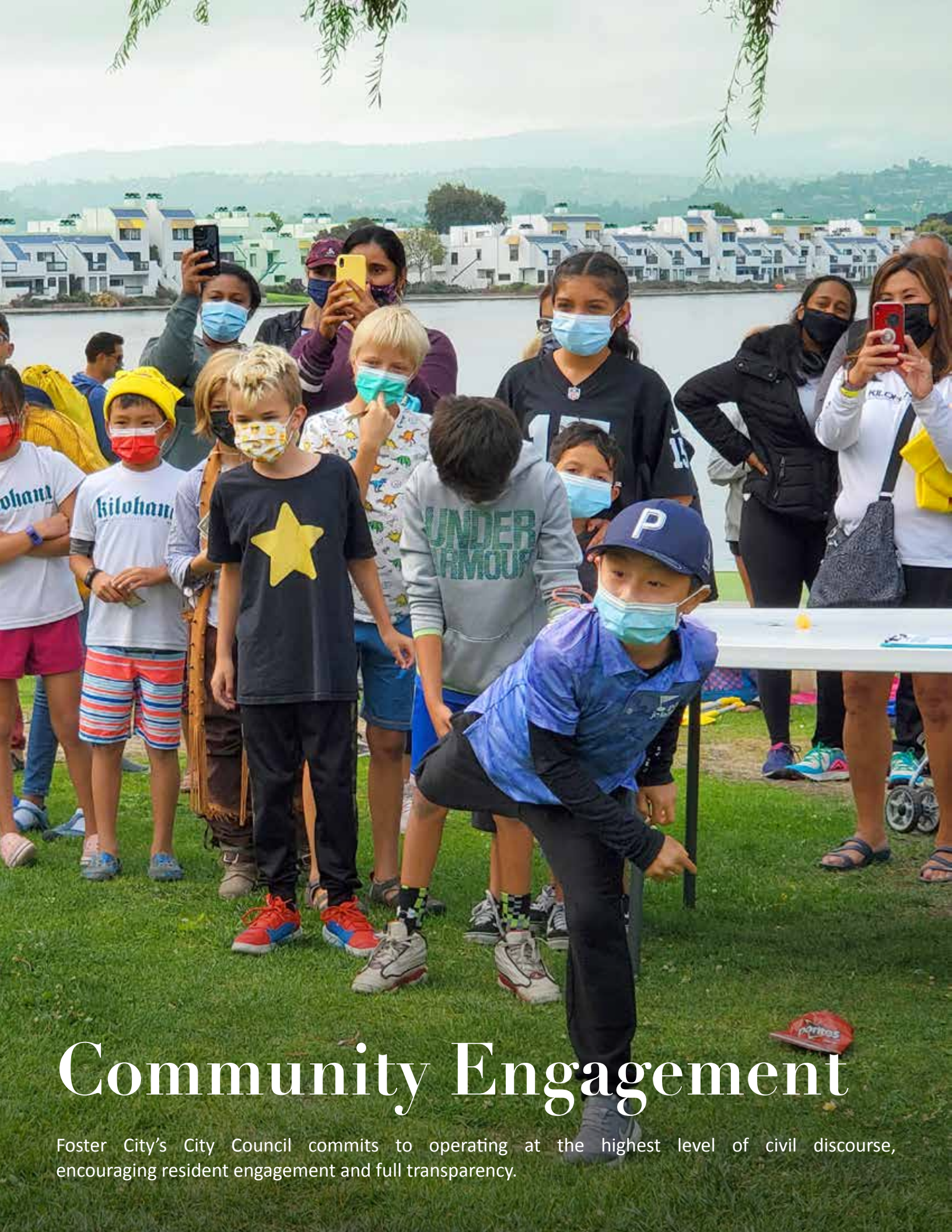
Community Planning & Collaboration

Community input was widely sought to establish a comprehensive set of Objective Design and Development Standards, which aim to regulate the look and feel of future multi-family and residential mixed-use projects in Foster City. Under new state law, jurisdictions can only use objective standards in development review of certain eligible projects.

Foster’s Landing

The City Council successfully worked to keep some of Foster City’s most vulnerable residents in their homes at Foster’s Landing by extending the expiring affordable housing covenants by one year and continuing to offer relocation assistance to tenants that are at the risk of being displaced.





Community Engagement

Foster City’s City Council commits to operating at the highest level of civil discourse, encouraging resident engagement and full transparency.

Mayoral Minute

The Mayoral Minute video series was launched this year, featuring Mayor Sanjay Gehani and a rotating cast of City Councilmembers discussing City events and sharing important updates. The series amassed more than 2,000 views on YouTube, and successfully diversified the Communications Division’s engagement strategy with Foster City residents.

Staying in Touch

Residents were regularly updated on City events, news, accomplishments, and more through the Weekly Newsletter. The virtual Newsletter was sent by the Communications Division directly to more than 9,000 subscribers, shared on the City’s social media outlets and archived on the City’s website. The publication also enhanced the City’s collaboration with the County of San Mateo, with space reserved in each edition for regional public health updates amid the pandemic.

Increased Accessibility

Completion of the Council Chambers Audio Upgrade project allowed for improved audio functionality and seamless teleconference integration, creating innovative solutions for public meetings during the pandemic. As indoor restrictions began to ease during the pandemic, Foster City leveraged these technological improvements to become one of the first cities in San Mateo County to start hosting hybrid City Council meetings. The transition resulted in enhanced accessibility by allowing the public to participate and engage at meetings in person or remotely.

Outreach Resources

To deepen and broaden engagement with residents, Foster City formed a series of partnerships with technology companies that specialize in improving community discourse. Agreements with Zencity, Bang The Table, and others offered Foster City essential social media monitoring services, survey functions, discussion platforms, and other virtual tools designed to expand community connectivity.

Community Workshops

Residents and community members were invited to participate in workshops addressing critical matters such as the Levee Improvements Project and the Housing Element. The gatherings featured in-depth presentations by experts and granted residents opportunities to share their thoughts or ask questions about some of the most important issues in Foster City.





Innovation & Sustainability

Foster City commits to lead in employing modern solutions to current day problems with a focus on and consideration of climate change.

Climate Action

The City is making headway on a Climate Action Plan (CAP) Assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the climate action progress relative to the technical performance targets outlined in the previous CAP. The assessment will also evaluate the current organizational strategy for climate action implementation and lead toward a comprehensive update to the CAP in the coming year.

Healthy Waters, Healthy Parks

In response to potential public health risks associated with water quality and the bacteria that comes from geese droppings in Foster City's parks and waterways, the City Council approved an update to the Lagoon Management Plan and adopted a Geese Population Mitigation Plan. These initiatives aim to improve the City's water quality while maintaining a naturally sustainable number of geese, which in turn will minimize the risk to human health, safety, and enjoyment of City parks.

The Pod Squad

The Recreation Division opened the "Pod Squad," a hub that helped families with distance-learning needs to first through fifth graders. The learning hub offered a safe environment for students during the pandemic while they attended school remotely. Trained Recreation staff supervised, provided homework assistance, and helped students log into their classrooms.

Environmental Sustainability

The Foster City Municipal Code was updated to eliminate restrictions on beekeeping due to threatened pollinator populations. Additionally, the City transformed the area at the corner of Shell and East Hillsdale Boulevards into a walk-through Habitat Garden designed to attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and pollinators.

Senate Bill 1383

Preparation started to implement Senate Bill (SB) 1383, which establishes reduction targets in a statewide effort to reduce methane emissions of short-lived climate pollutants in various sectors of California's economy, including methane emissions created by the disposal of organic materials. One of the regulations in SB 1383 requires that 20% of edible food that could be sent to landfills must instead be directed to feed people in need.



Social Equity & Public Safety

Foster City commits to continuing to promote diversity and inclusive policies within the City organization and seek social equity in all City policies including public safety.

Non-Profit Support

In addition to supporting the needs of vulnerable and at-risk populations, mobilizing community-based organizations, non-profits, and private sector businesses during the pandemic, the City, in conjunction with a grant from Gilead Sciences, contributed over \$100,000 to various non-profits as part of the annual budget process.

Connecting Community

Ten virtual neighborhood meetings were hosted by the Police Department with registered members of the Community Connect Program, which is designed to develop positive and productive relationships between the community and police. The Department also welcomed a new “recruit” to its family – Drake, the Service Dog. Drake’s duties include comforting and calming people in need, greeting citizens, and strengthening bonds, relationships, and trust.

Sister City

The City signed a Sister City agreement with Inagi City, Japan, which marked a historic and unique cultural milestone. The relationship is designed to develop lasting civic and people-to-people linkages and promote the exchange of cultural, educational, economic, and social information with communities from other countries with similar interests and characteristics.

Protecting Community

The Foster City Police Department unveiled the addition of “Peace Officer” decals, emphasizing the department’s commitment to community policing and its work to increase trust and create partnerships. The City Council also approved plans to install Automated License Plate Readers. The Police Department will use the technology to convert data associated with vehicle license plates for law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, and missing persons.

Mental Health

During Mental Health Awareness Month, the Foster City Police Department was selected to receive the Tony Hoffman Community Mental Health Service Award. The Awards recognize individuals, professionals, businesses, and the media who have made an extraordinary difference in the lives of people with mental illness and the communities in which they live. The nomination also called out the Department’s commitment to being 100% Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained.





Operational Excellence

Foster City staff is committed to and takes pride in proactively providing exceptional service to our community.

Making the Grade

Moody's Investors Service granted Foster City an AAA rating for its \$85 million 2020 General Obligation Bonds for the Levee Protection and Planning Improvements Project. This rating reflects the City's financial strength and low debt burden. With this solid financial footing, the City Council reduced the City's unfunded accrued pension liability by making a \$7.5 million payment to CalPERS.

Reopening Safely / Rethinking Work

City staff had zero employee COVID-19 outbreaks, as defined by CDPH and CDC. Staff also adjusted to an adaptable work schedule and an early transition to return safely to work so City facilities could reopen to the public. The City took steps to assist employees in working more efficiently in remote locations, including offering online pay statements, providing access to teleconferencing, and transitioning to virtual training, resulting in over 1,000 hours of staff development.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City updated its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), defining measures to reduce risks from natural disasters and compiling federal and state planning requirements to establish eligibility for funding under Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant programs. The document includes information on hazards facing Foster City, such as earthquakes, floods, and severe winter storms, and how to reduce damage from these risks.

Getting the Job Done

A study is underway to update the City's job classification standards to provide clarity in job requirements for employees. Additionally, City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Foster City Police Officers Association and updates to the Management Employees Compensation and Benefit Plan for the unrepresented Management Group. These efforts will help recruit staff, improve retention of high-caliber talent, and help the City continue to provide exceptional service to our community.

Enhanced Efficiency

In response to COVID-19, the City pivoted to online City Council and Planning Commission meetings, ultimately implementing hybrid meetings to maintain safety and increase accessibility. This transition continued throughout the City as staff streamlined various functions, including accepting online payments for business licenses, taxes, and permits, and the implementation of electronic stamping and signatures for plans and applications.





Community Profile

4 / 16
SQUARE MILES LAND / WATER

33,805
POPULATION

\$1,839,923
MED. HOME VALUE

57.1%
HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE

24
PUBLIC PARKS

\$158,529
MED. HOUSEHOLD INCOME

5
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Data collected from the US Census Bureau, DataUSA, and Zillow



By the Numbers

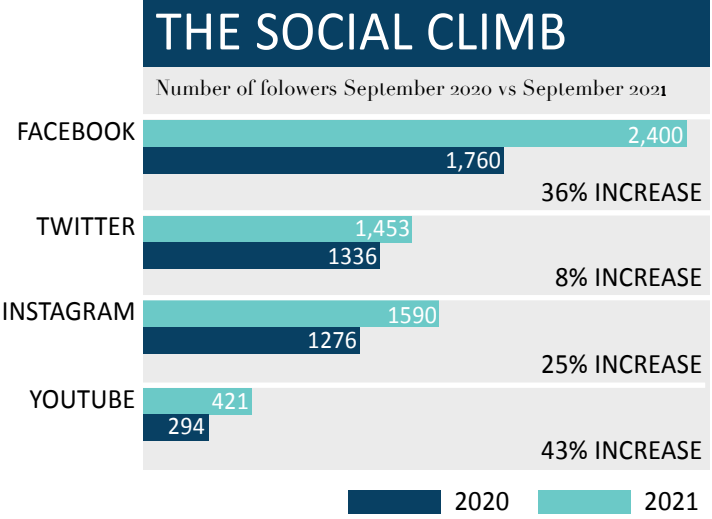
BUILDING & PLANNING

2,197
PERMITS ISSUED

\$4,321,268
COLLECTED IN PERMIT FEES

6,643
INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED

\$567,682
LINKAGE FEES COLLECTED



Data collected from the National Council for Home Safety and Security, 2021





EMERGENCY SERVICES

2,068
FIRE EMERGENCY RESPONSES

36
FIRES EXTINGUISHED

348
FIRE INSPECTIONS

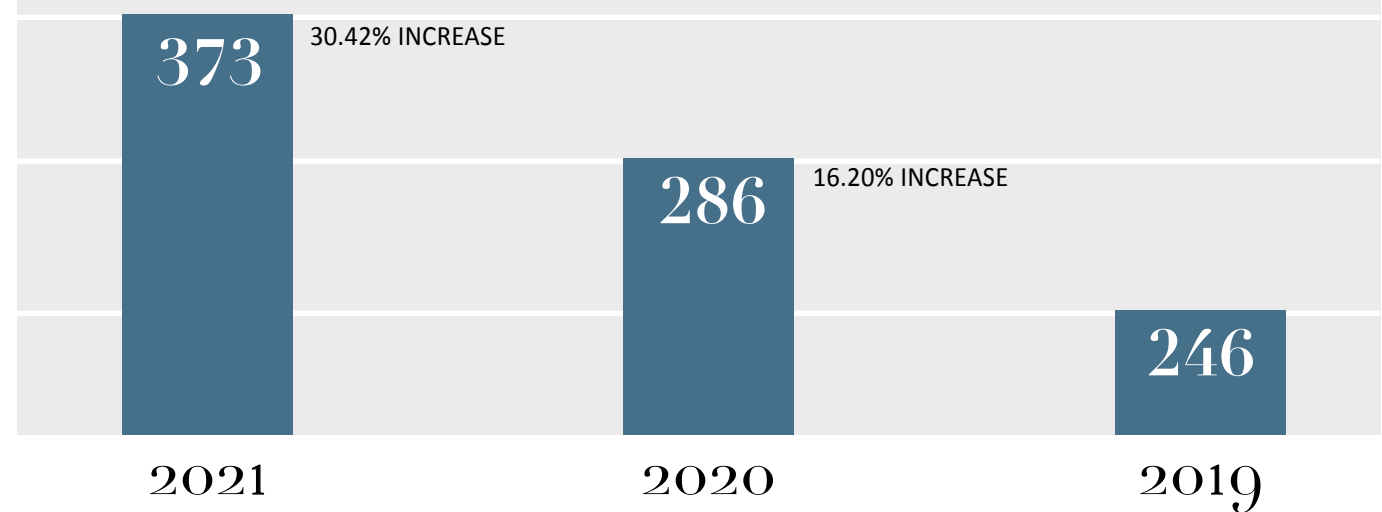
25,331
POLICE INCIDENTS COMPLETED

267
POLICE ARRESTS

6,166
POLICE EMERGENCY CALLS

23,681
POLICE NON-EMERGENCY CALLS

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, AND MINUTE ORDERS



CALOPPS.ORG PROGRESS

Calopps.Org is a state-wide public service agency recruitment website that is owned and operated by the City of Foster City.

196
AGENCIES USING WEBSITE

450,000
APPLICANT PROFILES CREATED



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