



REGULAR MEETING OF THE FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

7:00 PM

Thursday, October 02, 2025

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC THAT WISH TO ATTEND AND/OR PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING MAY DO SO IN PERSON OR BY JOINING THE ZOOM MEETING [HTTPS://FOSTERCITY-ORG.ZOOM.US/J/88992465897](https://FOSTERCITY-ORG.ZOOM.US/J/88992465897). PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BOTH IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM MEETING. ANY EMAILS SENT TO PUBCOMMENT@FOSTERCITY.ORG WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

To Attend the Meeting in Person:

- Location: 620 Foster City Boulevard, Foster City, California 94404

To Provide Public Comment in Person:

- Members of the public wishing to speak will be asked to fill out a Request to Speak Form. Forms will be accepted until the staff presentation on an agenda item ends, or until the public comment period on non-agenda items is closed. For special meetings, public comment is limited to item(s) on the agenda only.

To Observe the Meeting via Teleconference/Video Conference:

- To access the meeting by computer/smartphone, go to: <https://fostercity-org.zoom.us/j/88992465897>
- To dial-in via phone:

1-669-900-6833 or

1-408-638-0968

And enter Webinar ID: 889 9246 5897

**To Participate in the Meeting by Providing Public Comment via
Teleconference/Video Conference:**

- **During the Meeting:** Live verbal public comments may be made by members of the public joining the meeting via Zoom. Zoom access information is provided above. Use the "raise hand" feature (for those joining by phone, press *9 to "raise hand") during the public

comment period for the agenda item you wish to address. The Zoom Host will call on people to speak by name provided or last 4 digits of phone number for dial-in attendees. Please clearly state your full name for the record at the start of your public comment.

- **Before the Meeting:** Written public comments for the record may be submitted in advance by 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting by email to: publiccomment@fostercity.org and will be made part of the written record but will not be read verbally at the meeting. Written public comments submitted by email should adhere to the following:
 - Clearly indicate the Agenda Item No. or specify "Public" in the Subject Line for items not on the agenda
 - Include the submitter's full name (Recommended but not required)

Written public comments received by 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting will be provided in their entirety to the Planning Commission prior to the meeting and will be made part of the written record but will not be read verbally at the meeting. Written public comments will be posted to the City's website for review prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1 CALL TO ORDER

2 ROLL CALL

Robert Pedro, Chair
Doug Stoveland, Vice Chair
Nicolas Haddad, Commissioner
Ravi Jagtiani, Commissioner
Shankar Kenkre, Commissioner

3 COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Under this agenda item, members of the public may bring items not already on the agenda. The Ralph M. Brown Act (the State local agency open meeting law) prohibits the Planning Commission from acting on any matter that is not on the agenda.

4 CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Planning Commission and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a citizen or a member of the Planning Commission so requests. If discussion is required, that item will be removed from the Consent Calendar and will be considered separately at the conclusion of the Consent Calendar. Vote may be by roll call.

4.1. SEPTEMBER 18, 2025 REGULAR MEETING AND STUDY SESSION MINUTES

5 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING

6 NEW PUBLIC HEARING

6.1. A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING A USE PERMIT REQUEST TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN APPROXIMATELY 521-SQUARE-FOOT FIRST FLOOR ADDITION AND AN APPROXIMATELY 441-SQUARE-FOOT SECOND FLOOR ADDITION (FOR A TOTAL OF APPROXIMATELY 962 SQUARE FEET) TO AN EXISTING 2,240 SQUARE FOOT TWO-STORY SINGLE-FAMILY WATERFRONT HOUSE LOCATED AT 607 SANTA CATALINA LN (LONGWATER HOA) IN NEIGHBORHOOD 7 AND FINDING THAT THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT FROM CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) UNDER CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15301 (EXISTING STRUCTURES) – APN: 094-860-070

1. Open Public Hearing
2. Staff Report
3. Public Testimony
4. Close Public Hearing
5. Adopt Resolution No. P- -25 Approving UP2025-0006

Project Planner: Kevin McGill, 650-286-3238 or kmcgill@fostercity.org

6.2. ADOPT RESOLUTIONS FOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT, AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL REPEAL THE EXISTING 2009 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT AND ADOPT THE UPDATED 2025 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT AND FINDING THAT THE ADOPTION OF THE ELEMENT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15061(B)(3) (“GENERAL RULE” OR “COMMON SENSE”).

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL REPEAL THE EXISTING 2009 CONSERVATION ELEMENT AND ADOPT THE UPDATED 2025 CONSERVATION ELEMENT AND FINDING THAT THE ADOPTION OF THE ELEMENT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15061(B)(3) (“GENERAL RULE” OR “COMMON SENSE”).

1. Open Public Hearing
2. Staff Report
3. Public Testimony
4. Close Public Hearing
5. Adopt Resolution(s) No. P- -25

Project Planner: Vanessa Brannon, 650-286-3254 or vbrannon@fostercity.org

7 OLD BUSINESS

8 NEW BUSINESS

9 STUDY SESSION

10 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

11 STATEMENTS AND REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

12 ADJOURNMENT

NOTICES

Legal notices were posted in accordance with State law at City Hall, 610 Foster City Blvd.; Foster City Public Library, 1000 E. Hillsdale Blvd.; Foster City Recreation Center, 650 Shell Blvd. (near the south building entrance); Metro Center Sign Kiosks (between 921 and 987 E. Hillsdale Blvd.); Sea Cloud Park, Pitcairn Drive (on the snack shack/restroom building); and on those properties about which a public hearing was held; and published in a newspaper of general circulation. Additionally, owners of property within 300 feet were mailed Notice of Public Hearing a minimum of ten (10) days in advance. Agendas for Planning Commission Meetings are posted on cable television channel 27 and the City's web site (www.fostercity.org) several days in advance of the meetings.

EVIDENCE

Quasi-judicial Matters

California law requires that quasi-judicial matters be based on evidence. Applications before the Planning Commission involve matters that are quasi-judicial and therefore decisions must be supported by evidence.

In General

Public comments should be emailed to publiccomment@fostercity.org. Emailed comments should include your Name, Address, Agenda Item, and Public Comment.

All oral, written or pictorial evidence to be considered by the Planning Commission must be received prior to a decision being rendered by the Commission. Written, documentary, or pictorial evidence shall be collected and kept by the City for record purposes, and must be made available to an applicant, appellant or the

public prior to a decision being rendered by the Commission. Evidence received or submitted during a public hearing or public meeting while an item is being discussed and evaluated by the Planning Commission shall be deemed to have met this requirement. Evidence submitted for the record and for Planning Commission consideration may take the form of oral testimony, written information, documents, pictures, video tapes, audio tapes, and similar information. All evidence submitted must be of a length that is practicable for use by Commission members, and depending on its length and how it must be accessed or the need for special equipment in order to access it, must be received in a timely manner so as to afford the Commission and the public a reasonable opportunity to evaluate it and to allow an applicant, appellant and/or the public an opportunity to discuss, question and rebut it.

Information not admitted into the formal record shall not be used in rendering a decision.

APPEALS

All actions of the Planning Commission are appealable to the City Council *within ten (10) calendar days of the date the action was taken*. All appeals must be submitted in accordance with Section 17.06.150, Appeal Procedure, of Title 17 of the Foster City Municipal Code (copies available at City Hall). The required appeal fee as adopted by the City Council must accompany an appeal to the City Council of a decision of the Planning Commission or it will be considered incomplete.

MEETINGS

The Planning Commission conducts regular business and Public Hearings on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are held in the Council Chambers, 620 Foster City Boulevard or via Teleconference.

Any attendee wishing special accommodations at the meeting should contact Becki Hanan, Management Analyst, Community Development Department, at (650) 286-3225, or send an electronic mail request to bhanan@fostercity.org at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting or contact the staff at planning@fostercity.org per the Americans with Disabilities Act.

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDAS AND MINUTES ARE POSTED ONLINE AT:

<https://www.fostercity.org/agendasandminutes>

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS ARE TELECAST LIVE ON FCTV ON COMCAST CHANNEL

27 AND AT&T CHANNEL 99: Every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS STREAMED ONLINE AT:

<https://www.fostercity.org/community/page/fctv-live-stream>

[Direct Link to YouTube Stream](#)

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING REPLAY ON FCTV CHANNEL 27: 1:00 p.m. on Friday and 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, following the meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS ON-DEMAND AVAILABLE AT:

<https://www.fostercity.org/agendasandminutes>

DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2025

STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.2

TO: FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: SOFIA MANGALAM, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
NORI JABBA, HOUSING AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER
VANESSA BRANNON, SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST

PROJECT: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
AND CONSERVATION ELEMENTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

PROJECT LOCATION: CITY-WIDE

REQUESTED ACTION/PURPOSE

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- 1) Adopt a Resolution (Attachment 1) recommending that the City Council repeal the 2009 Parks and Open Space Element of the General Plan and amend the General Plan by adopting the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element and find that the adoption of the Element is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (“general rule” or “common sense”).
- 2) Adopt Resolution (Attachment 2) recommending that the City Council repeal the 2003 Conservation Element of the General Plan and amending the General Plan by adopting the 2025 Conservation Element; and find that the adoption of the Element is exempt from the CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (“general rule” or “common sense”).

NOTICING/PUBLIC OUTREACH

Notice of the Planning Commission Hearing was made available to the public in the following ways:

- Ad in the Foster City Islander – September 17, 2025
- Foster City Website: www.fostercity.org – September 17, 2025
- Public Posting Places – September 16, 2025
- Electronic Marquee Sign in Leo Ryan Park – September 18, 2025, to October 2, 2025
- Electronic mailing to listservs – September 17, 2025

California Government Code Sections 65352 – 65352.4 requires that before a legislative body takes action to adopt or substantially amend a general plan, the planning agency shall refer the proposed action to a number of entities or conduct consultations with California Native American tribes that are on the contact list. The City has referred the Parks and Open Space Element to all California Native American tribes on the contact list provided by the Native American Heritage

Commission and to other entities listed. No California Native American Tribe has requested consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California law requires that General Plans be updated "periodically." However, except for the Housing Element, which needs to be updated every eight (8) years, there is no specific timeline requirement from the State to update other General Plan Elements. The State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, LCI (previously known as the Office of Planning and Research or OPR), recommends comprehensively updating a General Plan every 10-15 years to reflect changes in community values, economic conditions, and emerging issues and challenges. The City's [Housing Element 2023-31](#) was updated in May 2023, and the [Safety Element](#) was updated in August 2023.

In the 2021-2022 state legislative session, [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1425](#) was passed and signed into law. This bill requires that the Open Space Element be updated by January 1, 2026, with expanded requirements, including:

- (1) Access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice element or environmental justice policies in the general plan, as applicable.
- (2) Climate resilience and other co-benefits of open space, correlated with the safety element.
- (3) Rewilding opportunities, correlated with the land use element.

Rewilding is defined in SB 1425 as: opportunities to preserve, enhance, and expand an integrated network of open space to support beneficial uses, such as habitat, recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, water management, and aesthetics, and establishing a natural communities conservation plan to provide for coordinated mitigation of the impacts of new development.

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1889](#), signed into law on September 10, 2024, requires the Conservation Element to consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction on the movement of wildlife and habitat connectivity. The bill requires the Conservation Element, upon the next update of one or more elements on or after January 1, 2028, to, among other things, identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction, identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features, and consider the impacts of development and the barriers caused by development to wildlife, as defined, and habitat connectivity.

To ensure compliance with SB 1425 and AB 1889 requirements in a timely manner, the City entered into an agreement with Rincon Consultants, Inc. ("Rincon") with WRT serving as their sub-consultant to update the two (2) Elements of the General Plan: the Parks and Open Space Element and the Conservation Element.

Rincon developed and implemented a Community Engagement Plan for updating the Elements. The Community Engagement Plan was implemented in parallel to the City's update of the Parks Master Plan. The engagement efforts were designed to capture a wide range of community voices, from residents who regularly use the City's parks to regional organizations focused on conservation and resilience. Engagement activities included a community priorities survey, two (2) pop-up events, a joint workshop, two (2) focus groups, formal consultation with local tribes under Senate Bill (SB) 18, and a public comment period. Attachment 6 provides a summary of

the engagement results.

Since the start of the update process, there have been three (3) Joint Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee Study Sessions and three (3) City Council meetings to provide input on the Element update process and on the Administrative Draft Elements.

In the last Joint Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee Study Session and the City Council meeting, staff presented an overview of the draft Elements to guide the final Draft of the (1) Parks and Open Space Element, and (2) Conservation Element. The administrative draft Elements were made available for public review from August 8 through September 2, 2025, to solicit feedback from the community.

Staff made further edits in response to the feedback from the Community, Parks and Recreation Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council, and prepared the final drafts of the two (2) Elements for adoption.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt attached resolutions recommending that the City Council adopt General Plan amendments to repeal the 2009 Parks and Open Space Element and 2003 Conservation Element of the General Plan and adopt the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element of the General Plan and 2025 Conservation Element, and make the relevant CEQA findings.

ANALYSIS

Comments received from the public, City Council, Planning Commission, and Parks and Recreation Committee were incorporated into the final Draft of each element as appropriate. Some comments relating to park management and recreation facilities that were more relevant to the Parks Master Plan were forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Department and WRT. It shall be noted that most of the comments received were for the Parks and Open Space Element.

Table 1 outlines the edits that were made to the final draft of the Parks and Open Space Element

	Comment Summary	Comment Response	Page Number (Attachment 3)
Community	The Lagoon is described as both a major recreational and ecological water body, which seems inconsistent, and suggests clarifying whether it is primarily recreational or ecological.	The requested edits have been incorporated.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7
	The lagoon is approximately 213 acres in size, to help in planning and recommends referencing surface area as well as ecological function.	The requested information regarding the volume of water held by the lagoon has been added.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7
	Requests that the City correct the term “Canadian geese” to “Canada geese,” and clarify that avian DNA, rather than Canada goose DNA	“Canadian geese” has been corrected to “Canada geese” and the statement	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7

	alone, has been identified as impacting water quality.	regarding poor lagoon water quality has been corrected to more accurately represent the cause of poor water quality.	
Planning Commission	Raised concerns about ensuring the Parks and Open Space Element do not conflict too strongly with the Housing Element. Referencing to POS-F under the Implementation Program, which states that as Foster City grows, the City will strive to maintain its existing park acreage level of service (LOS) of 3.2 acres per thousand residents. Provided that the surrounding cities have an LOS of 2.8 acres, and in order to experience the expected growth between now and 2040, an additional 12.9 acres of park space would need to be included in order to maintain the 3.2 LOS. It was suggested either remaining at the current acreage or slightly below to ensure that the city has room for the Housing Element obligations.	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
	Asked if the acreage requirement should be defined now. Referring that the City is moving towards more objective standards and having this dissonance could create unnecessary challenges for potential developers.	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
	Asked about the calculation behind 12.9 acres if the population is expected to go up by 2040 and suggested setting the goal at the current acres per thousand residents. Recommendation for setting it at 2.8 and cautioned that 3.2 might not be sustainable.	Language around park LOS has been updated in the Element to maintain existing acreage and consider the appropriate metric at a future time.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
	Stated that the preferred approach is to define the numbers to reach the	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13

	RHNA goals while still meeting the needs of the community.	existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	
	Suggested that there be looser language used in the elements. Asked if the dredging refers to the dumping of what has been dredged.	Language was adjusted for flexibility to avoid prescriptive standards. References to dredging were clarified to ensure accuracy of terminology regarding sediment removal and management.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13
Parks and Rec Committee Member	Asked if they are looking to adopt a formal and measurable standard.	The Parks and Open Space Element clarifies that measurable standards may be established through future planning processes.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 34 (see Program POS-g)
	The attractiveness of the parks should be discussed alongside the technical components of the element.	Narrative language was added to emphasize that parks provide both technical functions (e.g., flood protection, habitat value) and community benefits such as beauty, identity, and quality of life.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 6 and 21
City Council	Referring to the issue raised by Planning Commission regarding the LOS requirement of 3.2 acres per thousand residents, or 12.9 additional acres are needed by 2040. Will this requirement interfere with housing development?	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34

		Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	
	Noted missing elements from some of the entries in the parks inventory (Table 1) and requested Parks & Rec review the table before finalizing the report.	Table 1 was reviewed and refined for accuracy and updated to better reflect the major facilities at each park.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 8-9
	Recommended revising strong wording in policies (e.g., “ensure”) to lighter alternatives like “promote”, “create”, or “aspire to.”	Strong prescriptive wording was revised to alternatives such as “promote” or “support,” consistent with the Council’s direction.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 31-36
	Found implementation programs starting on Page 46 a bit vague and requested clarification on definitions of long-term, mid-term, and short-term to be added to the Elements. Also, would like to see some of the long-term goals done sooner.	Language added for clarification: short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years).	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 36

In addition, other changes/edits were made to correct errors in acreages, refine language for clarity, and implement overall grammatical edits. The list of all edits for both the Elements is included in Attachment 5.

For reference, staff have included redline versions of the two (2) Elements, as follows:

- Parks and Open Space Element – redline version – Attachment 3
- Conservation Element – redline version – Attachment 4

Draft 2025 Parks and Open Space Element (See Attachment 1, Exhibit A- final draft)

The draft 2025 Parks and Open Space Element fulfills State requirements for an Open Space Element and establishes Foster City’s vision for how recreational and natural areas, including parks, open space, facilities, and recreation programs, are developed, maintained, and enhanced. The Element recognizes parks and open space as critical to community health, social connection, and natural stewardship, while also contributing to climate resilience by addressing flooding, extreme heat, and other natural hazards. The Element is organized into four (4) main sections:

1. Requirements – State legal requirements, regional policies, and local plans.
2. Background – Provides a systemwide assessment of existing conditions of parks and open space, including level of service, access, connectivity, usage, and amenities, as well as detailed park site evaluations and results of community engagement.
3. Goals and Policies – Establishes seven (7) goals and 22 policies focused on the park system, programming and events, operations and maintenance, open space values, and climate resiliency.

4. Implementation Programs – Establishes 29 specific programs with lead and supporting departments and timelines for implementation.

Attachment 1, Exhibit B is a checklist to ensure that the Parks and Open Space Element Update is consistent with State planning law and recent legislation, including SB 1425 and AB 1889. California Government Code Section 65302(e) requires cities to adopt an open space element addressing the preservation and enhancement of open space lands, equitable access to recreation, and long-term community needs. The analysis confirms that the updated Element is consistent with these mandates and incorporates all recent requirements. The checklist outlines how the City's goals, policies, and implementation programs address each statutory requirement. The Element demonstrates strong alignment with State law while advancing Foster City's vision for community health, equitable recreation, and environmental resilience.

In summary, the 2025 Element provides a comprehensive framework for guiding the long-term stewardship of Foster City's parks and open spaces, ensuring equitable access to recreation, enhancing quality of life, and supporting environmental sustainability.

Draft 2025 Conservation Element (See Attachment 2, Exhibit A - final draft)

The draft 2025 Conservation Element fulfills State requirements and defines Foster City's long-term vision for conserving and managing its natural and cultural resources. The Element emphasizes environmental sustainability, community well-being, and climate resilience as central priorities for the City's resource management. It guides stewardship of biological habitats, the urban forest, surface and groundwater, and historic, cultural, and tribal resources, while supporting efforts to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with State mandates.

The Element is organized into four (4) primary sections:

1. Requirements – State requirements, regional policies, and local plans.
2. Background – Provides a comprehensive assessment of Foster City's environmental setting, including natural resources, water and air quality, energy infrastructure, and habitat areas. It also evaluates future challenges such as sea level rise, groundwater rise, and extreme heat, and highlights opportunities for biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and equitable access to green space.
3. Goals and Policies – Establishes nine (9) goals and 38 policies addressing biological resources, water resources, air quality, energy resources, and climate adaptation.
4. Implementation Programs – Establishes 23 specific programs to achieve the vision of the Element, each with lead and supporting departments and implementation timelines.

As with Parks and Open Space Update, staff has included a checklist to ensure consistency with state laws and recent legislation (Attachment 2, Exhibit B). California Government Code Section 65302(d) requires cities to adopt a conservation element that addresses the protection of natural resources, including water and air quality, biological resources, and energy conservation. The analysis confirms that Foster City's updated Element meets these requirements and incorporates new mandates, including [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1889](#), which directs jurisdictions to consider wildlife movement and habitat connectivity. The Element demonstrates strong alignment with State law while advancing Foster City's long-term vision for environmental stewardship, climate resilience, and protection of natural resources.

In summary, the Conservation Element provides a modern framework for protecting Foster City's natural and cultural resources while advancing climate resilience, sustainability, and long-term quality of life for the community.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), also known as the “general rule” or “common sense” exemption, CEQA exempts activities that can be seen with certainty to have no possibility for causing a significant effect on the environment. CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) states that “A project is exempt from CEQA if...[t]he activity is covered by common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.”

The Updates involve the adoption of policy documents to establish the City's vision, goals, policies, and programs for the provisioning and management of natural and recreational areas within the city, as well as the protection of natural and cultural resources. These policy documents, in and of themselves, do not include any proposed projects or development. The Updates do not propose or approve any physical development and will not result in changes to the physical environment, nor will they result in potential environmental impacts. To the extent that the Updates do identify potential future projects or development, those would be analyzed if and when the City approves those projects in accordance with CEQA. The Updates meet the criteria for the common sense exemption as identified above.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1 – Parks and Open Space Resolution
 - Exhibit A: P_OS Element – Final Clean Version
 - Exhibit B: P_OS Element - Legislative Consistency Checklist
- Attachment 2 – Conservation Element Resolution
 - Exhibit A: Cons Element – Final Clean Version
 - Exhibit B: Cons Element - Legislative Consistency Checklist
- Attachment 3 – P_OS Element – Redline Version
- Attachment 4 – Cons Element – Redline Version
- Attachment 5 – Full List of Edits in Redlined Versions
- Attachment 6 – Engagement Results Summary

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FOSTER CITY RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL REPEAL THE 2009 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT AND AMEND THE GENERAL PLAN BY ADOPTING THE 2025 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT AND FINDING THAT THE ADOPTION OF THE ELEMENT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES 15061(B)(3)

CITY OF FOSTER CITY

WHEREAS, a general plan contains the community vision for future growth, California law also requires each general plan to address the mandated elements listed in Government Code section 65302; and

WHEREAS, the mandatory elements for all jurisdictions are Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety; and

WHEREAS, Foster City's Parks and Open Space Element was last adopted in September 2009; and

WHEREAS, the State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, LCI (previously known as the Office of Planning and Research or OPR) recommends comprehensively updating a General Plan every 10-15 years to reflect changes in community values, economic conditions, and emerging issues and challenges; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill (SB) 1425 requires that the Open Space Element be updated by January 1, 2026, with expanded requirements including consideration of climate resilience in coordination with the Safety Element; and

WHEREAS, SB 1425 also explicitly focuses on "rewilding opportunities," or creating and preserving open space networks to support biological and recreational uses; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill (AB) 1889 requires the General Plan Conservation Element to consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction on the movement of wildlife and habitat connectivity; and

WHEREAS, AB 1889 requires the Conservation Element, upon the next update of one or more elements on or after January 1, 2028, to, among other things, identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction, identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features, and consider the impacts of development and the barriers caused by development to wildlife, as defined, and habitat connectivity; and

WHEREAS, to ensure compliance with SB 1425 and AB 1889 requirements in a timely manner, the City of Foster City began work on updating the two (2) Elements, including the Parks and Open Space Element, and Conservation Element; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Sections 65352 – 65352.4 require that before a legislative body takes action to adopt or substantially amend a general plan, the planning agency shall refer the proposed action to a number of entities or conduct consultations with California Native American tribes that are on the contact list. The City has referred the Parks and Open Space Element to all California Native American tribes on the contact list provided by the Native American Heritage Commission; and

WHEREAS, no California Native American Tribe has requested consultation; and

WHEREAS, the City conducted extensive community outreach, including one (1) joint workshop, two (2) focus groups, two (2) pop-up events, a dedicated webpage, and one (1) community priorities survey and social media, e-news, emails, and notices; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2025, the City published an administrative draft of the Parks and Open Space Element and requested public comment on the draft until September 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, as provided in Government Code Section 65353, the Planning Commission shall hold at least one (1) public hearing before approving a recommendation on the adoption or amendment of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, as provided in Government Code Section 65354, the Planning Commission shall make a written recommendation on the adoption or amendment of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, on September 17, 2025, a public hearing notice was published in the newspaper (Foster City Islander) and posted in three public places pursuant to California Government Code Section 65090 for the Planning Commission public hearing on October 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on October 2, 2025, the Planning Commission conducted a duly and properly noticed public hearing to take public testimony and consider this Resolution regarding the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element, reviewed the Element and all pertinent documents and exhibits, staff report and all attachments, and oral and written public comments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission hereby finds that, based on substantial evidence in the record:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated by reference into this action.
2. The proposed project conforms to the provisions and standards of the General Plan in that the proposed amendments are internally consistent with all other provisions of the General Plan and do not conflict with any of the previously adopted goals, policies, or programs of the General Plan.

3. The proposed General Plan Amendment complies with, and is required by, applicable State law.
4. The proposed amendments will not be detrimental to the public interest, convenience, and general welfare of the City. The amendments will ensure Foster City's General Plan is consistent with current state law. The updated Element establishes the City's vision, goals, policies, and implementation programs for how its recreational and natural areas, including parks, natural open space, facilities, and recreation programs, are developed, maintained, and enriched.
5. The City, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), has completed analysis, and the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element and 2025 Conservation Element and determined that the Updates are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) based on the "common sense exemption" in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), which applies if it can be seen with certainty that a project will not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment. The Updates involve the adoption of policy documents to establish the City's vision, goals, policies, and programs for the provisioning and management of natural and recreational areas within the city, as well as the protection of natural and cultural resources. These policy documents, in and of themselves, do not include any proposed projects or development. The Updates do not propose or approve any physical development and will not result in changes to the physical environment, nor will they result in potential environmental impacts. To the extent that the Updates do identify potential future projects or development, those would be analyzed if and when the City approves those projects in accordance with CEQA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City therefore recommends that the City Council repeal the 2009 Parks and Open Space Element and adopt the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element as set forth in Exhibit A, incorporated herein by this reference and attached hereto.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City
at the Regular Meeting held on the 2nd day of October 2025, by the following vote:

AYES, COMMISSIONERS:

NOES, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT, COMMISSIONERS:

ROBERT PEDRO, CHAIR

ATTEST:

SOFIA MANGALAM, SECRETARY

EXHIBIT A

Parks and Open Space Element – Final Clean Version

EXHIBIT B

Parks and Open Space Element Legislative Consistency Checklist

Parks and Open Space Introduction



Boardwalk along the Foster City Lagoon near Leo J. Ryan Park, a central open space known for its scenic waterfront and community gathering areas Foster City, 2025.

Purpose

The Parks and Open Space Element fulfills the State's requirements for an Open Space Element while also establishing Foster City's vision to how its natural and recreational areas, including parks, natural open space, facilities, and recreation programs, are developed, maintained, and enriched.

The Parks and Open Space Element leverages the city's parks and open space areas as a vital framework for community wellbeing and natural stewardship. It guides the use of parks and open spaces for recreation, social connection, and enrichment, and plays a role in building resilience to natural hazards such as flooding and extreme heat. By weaving these aspects together, the City can enhance livability for all residents and foster deeper relationships with Foster City's natural environment.

This Element is organized into four primary sections: *Requirements*, *Background*, *Goals and Policies*, and *Implementation Programs*. The *Requirements* section outlines legal requirements for this element. The *Background* section provides existing conditions and key trends related to parks, open space, and recreation. The *Goals and Policies* section defines the City's goals and policy direction for parks, open space, and recreation. The *Implementation Programs* section outlines specific actions the City will take to achieve the vision set by the Goals and Policies.

Clarification of Terminology

The Conservation Element and the Parks and Open Space Element both address land and resource stewardship in Foster City, but each with a distinct purpose and emphasis:



Park: A developed public space designed primarily for recreation and community use. Parks typically include landscaping and features such as play areas, sports courts, athletic fields, picnic facilities, or community centers. They provide opportunities for physical activity, social connection, and access to nature within the built environment.



Open Space: Land that remains largely undeveloped, often preserved for its scenic, ecological, or buffering functions. Open space may support passive recreation, such as trails and viewpoints, and also contribute to habitat value, stormwater management, and climate resilience. While not always actively used, open spaces help define the character and environmental function of the city.



Conservation: The active management and protection of natural resources—including water, air, soil, vegetation, habitat, and wildlife—throughout the entire city, across all land types. Conservation is not limited to specific areas; it is a citywide approach applied to parks, open spaces, developed areas, waterways, and infrastructure. It includes efforts to restore habitat, enhance biodiversity, improve ecosystem health, and ensure the sustainable use of environmental resources for future generations.

While these categories differ in focus, they are deeply interconnected. Open space and parks often serve as the physical setting where conservation strategies are implemented. For example, a park may include restored habitat, and an open space corridor may function as both a scenic buffer and a wildlife pathway. Conservation provides the guiding framework that weaves these uses together, ensuring Foster City's green spaces support not only recreation and beauty, but long-term ecological health and resilience.

Legal Requirements

The Parks and Open Space Element of the General Plan is guided by state law, regional plans, and local priorities that collectively aim to preserve natural resources, promote ecological health, and support the sustainable management of environmental systems. Key statutes and policies include the following:

California Government Code §65302(e) – Open Space Element Requirements

California Government Code §65302(e) requires all general plans to include an Open Space Element that addresses the long-term preservation of open space lands. This includes open space for natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, hazard mitigation (such as flood and fire zones), and the production of resources like agriculture. Additional considerations include open space that supports military readiness or protects tribal resources.

Quimby Act

Government Code §66477, known as the Quimby Act, allows cities and counties to require residential subdivisions to dedicate land or pay in-lieu fees for park and recreational purposes. These dedications or fees are then used to fund new park and open space development in consideration of population growth necessitating additional public open spaces.

Public Park Preservation Act

The Public Park Preservation Act (§5400–§5409) restricts the sale, lease, or disposal of public parkland unless a replacement of equivalent size and function is provided. This protects publicly accessible parks from being converted to non-recreational uses without due process and community benefit.

Senate Bill 1425 (2022) – Open-Space Element: Updates

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 added Government Code §65565.5 to require that the Open Space Element prioritize the multi-benefit use of open spaces, particularly in historically underserved communities. The law directs jurisdictions to include plans and an action program in any update to address access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice policies in the general plan, address climate resilience strategies such as flood mitigation and cooling, and to address rewilding opportunities.

Assembly Bill 1889 (2024) – Conservation Element: Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity

AB 1889 amended Government Code §65302(d), requiring jurisdictions to identify and analyze wildlife connectivity and movement corridors, and consider the impact of development on species movement and ecological resilience. Any impacts and barriers to wildlife movement are then required to be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to the extent feasible. It encourages alignment with State and regional agencies, conservation goals, and efforts in developing wildlife and habitat connectivity strategies.

Regional and Local Planning

In addition to meeting State requirements, the Parks and Open Space Element must be aligned with regional priorities and local planning efforts. On the regional scale, open space planning is often coordinated through countywide or multi-jurisdictional strategies. For Foster City, relevant partners include OneShoreline, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), each of which plays a role in guiding land use and resource conservation within the San Francisco Bay Area. These agencies provide policy guidance and mapping resources that help local governments identify priority areas for natural infrastructure, shoreline buffers, habitat corridors, and sea level rise adaptation.

At the local level, the Parks and Open Space Element provides the overarching vision implemented by Foster City's Parks Master Plan and Capital Improvement Program. These documents identify specific opportunities for acquiring, improving, and maintaining parks and recreational spaces in alignment with the vision of the Parks and Open Space Element. The Element also integrates the City's broader environmental goals, such as climate resilience, stormwater management, and habitat restoration by incorporating nature-based solutions and equitable access principles into the design and stewardship of

open spaces. The alignment between regional frameworks and local initiatives ensures that Foster City's open space planning supports both community priorities and broader environmental sustainability goals.

Several local and regional plans and programs provide additional guidance and are referenced throughout this Element. Brief descriptions are provided below to give context when these plans are mentioned.

- The **Parks Master Plan** was developed concurrently with this Element, the Parks Master Plan provides a detailed systemwide analysis of park conditions, recreational needs, and community priorities. It includes site-specific recommendations, amenity standards, and an implementation strategy to guide future investments.
- The City's **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)** identifies, prioritizes, and funds infrastructure projects, including park and open space improvements.
- The **Lagoon Management Plan** provides policies and actions for long-term stewardship of the City's lagoon system, including water quality monitoring, vegetation control, and public education. The Plan also addresses ecological concerns such as runoff, algal blooms, and wildlife impacts, ensuring the lagoon remains a safe, healthy, and enjoyable resource for recreation and habitat.
- The **Integrated Canada Goose Population Management Plan** establishes strategies for managing Canada goose populations in Foster City's parks and lagoon system to minimize impacts on water quality, vegetation, and recreational use. This plan complements the Lagoon Management Plan by addressing a major source of non-point pollution and nuisance conditions.
- The **Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan (2026)** will guide the creation of a connected network of trails and bikeways that link parks, open spaces, neighborhoods, and the Levee Pedway. The Plan will aim to support active transportation, recreation, and access to natural areas.

Relationship to the Foster City Parks Master Plan

The update to the Parks and Open Space Element was developed concurrently with the 2025 Parks Master Plan. These two documents are closely linked; the Parks and Open Space Element establishes a citywide vision and high-level framework to guide the planning, development, and stewardship of Foster City's parks, recreational facilities, and open space resources. As shown in Figure 1, the Parks Master Plan builds on this foundation with a more detailed assessment of community needs and priorities. The Parks Master Plan includes specific recommendations and an implementation strategy to help realize the City's long-term vision and ensure that parks and open spaces continue to support both ecological functions and community well-being.

Because these efforts were conducted in parallel, much of the detailed community engagement and needs assessment from the Parks Master Plan has been integrated into this Element, further strengthening its vision and policy framework for the future of parks and open space in Foster City.

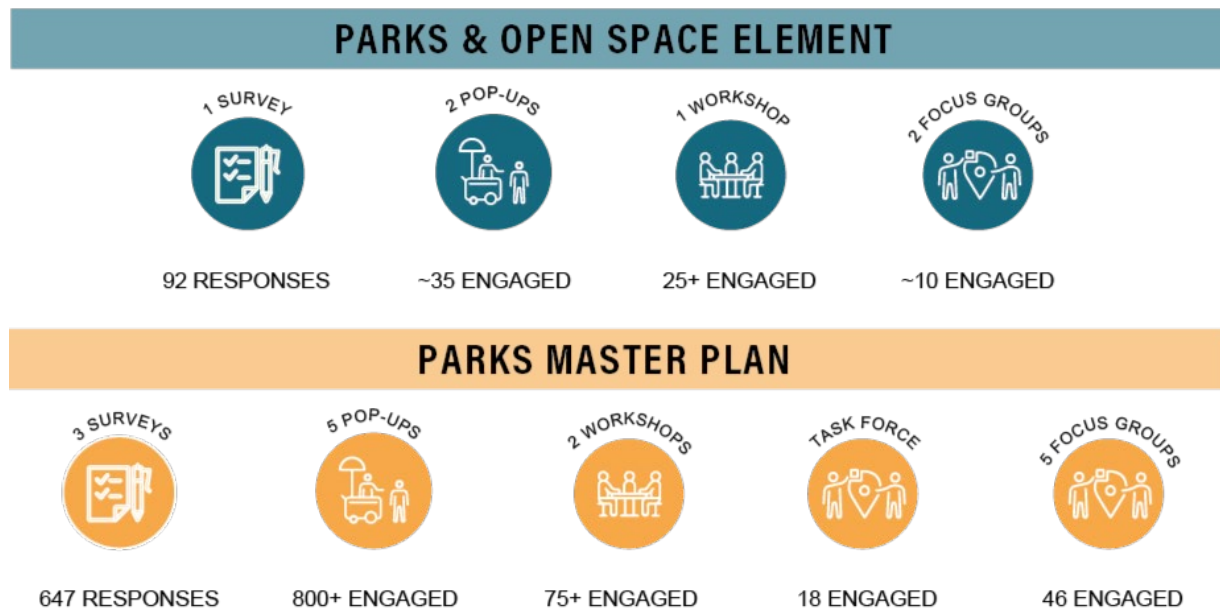
Figure 1 Relationship Between the Parks and Open Space Element and the Parks Master Plan



Background

The update process for the Parks and Open Space Element included a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions, featuring both a systemwide analysis that covered level of service, access, connectivity, usage, and amenities, as well as detailed evaluations of individual park sites. As shown in Figure 2, extensive community outreach was conducted in coordination with the Parks Master Plan, ensuring that the voices of residents and stakeholders guided the direction of both the Parks Master Plan and this Element. Together, the assessment and engagement serve as the foundation for the goals and policies of the Parks and Open Space Element.

Figure 2 Community Engagement Overview



Parks and Open Space System

Parks

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 3, Foster City has approximately 113 acres of publicly accessible parks and open spaces that shape the city's recreational and ecological landscape. Many of these spaces are notable for features such as well-maintained landscaping, lagoon and bayfront views, shaded picnic areas, and family-friendly playgrounds that encourage regular use. The city is anchored by four large community parks, Leo J. Ryan Park, Sea Cloud Park, Boothbay Park, and Edgewater Park, which offer a wide range of amenities such as sports fields and courts, playgrounds, and group picnic areas that attract diverse users from across the community. Leo J. Ryan Park serves as a hub for major community events and is the site of Foster City's new community center. The center will offer flexible spaces and upgraded amenities to better serve residents' needs.

In addition to community parks, Foster City is home to a network of smaller neighborhood and mini parks nestled within residential areas. These parks provide everyday recreational opportunities and are

designed to meet the specific needs of nearby residents. The city also includes three special-use parks dedicated to unique recreational activities such as windsurfing and dog play.



Foster City's park system includes large community parks like Sea Cloud Park (left), popular neighborhood parks like Catamaran (middle) and mini parks that serve local needs, like Ketch Park (right).

Open Space

Foster City contains a diverse range of open spaces that enhance environmental quality and provide recreational and ecological value. In addition to the 24 parks, the city includes approximately 22 acres of publicly accessible open space along trails and 41 acres of open space with restricted access, much of which consists of sensitive habitat along the levee system and protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Public access is generally discouraged as these areas consist of sensitive habitat along the levee pedway. The shorelines along the Belmont Slough are protected as a part of the Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve. The CDFW oversees the ecological health and wildlife protection in the area. Natural areas like the Belmont Slough offer scenic trails and habitat for wildlife, and the city features the Foster City Lagoon, described further below. The lagoon primarily supports drainage and water-based recreation, and has some ecological value.

Water Bodies

The Foster City Lagoon is a major recreational feature and is central to the community's identity. The Lagoon covers approximately 218 acres, holding approximately 1,300 acre-feet of water, and winds through several neighborhoods in Foster City, fronting many of the City's parks and open spaces. Residents engage in water-based recreational activities such as kayaking, paddling, and boating, and the Lagoon is central to many Foster City community events. Water testing in the lagoon has detected avian DNA, and while the lagoon supports a large Canada Geese population, the results cannot be traced specifically to geese or to any single location. Nevertheless, the presence of Canada Geese contributes to ongoing challenges with cleanliness and maintenance. Outside of designated beach areas, water quality is generally similar to bay water.

Just as important, the San Francisco Bay creates an enhanced experience for people using the Levee Pedway and Bay-adjacent parks such as Baywinds, Gateshead, Shorebird, and Bridgeview. The San Francisco Bay is the largest estuary on the West Coast, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and plant species. It provides critical habitat for migratory birds, fish nurseries, and endangered species such as the Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. The Bay also offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including kayaking, sailing, birdwatching, and waterfront trails, making it a vital natural and cultural resource that connects communities to the region's environmental heritage while promoting outdoor access and stewardship.



The Foster City Lagoon (left and middle) and the San Francisco Bay are important recreational assets in the community.

Trails

Wrapping around the perimeter of Foster City’s waterfront edge is the Levee Pedway. This multi-use pathway is a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail, and serves as a recreational asset for people walking, jogging, and biking. The trail runs past several parks and open spaces while also providing a continuous path without requiring on-street travel. In addition to the Levee Pedway, neighborhood trails provide local connections throughout Foster City. The Levee Pedway and other trails in Foster City are managed by the City’s Parks and Recreation Department, which oversees maintenance and improvements to support safe, accessible routes for walking, biking, and recreation.



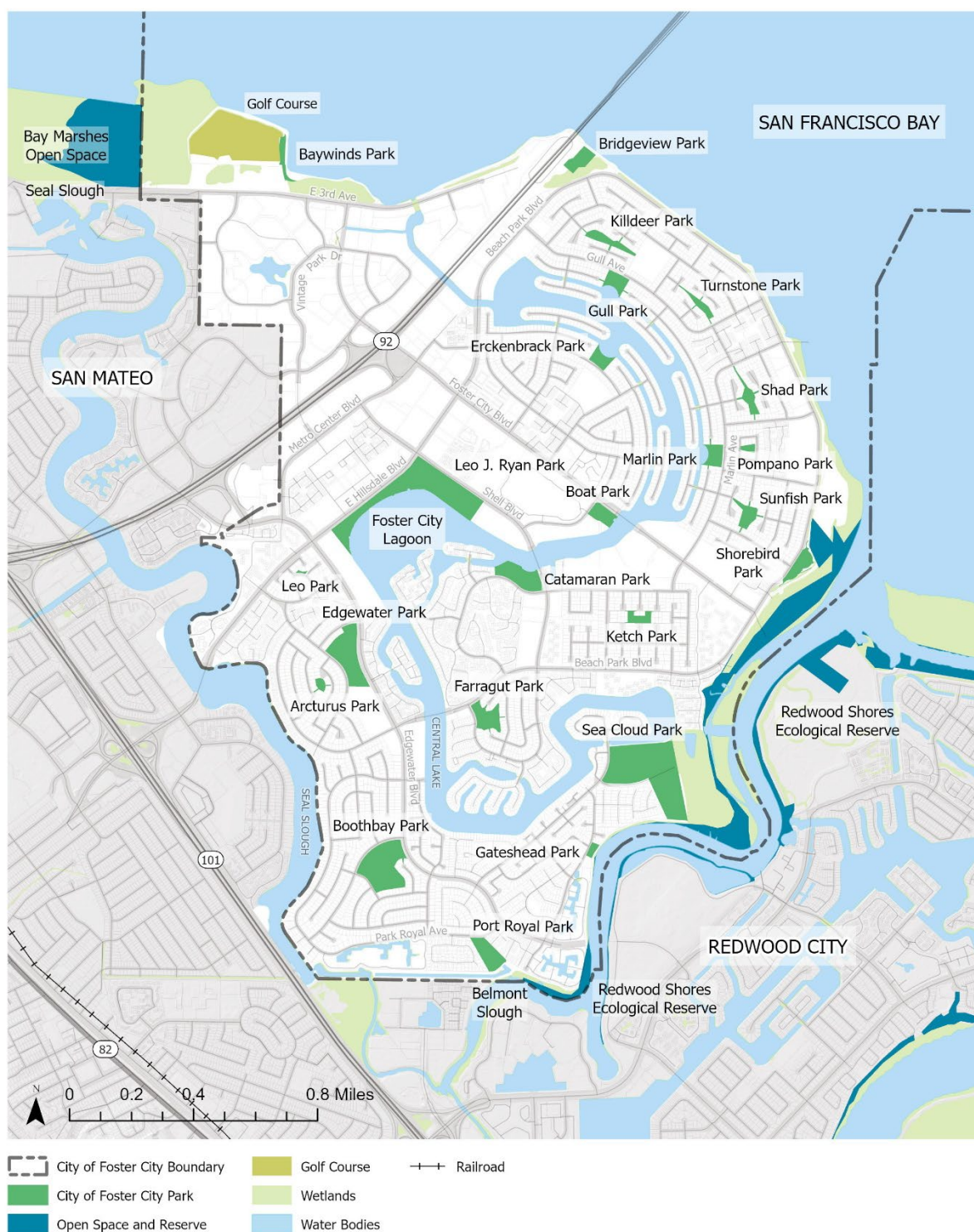
The Levee Pedway (left and middle) is a heavily-used regional route that is supported by the City’s local neighborhood trails (right, source: Google Streetview).

Table 1 Parks and Open Space Inventory

Park	Number	Acres	Major Amenities
Community Parks	4	64.7	
Boothbay		11.2	Playground, Ballfield, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Courts, Volleyball Court, Restroom, Picnic Shelter
Edgewater		8.5	Playground, Ballfield, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Courts, Restroom, Picnic Shelter
Leo J Ryan		20.7	Basketball Court, Pickleball Courts, Bocce Ball Courts, Tennis Courts, Beach, Boat Launch
Sea Cloud		24	Playground, Ballfields, Soccer/Multipurpose Fields, Restroom, Picnic Shelter
Neighborhood Parks	10	33.7	
Catamaran		5.9	Playground, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Court, Volleyball Courts, Restroom
Erckenbrack		3.5	Playground, Restroom, Beach
Farragut		3.9	Playground, Restroom
Gull		3.1	Playground, Restroom, Beach
Kildeer		2.4	Playground
Marlin		3.1	Playground, Restroom, Beach
Port Royal		4.0	Playground, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Restroom, Parking Lot
Shad		2.1	Playground, Basketball Court, Restroom
Shorebird		3.5	Restroom
Sunfish		2.4	Playground, Basketball Court
Mini Parks	8	7.5	
Arcturus		0.8	Playground
Gateshead		0.7	None
Ketch		1.6	Playground, Basketball Court
Leo		0.1	None
Pompano		0.5	None
Turnstone		1.5	Playground, Basketball Court
Town Center Park*		1.1	None
Pilgrim Triton*		1.2	Playground, Picnic Area
Special Use Parks	3	7.7	
Bridgeview		3.2	Restroom, Parking Lot
Baywinds		1.3	Restroom, Shower
Boat/Dog		3.2	Restroom, Boat Launch, Dog Park, Parking Lot
Subtotal, Parks	25	113.6	
Open Space		63	
Publicly Accessible Open Space		22	
Restricted Access Open Space		41	
Lagoon		218	

*Pilgrim Triton and Town Center Park are private parks, but are publicly accessible.

Source: City of Foster City 2025.

Figure 3 Foster City Parks & Open Spaces

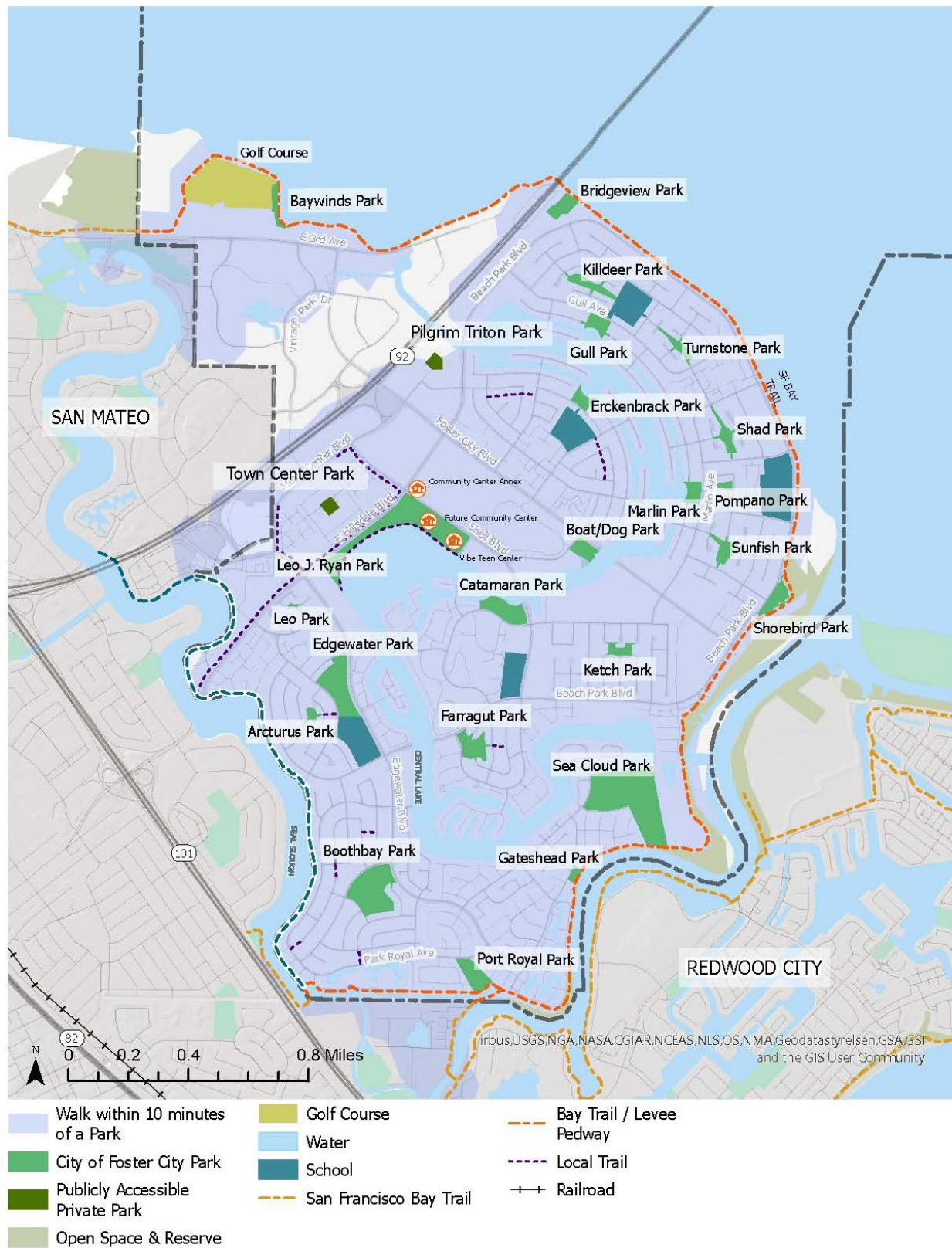
Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

Source: City of Foster City, County of San Mateo Open Data portal, 2024.

Park Access

As shown in Figure 4, all of Foster City's residential neighborhoods are within a 10-minute walk of a park, an aspirational standard that many cities struggle to achieve. While there are portions of the City that are beyond a 10-minute walk from a park, these are primarily employment areas.

Demographic patterns offer insight into how park access and recreational resources can best serve the community. In central Foster City, particularly along the Foster City Boulevard corridor, a larger population of older adults (65 and over) presents an opportunity to enhance amenities and programs that support seniors. Youth, by contrast, are more evenly spread throughout the city, although central neighborhoods overall tend to have the highest population density. Park access is generally well-distributed across all racial and income groups. While Foster City's population is predominantly Asian and/or White, there are no distinct clusters of culturally specific communities that would require targeted outreach or specialized facilities.

Figure 4 Foster City Park Walksheds

Park Acreage

Park acreage level of service (LOS) measures the availability of parks and recreational facilities relative to a community's population, helping promote equitable access and adequate resources. As shown in Table 2, Foster City currently offers 3.2 acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents, which is somewhat higher than the average of similar local communities. The Parks and Open Space Element recommends maintaining the existing developed parkland acreage of 113.6 acres. The City could explore adding additional parkland by exploring conversion of Sea Cloud II site, as discussed in detail below (*see Opportunity Sites*). It shall be noted that the LOS in 2040 with additional growth and without additional parkland would be 2.9.

As Foster City grows, the Parks and Open Space Element also recommends establishing an appropriate LOS balances future housing and community preference.

Table 2 Park Acreage Level of Service

	City Acres	Publicly Accessible Private Acres	Total Acres	Current Level of Service (LOS) (acres/1000 residents)	Local Average LOS ¹ (acres/1000 residents)
Parks	110.6	2.3	113.6	3.2	2.8
Open Space	22.0	0	22.0	0.6	NA
Grand Total	132.6	2.3	135.6	3.8	NA

Recreation Amenities

Table 3 summarizes the inventory of recreation amenities in Foster City's parks, indicates existing level of service for these amenities, and establishes recreation amenity standards based on local and national trends, as well as Foster City's unique needs. Foster City provides a high level of service for most major recreational amenities, particularly multi-use fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playgrounds. By 2040, additional amenities needed to meet projected demand include at least four pickleball courts, one volleyball court, and four reservable picnic shelters. This analysis focuses on traditional park amenities commonly tracked by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). However, it does not capture other important community needs, such as trails, shade trees, walking paths within parks, community gardens, and more, which were highlighted through community engagement (*see Engagement Results for Parks and Open Space*).

Table 3 Park Recreation Amenity Level of Service

Amenity	Inventory	Current LOS (pop. per amenity)	Local Average LOS 1 (pop. per amenity)	National Average LOS (pop. per amenity) 2	Priority Investment Rating (PIR) ³	LOS Standard (pop. per amenity)	2040 Additional Amenities Needed
Diamond Field	10	3,500	4,878	3,007	Low	4,000	0
Soccer Multipurpose Field	12	2,917	8,212	3,333	Low	4,000	0
Basketball Court	8	4,376	7,294	7,501	Low	7,000	0
Tennis Court	13	2,693	6,151	5,461	Medium	4,000	0
Pickleball Court	6	5,834	9,124	7,737	Medium	4,000	4
Bocce Ball Court	4	8,751	N/A	N/A	Low	9,000	0
Volleyball Court	2	17,502	N/A	14,280	Medium	15,000	1
Dog Park	1	35,004	31,087	27,508	Medium	30,000	0
Playgrounds	15	2,334	3,973	3,105	Low	3,500	0
Reservable Picnic Tables	3	11,668	6,572	N/A	Medium/ High	6,000	4

1 Average level of service for comparable Bay Area communities (Belmont, Burlingame, Menlo Park, Millbrae, San Bruno, San Carlos, San Mateo, South San Francisco). Source: Parks Master Plan Benchmark Analysis.

2 For agencies serving communities of between 20,000 and 49,999 residents. Source: National Recreation and Park Association, 2024.

3 Priority Investment Rating is an index score based on residents' level of unmet need and level of importance for each amenity. Source: Parks Master Plan Community Survey, 2024

Park Use

A park usage analysis was also conducted based on data from Placer.ai and revealed how amenities and user demographics influence visitation patterns, offering insights that can guide future planning, investment, and improvements in Foster City's parks.¹

Catering to Residents and Visitors

Foster City parks primarily cater to residents. However, parks like Baywinds Park and Leo J. Ryan Park attract significant non-resident visitation and have the potential for cost recovery opportunities through user fees, equipment rentals, or other strategies. Other parks with desirable recreation amenities, like Sea Cloud, may also have potential to be leveraged for more cost recovery.

Extending Use

Lighting and shade play a role in shaping park usage patterns, both seasonally and throughout the day. Enhanced lighting can extend usability into evening hours while being designed to not disturb surrounding residential areas. Adding shade trees and structures could also improve comfort and attract

¹ PlacerAI is an analytics platform that leverages anonymous mobile location data to analyze how people move through and interact with different spaces.

more users during peak sunlight. These upgrades could also promote greater year-round accessibility and enjoyment of parks.

Understanding Park Users

Foster City's parks should reflect the diversity of the community and the varying ways residents engage with outdoor spaces. Young adults, Hispanic/Latino families, and households with lower to moderate incomes tend to use parks frequently, while seniors, middle-aged adults, and Asian residents, who make up the city's largest demographic group, appear less represented in park use.² These patterns point to opportunities to broaden the appeal of Foster City's parks by ensuring amenities remain affordable and accessible, offering culturally inclusive programs, improving language access, and enhancing park features that meet the needs of all residents.

Park Site Assessment



Foster City Parks are safe, well-maintained and have diverse recreational amenities, though key challenges include Geese habitation and lack of comfort amenities.

Foster City parks were evaluated for access, safety, functionality, and condition. Each park was considered from the perspective of strengths and areas for improvement. Stunning waterfront views at Leo J. Ryan Park and the variety of diverse activities at Sea Cloud Park make those parks attractive destinations for local and regional community members. The park system also faces challenges, including geese droppings particularly at parks with access to the lagoon, and a lack of signage and pathways at parks like Edgewater and Pompano parks. Strengths and challenges are summarized below.

² It should be noted that visitor demographic data is inferred based on a visitor's census block group, providing insights into the demographic composition of neighborhoods rather than the specific traits of individual users.

PARK ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Foster City parks were evaluated for access, safety, functionality, and condition. Using a qualitative approach tailored to the city, it identified strengths and areas for improvement.

STRENGTHS



Safe & Maintained Environments

Most parks are well-maintained, with minimal vandalism or safety concerns.



Diverse Activities in Large Parks

Large parks like Boothbay and Sea Cloud offer a variety of amenities.



Scenic Waterfront Locations

Parks like Leo J. Ryan and Marlin offer stunning views and access to the lagoon.

CHALLENGES



Cleanliness Issues

Waterfront parks, such as Marlin and Erckenbrack, are significantly impacted by goose droppings.



Lack of Signage & Pathways

Parks like Edgewater and Pompano are harder to navigate due to unclear signage and limited pathways.



Limited Comfort Amenities

Many parks lack sufficient shade, seating, and lighting.

Opportunity Sites

Foster City is a nearly built-out community with a well-distributed park system and relatively limited undeveloped open space areas. Foster City's greatest opportunities to expand recreation opportunities lie in enhancing existing parks and facilities. However, two key sites, Sea Cloud II and the Baywinds area, present unique opportunities to introduce new public open spaces that may both provide additional recreational value and also support multiple ecological and resiliency benefits.

Sea Cloud II Site

Adjacent to Sea Cloud Park lies a 21-acre, City-owned open space known as Sea Cloud II, shown in Figure 5. Designated by the Army Corps of Engineers as a dredge material deposit site in 2018, the area has since evolved into a seasonal retention basin and wetland, supporting a mix of natural and invasive vegetation. In recent years, protected bird species have been observed nesting on-site, highlighting the ecological significance of the area and the importance of thoughtful stewardship. Currently fenced off and inaccessible to the public, the site also lacks direct connectivity to Sea Cloud Park and the Bay Trail. With further study, community visioning, and targeted improvements, it has the potential to become a valuable ecological resource and a recreation asset.

Due to the potential presence of wetland and sensitive habitat areas on portions of the site, the scope of potential improvements is not yet fully known. Additional environmental analysis and close coordination with State and regional regulatory agencies will be necessary to clarify the site's constraints and opportunities. With that understanding, the City could develop a long-term vision that protects and enhances the site's natural features while improving connectivity to the Bay Trail and potentially introducing recreational amenities.

Figure 5 Sea Cloud II Site Opportunities

Inspirational images of habitat restoration and passive recreation including elevated boardwalk, wildlife viewing areas, and docks.

Baywinds Park

At just 1.3 acres, Baywinds Park is one of Foster City's smallest parks, tucked into the northwestern edge of the city along the Bay. The park is popular for windsurfing and attracts people from around the region for that activity. However, the surrounding properties include extensive wetlands, open space, and recreational assets, most notably the 25-acre Mariners Point Golf Center and Driving Range and approximately 25 acres of Caltrans-owned undeveloped land including wetlands. Together, these sites (shown in Figure 6) present a unique opportunity to create a more integrated, nature-focused recreation destination that could support habitat restoration, wildlife viewing, environmental education, picnicking, and other passive uses.

The Mariners Point Golf Center is a valued recreational amenity, currently leased by the City and the Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) to a private operator. While the long-term vision for the site has not yet been determined, its future use could significantly influence the area's recreational potential. If the golf course remains indefinitely, improvements could enhance connectivity with Baywinds Park and surrounding open space. If the site is ever repurposed, there may be an opportunity to expand parkland, restore natural habitat, or introduce other recreational facilities.

The Caltrans-owned parcels also represent a strategic opportunity. The City may pursue partnerships or acquisition opportunities that would support site improvements, habitat restoration, and expanded public access.

Figure 6 Baywinds Park Opportunities



Inspirational images of habitat restoration and passive recreation, including a board walk, nature center, and relaxation areas.

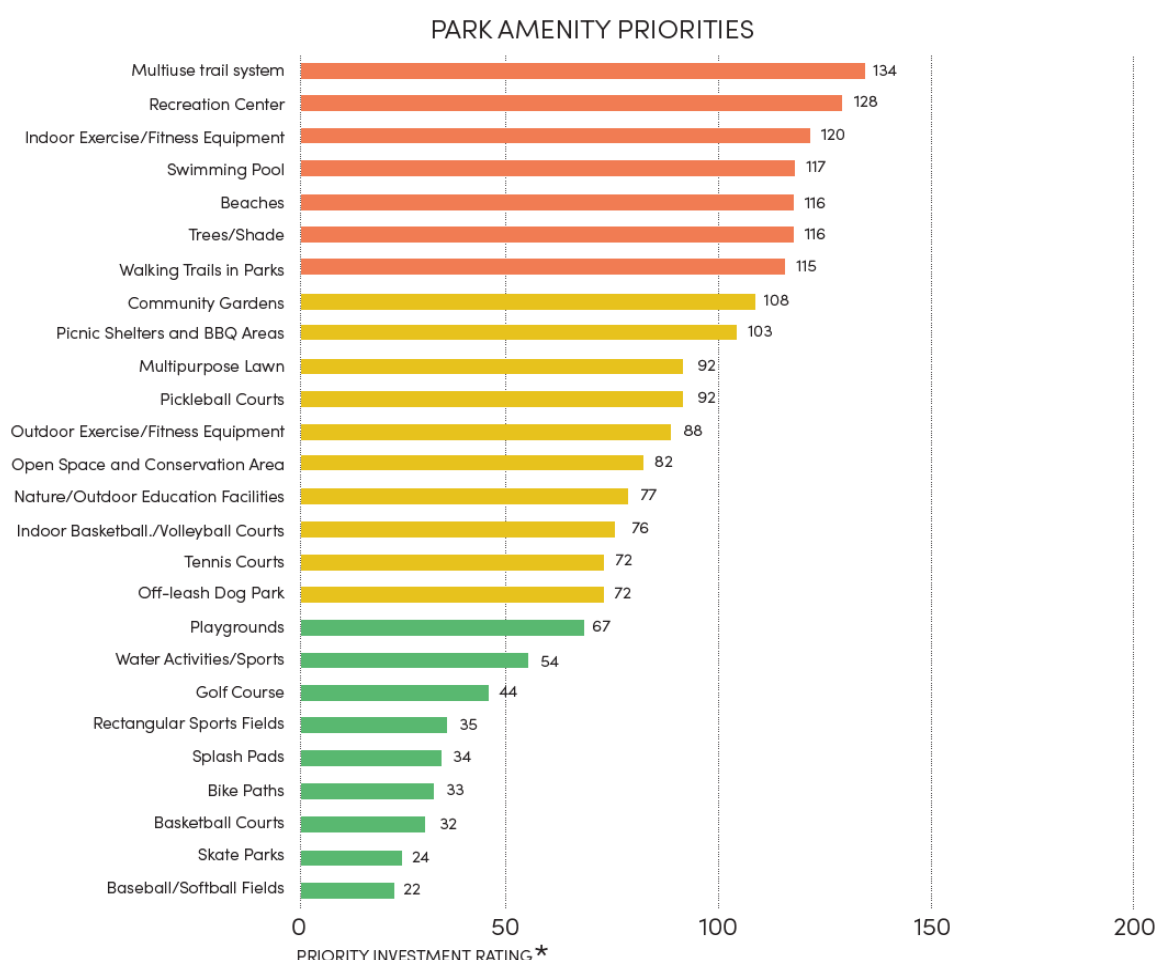
Engagement Results for Parks & Open Space

During the planning process, hundreds of residents shared their insights on the parks and open space system through a variety of engagement opportunities, including workshops, pop-up events, surveys, focus groups, and more. Key findings from these activities are summarized below.

Parks Master Plan Community Survey

A strong indicator of community preferences came from the Parks Master Plan Community Survey, conducted by ETC Institute in winter 2024–2025 through a mailed and online questionnaire sent to a random sample of Foster City households. With over 300 participants and a 95 percent confidence level, the survey results are considered reflective of the city’s population. The survey found that 85 percent of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with Foster City’s parks and recreation system—well above the national average of 62 percent. To identify resident priorities for recreation amenities and programming, ETC used its Priority Investment Rating (PIR) tool, which equally weighs the importance of a facility and the level of unmet need, as reported by survey respondents. As shown in Figure 7, top priorities identified include multi-use trails, a recreation center, indoor fitness equipment, a swimming pool, beaches, trees and shade, and walking trails in parks.

Figure 7 Foster City Park Amenity Priorities



Source: ETC Institute, 2025.

Community Engagement Takeaways

Hundreds of engaged residents have shed light on the aspects of the parks and recreation system that should be improved, added, or prioritized. Key themes emerged from the outreach and engagement process:

Trails & Connectivity



- Trails are highly valued, and residents greatly appreciate the Levee Pedway.
- Residents desire additional trails connecting neighborhoods, parks, and the Levee Pedway.
- Trail improvements are needed, including increased lighting, signage, and safety.

Beaches & Water Quality



- Issues with water quality and beach conditions deter recreational use.
- There are opportunities to activate the water through additional amenities, access points, and water-related programming.
- Community members have strong interest in activating the Lagoon's edges, especially through outdoor dining.

New Park Experiences



- Foster City has a great park system, with fantastic active recreation facilities.
- Residents would welcome new features to further activate and increase identity through new and unique experiences.
- There is demand for more passive spaces, such as walking paths, picnic areas, beaches, and natural open spaces.

Park Comfort



- Park users would benefit from more comfortable places to relax and walk through improved shade, pathways, and seating.
- Some highly visited parks need improved or expanded restrooms.

Indoor Recreation & Swimming



- Residents share a desire for fitness, senior, arts, and cultural programs, reinforcing the need for the new Community Center.
- Indoor fitness equipment and a swimming pool are community needs that are so far unmet with current plans.
- School joint-use agreements are essential for the community's access to gymnasiums.

Programming and Events

Programming and events are key elements of park facilities and open spaces in Foster City. Participation is reinforced by the settings themselves: waterfront views at Leo Ryan, shaded lawns at Boothbay, and playgrounds near picnic areas all create inviting environments for both organized programs and casual community use. The City offers a variety of programs and services that fall into the following core program areas:

- **Afterschool Programs:** Provide programming on elementary school campuses on early dismissal days.
- **Athletics:** Foster healthy lifestyles and promoting lifelong wellness throughout the community.
- **Camps:** Full-day camps for children ages 4 to 13.
- **Community Events:** Engage Foster City residents and visitors with free to low-cost events.
- **Lifelong Learning and Wellness:** Various classes offered year-round that provide opportunities for community engagement.
- **Reservations and Rentals:** Rentable rooms and park spaces that accommodate different types of events, meetings and parties.

Serving All Ages

The Foster City Parks and Recreation Department provides a balance of programs and services across all age segments. The Department should continue to provide programs across all age groups and reevaluate program offerings each year with the goal of keeping programs responsive to user needs. Table 4 provides a summary of the various recreational programs offered to different age groups within Foster City.

Table 4 Ages Served by Recreational Core Program Area

Core Program Area	Ages Served						
	Preschool (5 and under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Young Adult (18-34)	Adult (35-54)	Active Adult (55-64)	Senior (65+)
Afterschool Enrichment Program		X					
Athletics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Facility & Park Rentals				X	X	X	X
Youth & Adult Contract Classes & Specialty Camps		X	X	X	X	X	X
Teen Afterschool Program			X				
Youth & Teen Camps	X	X	X				

Source: Foster City Parks Master Plan Program and Services Assessment, PROS Consulting, 2025.

Engagement Results on Programming

The Parks Master Plan Community Survey sheds light on community interests and needs for programming and events:

- 46 percent of residents have participated in Foster City programs in the past 12 months, significantly more than the national average of 36 percent. By weighing the importance of a program and the level of unmet need, fitness/wellness programs, community special events, outdoor recreation, programs for seniors, cultural enrichment programs, visual arts/crafts programs, performing arts programs, and pickleball lessons and leagues emerged as top priorities for residents (*see Figure 8*).
- The biggest barrier to program participation was a lack of awareness, with 27 percent of residents indicating they did not know what was being offered. Other top barriers included inconvenient program times (23 percent) and being too busy or not interested in participating (15 percent).

Figure 8 Program and Event Priorities from the Statistically Valid Community Survey



Source: ETC Institute, 2025.

Operations and Maintenance

Maintenance is needed for many parks, facilities, and amenities to promote functionality, safety, and aesthetic appeal for Foster City residents.

Engagement Results on Maintenance

The community engagement process surfaced several key insights related to park operations and maintenance. Feedback from the survey and open-ended comments highlighted both areas of satisfaction and specific concerns that can help guide future improvements.

- **Physical Condition Generally Rated Well, But Gaps Remain.**
While 90 percent of residents rated park conditions as “excellent” or “good,” 9 percent rated them as only “fair” or “poor,” signaling pockets of maintenance issues that may be addressed through targeted interventions.
- **Restroom and Trail Maintenance Need Greater Emphasis.**
An Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) analysis identified paved path/trails, restrooms, and waterways/beaches as the top two priorities for maintenance. These areas had high importance but relatively lower satisfaction scores, indicating strong community demand for better upkeep.
- **Cleanliness and Environmental Conditions Are Concerns.**
Although not always formally listed, geese droppings were repeatedly mentioned in open-ended comments as a major deterrent to park use, suggesting the need for more proactive sanitation and environmental management as part of routine maintenance.

Maintenance Assessment

A Park Maintenance and Operations Assessment was conducted as part of the Foster City Parks Master Plan, analyzing current maintenance practices, staffing levels, service standards, and operational challenges across the city’s park system. The assessment evaluated how the City maintains its parks and open spaces and reviewed key functions such as turf management, irrigation, equipment upkeep, and trail maintenance.

Key challenges that came out of this assessment included:

- **Lack of a Formal Maintenance Management Plan**
While some standards exist, the City does not have a fully documented plan tracking work performance and outcomes by park.
- **No GIS-Based Asset Management System**
The absence of such a system limits the City’s ability to track maintenance needs, costs, and asset lifecycles efficiently.
- **Underfunding of Maintenance Operations**
Annual park maintenance funding falls short compared to the level needed for optimal service.
- **Well-Equipped but Needs Continued Investment**
The City currently has the necessary vehicles and equipment but must reinvest as the system grows to maintain service levels.

Open Space Value for Natural Resources

Foster City's open space network presents several meaningful opportunities for enhancing natural habitat and wildlife compatibility, including targeted rewilding that can enhance ecological integrity and restore natural processes across the urban landscape. Guided by the provisions of SB 1425, the City can pursue strategies that preserve, enhance, and expand habitat areas within and adjacent to developed zones. The City's open spaces are identified in Figure 9, below.

Belmont Slough, which forms a natural boundary between Foster City and Redwood Shores, is a prime opportunity area for rewilding. The surrounding wetlands provide vital habitat for shorebirds and native plant communities such as cordgrass and pickleweed. With portions of the shoreline under the management of the CDFW and others privately owned, there are opportunities for both targeted and coordinated restoration efforts such as marshland expansion, the creation of buffer zones using native vegetation, and formal habitat restoration plans that involve multiple local and regional agencies and funding sources.

Seal Slough, also known as Marina Lagoon, represents another opportunity to support habitat connectivity and ecological health. While much of the slough is managed by the City of San Mateo, Foster City shares responsibility for adjacent areas and could support and collaborate on restoration efforts. Strategies may include riparian plantings, removal of invasive species, and the establishment of small-scale wildlife corridors.

Beyond these tidal and riparian corridors, Foster City's urban parks and landscaped areas offer potential for small-scale rewilding. Parks such as Boothbay and Port Royal could be enhanced by replacing portions of ornamental lawns with native, drought-tolerant plants, introducing wildflower meadows, or establishing gardens focused on native species. Even highly engineered shoreline areas could benefit from nature-based enhancements, such as vegetated buffer strips and boardwalks that improve both habitat quality and public engagement with natural spaces. For additional information and policies on habitat and wildlife management and connectivity, please see the Conservation Element.

Figure 9 Publicly Accessible Open Space

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

Climate Resiliency

Foster City's open spaces also play a critical role in advancing the City's climate resiliency goals by serving as buffers against climate-related hazards and offering natural systems that help moderate environmental stressors. Coastal wetlands and shoreline open spaces, such as those near Belmont Slough and the Bay Trail, absorb floodwaters, reduce wave energy, and space for marsh migration and living-shoreline measures needed to accommodate sea level rise over time.

Mapping of sea level rise scenarios illustrates that while Foster City's upgraded levee provides critical protection against current coastal hazards, the community remains vulnerable to future conditions driven by climate change. Figure 10 shows a mid-century scenario of approximately 0.8 feet of SLR (about the increase expected during typical daily high tides by 2050, absent any storms). Under this scenario, portions of the shoreline, including parks, trails, and some low-lying residential areas (such as those along Beach Park Boulevard and the fringes of the central lagoon) could experience more frequent tidal flooding. Vulnerability increases further when considering the added impact of severe coastal storms or King Tide events on top of elevated sea levels. Figure 11 illustrates Foster City's present-day 100-year storm surge scenario, which in combination with sea level rise could exceed the capacity of existing flood protection. Such an event could affect residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, critical infrastructure, and transportation routes, including portions of Highway 101.

Preserving, enhancing, and restoring these areas with native vegetation and habitat restoration strengthens their ability to sequester and store carbon, filter pollutants, and reduce the impacts of storm surges on adjacent neighborhoods and critical infrastructure. Open spaces also bolster ecological resilience by preserving habitat for habitat corridors that allow species to migrate and adapt to rising temperatures and shifting ecosystems, countering regional habitat fragmentation in line with AB 1889.

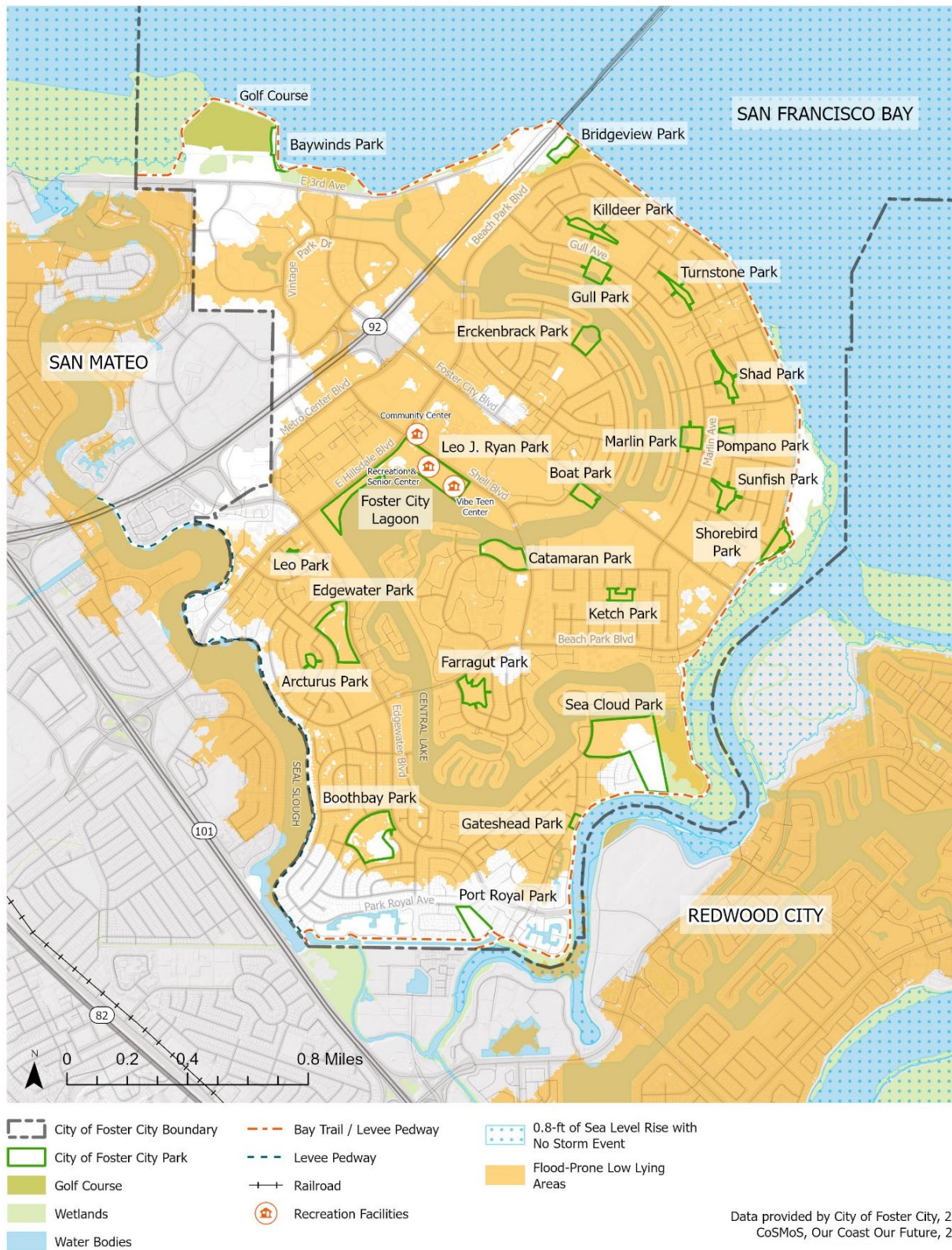
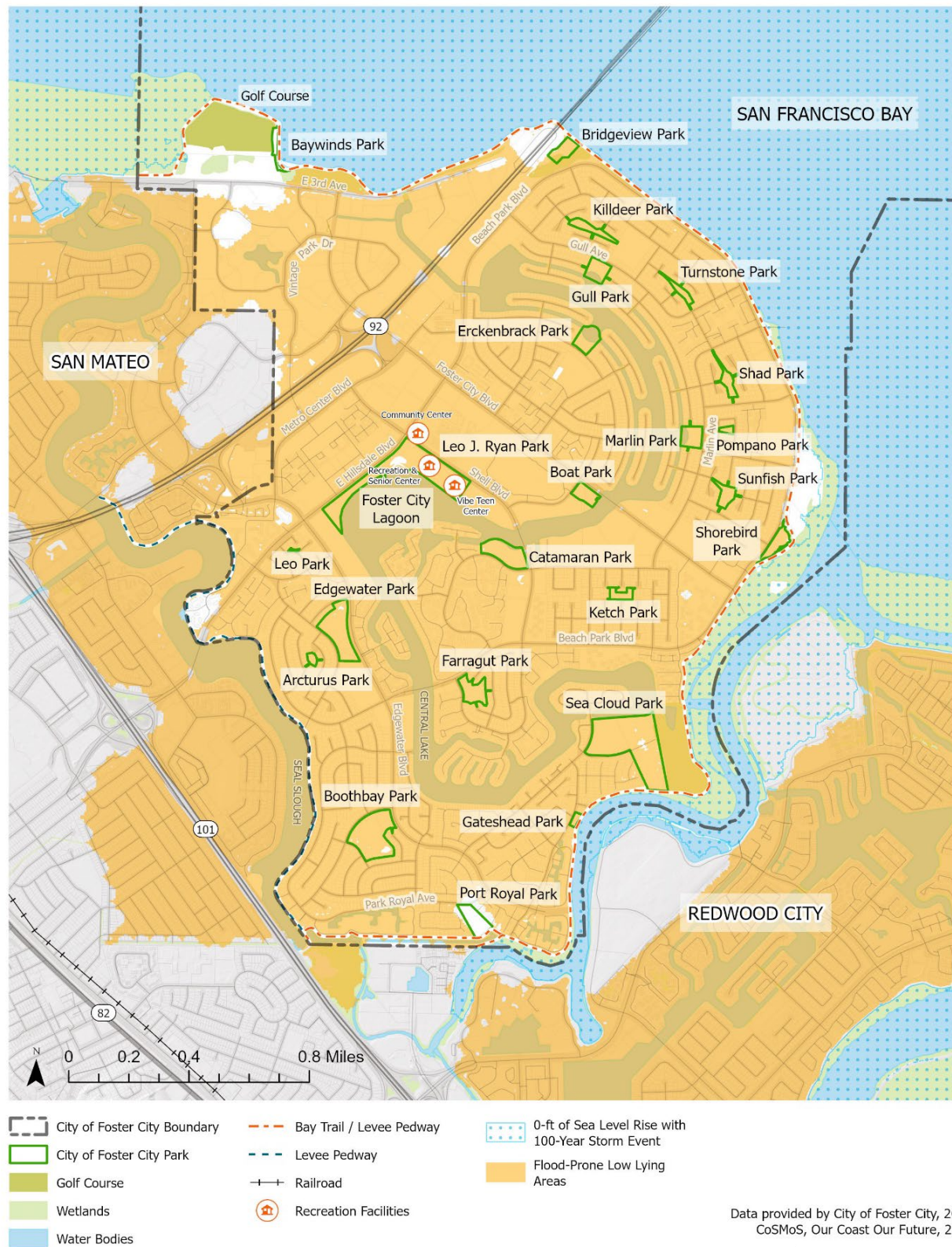
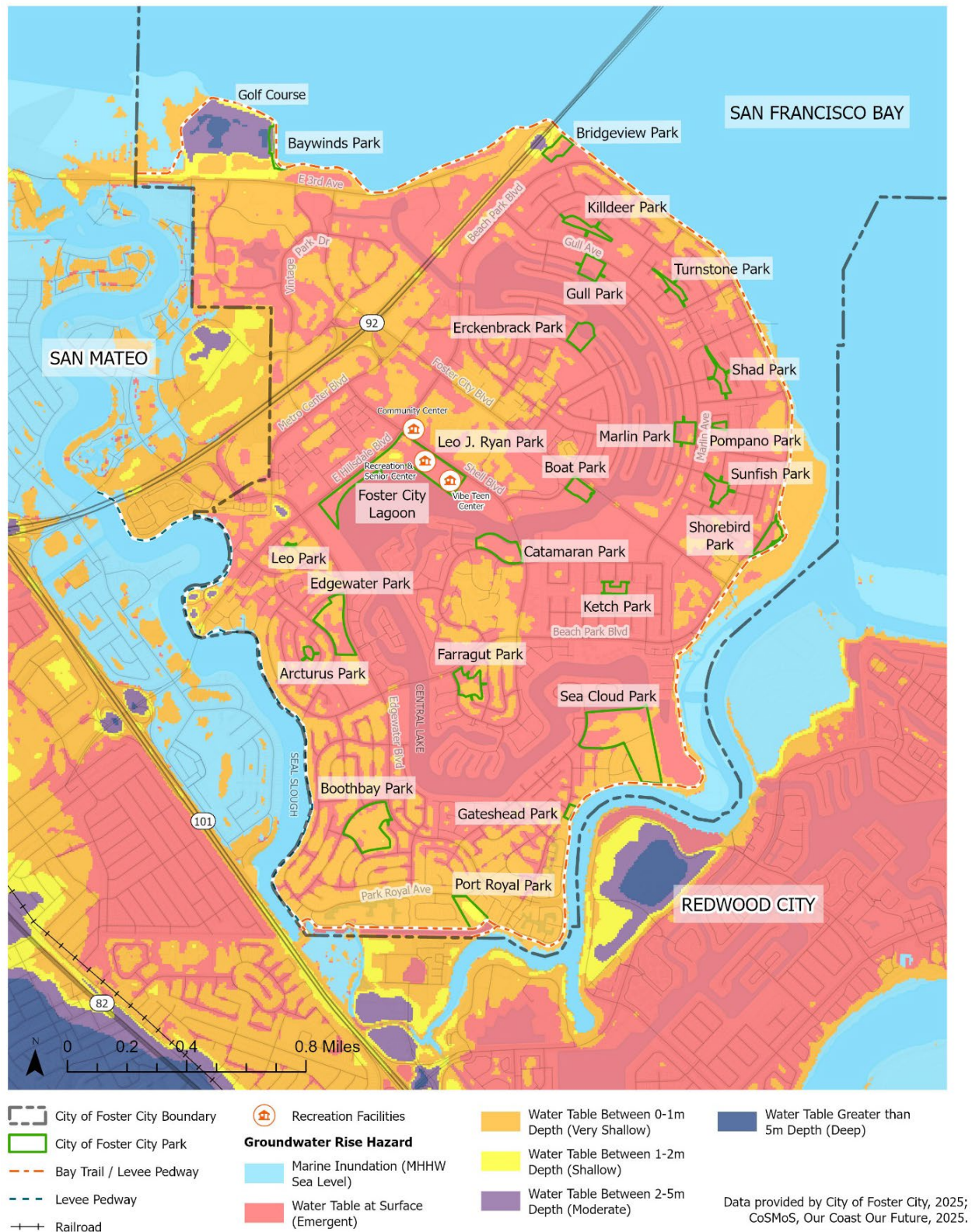
Figure 10 Sea Level Rise Inundation (0.8 feet)

Figure 11 Present-Day (No Sea Level Rise) 100-Year Storm Inundation Risk

Another emerging concern is groundwater rise. As sea level rises, the water table in Foster City will rise as well, since the city is built on permeable fill and former marsh and the water table will rise as sea level rises. Rising groundwater can lead to flooding from below, even if surface levees hold back the Bay from direct coastal inundation. Figure 12 displays a groundwater rise hazard map for Foster City, highlighting areas particularly susceptible to groundwater rise, particularly the shoreline zones and lands around the lagoon. In these areas, the water table will likely eventually breach the surface or infiltrate underground infrastructure, causing flooding of housing foundations, road base materials, or within storm sewers. Groundwater rise could also induce soil instability or mobilize pollutants in soils.

To strengthen climate resilience and meet SB 1425 goals, Foster City should implement nature-based strategies, such as permeable surfaces, expanded tree canopy, and green stormwater infrastructure, to reduce heat, retain stormwater, and recharge shallow groundwater. For example, native plantings in shoreline parks and undeveloped parcels can strengthen soil stability, support pollinator populations, and reduce the need for irrigation. Meadow restoration and the creation of microhabitats within urban green spaces offer additional benefits by moderating temperatures and supporting localized ecosystems. As climate pressures intensify, integrating open space into the City's adaptation strategy is vital for ecological function and for protecting the public health and safety of residents. These spaces offer cooler environments during heat waves, areas for passive stormwater retention, and opportunities for environmental education that can foster long-term stewardship and community resilience.

Figure 12 Present Day (No Sea Level Rise) Groundwater Hazard



Goals and Policies

Parks and Recreation System

Goal POS-1 Foster City's parks and recreation system is vibrant, comfortable and responsive.

*Policy POS 1.1 **Vibrant and Unique Parks.** Aim for all Foster City parks to be vibrant and have a unique identity, incorporating in-demand and innovative features for evening activation.*

*Policy POS 1.2 **Comfortable Parks.** Support park comfort and appeal by adding or improving key features such as seating, lighting, shade, and restrooms.*

*Policy POS 1.3 **Community Needs.** Strive to make the parks and recreation system responsive to the recreation needs identified in the Parks Master Plan and through continued engagement.*

Goal POS-2 Foster City has a connected and accessible parks and recreation system.

*Policy POS 2.1 **Connected Trail System.** Create a citywide network of paths and trails for walking and biking that is safe and comfortable.*

*Policy POS 2.2 **Navigating Parks.** Promote easy access to and navigation within the City's parks, lagoon, and trails by installing wayfinding signage and creating plans for multi-modal access.*

*Policy POS 2.3 **Accessible & Inclusive.** Promote accessibility and inclusivity in park facilities and programs through universal design and diverse, community-responsive activities.*

Goal POS-3 The Foster City Lagoon is active and well-integrated with its surroundings.

*Policy POS 3.1 **Lagoon Access & Amenities.** Provide places and amenities to view, enjoy and access the Lagoon.*

Policy POS 3.2 **Waterfront Activation.** Increase Lagoon activation through programming and events, improved water quality, and increased water-front activity.

Programming and Events

Goal POS-4 Foster City has lively and inclusive events and programs.

Policy POS 4.1 **Programming.** Invest in high priority programs and services that bring residents together, serve all age groups, and are responsive to community needs and desires.

Policy POS 4.2 **Community Events.** Strengthen community events in Foster City by improving and expanding offerings and collaborating with other recreation providers.

Operations and Maintenance

Goal POS-5 Operational efficiency and economic feasibility are core to park and recreation management in Foster City.

Policy POS 5.1 **High Quality Maintenance.** Continue to support high-quality park and facility maintenance by focusing on key maintenance priorities and investing in maintenance staff, tools, and equipment.

Policy POS 5.2 **Funding Strategy.** Develop and implement a funding strategy to realize the City's vision for its parks and recreation system.

Policy POS 5.3 **Plan and Engage Proactively.** Promote long-term success through regular planning, transparent reporting, and ongoing community engagement.

Open Space Value for Natural Resources

Goal POS-6 Foster City's parks and open spaces support native biodiversity, climate resilience, and ecological function through targeted rewilding, habitat restoration, and nature-based solutions.

Policy POS 6.1 **Urban Rewilding.** Implement urban rewilding projects to reintroduce natural processes, restore natural ecosystems, and promote biodiversity.

Policy POS 6.2 **Habitat Linkages.** Prioritize rewilding in areas that enhance or create new habitat linkages and corridors for wildlife movement.)

Policy POS 6.3 **Resilient Landscaping.** Prioritize the use of native, drought-tolerant, and climate-resilient vegetation in existing parks and landscaped open

spaces to enhance habitat value, reduce water demand, and support pollinators.

Policy POS 6.4 **Ecologically Beneficial Features.** Integrate ecologically beneficial features, such as pollinator gardens, wildflower meadows, bioswales, and native plant corridors, into public parks, medians, and along trail networks.

Policy POS 6.5 **Community Participation.** Encourage inclusive community participation in habitat restoration through stewardship programs, youth engagement, and interpretive signage in rewilded open spaces.

Climate Resiliency

Goal POS-7 Foster City's open space network is adaptively managed to strengthen resilience to climate change impacts, including sea level rise, extreme heat, and flood risk.

Policy POS 7.1 **Multi-benefit Prioritization.** Prioritize the preservation and restoration of undeveloped open spaces and natural areas that provide multi-benefit climate services, including flood protection, carbon sequestration, heat reduction, and habitat connectivity, particularly in underserved areas.

Policy POS 7.2 **Climate Data Integration.** Integrate future climate scenarios, such as sea level rise, groundwater rise, and extreme heat, into open space design, planning, and management decisions to support ecological resilience, adaptive capacity, and equitable public access.

Policy POS 7.3 **Green Streets.** Encourage the use of "green streets" that incorporate native vegetation, permeable surfaces, and stormwater features to enhance habitat and reduce runoff.

Policy POS 7.4 **Green Infrastructure.** Support the development of rooftop gardens, vertical greenery, and other integrated green infrastructure that enhances biodiversity and reduces energy use.

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-a	Enhance park activation and identity by reprogramming underutilized park spaces with in-demand or innovative park amenities/experiences, referencing the park-specific improvements identified in the Parks Master Plan.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-1.1
POS-b	As part of future park improvement and maintenance projects, support the expansion of passive amenities such as walking trails, picnic areas, and natural open spaces.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Ongoing	POS-1.1
POS-c	As part of future park improvement and maintenance projects, seek opportunities to increase shade in parks by planting trees and/or constructing shade structures, particularly at playgrounds and picnic areas.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Ongoing	POS-1.2
POS-d	Add or improve seating, lighting, water fountains/refill stations, trash receptacles, restrooms, and bike racks to all parks where needed.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Long-term	POS-1.2
POS-e	Explore opportunities to expand access to indoor recreation and swimming facilities by pursuing or strengthening partnerships with San Mateo-Foster City School District and private recreation providers.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-1.3
POS-f	As Foster City grows, the City will continue to maintain the existing developed parkland of 113.6 acres in Foster City.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Long-term	POS-1.3
POS-g	Determine an appropriate LOS that balances future housing and community preference and make necessary edits to Chapter 16.36 Parks and Recreation Facilities of Foster City Municipal Code.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Mid-term	POS-1.3
POS-h	Conduct a study of open space opportunity areas to assess their environmental constraints and natural assets. Use these insights to create a master plan that balances ecological restoration with expanded recreational access and amenities.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Short-term	POS-1.3
POS-i	Explore opportunities for creating a network of paths and trails that connect existing city parks, trails, and community destinations. Work cross-departmentally to implement the Bike Pedestrian Master Plan 2026.	Public Works	Community Development/Parks and Recreation	Long-term	POS-2.1
POS-j	Consider additional improvements to the Levee Peway, including distance markers, signage, and lighting, to create comfortable conditions for all trail users.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation/Community Development	Long-term	POS-2.1

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-k	Explore strategies for establishing clear and consistent signage across the park and recreation system.	Parks and Recreation		Long-term	POS-2.2
POS-l	Enhance ADA-compliant access at all parks.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Long-term	POS-2.3
POS-m	Promote cross-cultural and multi-generational programming and facilities, recognizing the full diversity of Foster City residents.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-2.3
POS-n	Explore opportunities to enhance the integration of the design of lagoon-adjacent parks with the lagoon, providing places to view, enjoy, and access the water, including boat docking opportunities.	Parks and Recreation		Long-term	POS-3.1
POS-o	Collaborate across departments to continue to implement the Lagoon Water Quality Management Plan and Canada Goose Population Management Plan to improve cleanliness of lagoon-adjacent parks and lagoon water quality.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-p	Support land use regulatory changes to encourage public access and activation along the lagoon as part of future development.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-q	Continue to support the use of the lagoon for community events such as regattas, performances, etc.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-3.2
POS-r	Explore opportunities to activate recreational use of the lagoon.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-s	Pursue opportunities to expand high-demand recreational programs/events that serve residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-4.1
POS-t	Continue to support and expand special events that activate community parks in all seasons.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-4.2
POS-u	Complement and connect with other recreation providers and event sponsors, developing partnerships when advantageous.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-4.2
POS-v	Encourage the dedication of staff resources to help identify and secure funding that supports park improvements, maintenance, and recreation programming and events.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-5.3
POS-w	Continue to foster the provision of high-quality parks and recreation services through the strategic allocation of funds for recreation programming, park/facility maintenance, and lifecycle improvements to maintain consistent financial support for meeting accepted service levels.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-5.3
POS-x	Promote the use of consistent community engagement practices, such as surveys, town halls, and focus groups, to continue to gather input on evolving recreational needs and preferences.	Parks and Recreation	Communications	Ongoing	POS-5.4

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-y	Support the identification of at least one City park or trail-adjacent open space for pilot naturalization projects that include, but are not limited to, replacement of turf or ornamental plantings with native vegetation. Monitor for habitat use, water savings, and community reception.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-6.1, POS-6.3
POS-z	Explore opportunities to map and identify areas within the City's parks and open spaces to naturalize with the aim of connecting natural areas with rewilded areas. Prioritize rewilding efforts in places where the clearest linkages for species movement between areas.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Long-term	POS-6.2
POS-aa	Seek opportunities to host seasonal events in collaboration with local schools, nonprofits, or native plant societies to involve residents in habitat restoration activities and promote awareness of urban ecology.	Parks and Recreation	Communications	Bi-Annual	POS-6.4
POS-bb	Actively seek State and federal funding opportunities that support land conservation, shoreline resilience, or wetland restoration, and coordinate with regional agencies for joint applications.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development/City Manager's Office	Ongoing	POS-7.1, POS-7.2
POS-cc	Pursue the development of a climate-resilient open space web viewer that overlays sea level rise projections, habitat corridors, and flood-prone areas and use as a tool for determining the highest impact naturalization and resilience-focused projects to prioritize.	Community Development	City Manager's Office	Long-term	POS-7.2
¹ Timeframes are categorized as short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years). Programs that are on an ongoing or annual basis are identified as such.					

EXHIBIT B

Parks and Open Space Element Legislative Consistency Checklist

Government Code Section	Description of Requirement	Consistency Status	Compliance Notes
Gov. Code § 65563	The Open Space Element must provide a long-range and comprehensive plan for the preservation and conservation of open space lands.	Addressed	The Element provides a comprehensive, long-range framework for parks and open space, establishing goals, policies, and implementation programs that ensure ongoing stewardship, programming, and climate resilience.
Gov. Code §65560(h)(1)	The Open Space Element must designate and conserve open space for the preservation of natural resources such as habitat, scientific study areas, rivers and streams, and watersheds.	Addressed	Goals POS-6 and POS-7 commit to habitat restoration, urban rewilding, protection of watershed lands, and integrating scientific/ecological study opportunities. Implementation programs (POS-x, POS-y, POS-aa) specifically advance rewilding, habitat corridors, and shoreline resilience.
Gov. Code §65560(h)(2)	The Open Space Element must identify and conserve open space lands used for the managed production of resources, including forests, rangelands, agriculture, groundwater recharge areas, fisheries, and minerals.	Partially Applicable	Foster City does not contain any managed production resources. However, the Element addresses groundwater recharge (POS-7.3, POS-7.4).
Gov. Code §65560(h)(3)	The Open Space Element must provide for open space dedicated to outdoor recreation, including parks, scenic areas, cultural and historic sites, trails, and recreational corridors.	Addressed	Recreational access is a central focus of the Element. Goals POS-1 through POS-4 and Programs POS-a–POS-s ensure high-quality parks, recreation amenities, trail connectivity, cultural and community events, and scenic shoreline access.
Gov. Code §65560(h)(4)	The Open Space Element must conserve open space lands needed for public health and safety, such as hazard areas, floodplains, fire-risk areas, and lands critical to maintaining water and air quality.	Addressed	The Element addresses sea level rise, flood hazards, and groundwater rise in open spaces (POS-7.1–7.4, POS-bb). The Element describes and includes policy for the use of open space as a buffer for climate hazards, improving air quality, floodwater management, and reducing heat island effects.
Gov. Code §65560(h)(5)	The Open Space Element must account for and protect open space in support of the operational integrity of military installations.	Not Applicable	No military installations or training areas are located in or adjacent to Foster City.

Government Code Section	Description of Requirement	Consistency Status	Compliance Notes
<u>Gov. Code §65560(h)(6)</u>	The Open Space Element must include provisions for conserving open space that protects tribal cultural resources, traditional lands, and places of significance.	Addressed	Foster City does not contain any open space for the protection of tribal resources. The Element acknowledges tribal cultural resources in alignment with Public Resources Code §5097.9 and §5097.993. Consultation was conducted consistent with State law.
<u>Gov. Code §65560(h)</u> <u>Save El Toro Assn. v. Days (1977)</u> <u>74 Cal. App. 3d 64, 73</u>	The Open Space Element must include an inventory of open space lands important for the preservation of natural resources.	Addressed	Background section includes a detailed inventory of open spaces, including Belmont Slough, Seal Slough, San Francisco Bay shoreline, and the Lagoon, with ecological value highlighted.
<u>Gov. Code §65562(a)</u>	The Open Space Element must establish policies that require open space lands to be conserved wherever possible.	Addressed	Goal POS-6 and related policies prioritize conservation and rewilding of open space areas to maintain ecological value and community benefits.
<u>Gov. Code §65562(b)</u>	The Open Space Element must be coordinated with State, regional, and local open space conservation plans to ensure consistency and effectiveness.	Addressed	The Element emphasizes coordination with OneShoreline, BCD, ABAG, and CDFW for shoreline resilience, ecological restoration, and open space planning.
<u>Gov. Code §§65564, 65566, 65567, 65910</u>	The Open Space Element must include an action program for implementation, including acquisition and disposal of lands, zoning consistency, subdivision and building permit review, and application of open-space zoning.	Addressed	Implementation Programs POS-g, POS-aa, and POS-bb support acquisition studies, funding strategies, and zoning consistency. The Element affirms that open space land use regulations must align with the plan.
<u>Gov. Code §65565.5</u> <u>SB 1425 (2022)</u>	Requires that Open Space Element updates prioritize multi-benefit uses of open space, particularly in underserved communities. Plans must include an action program to improve equitable access, address climate resilience (e.g., flood mitigation, cooling), and incorporate rewilding opportunities.	Addressed	The Parks and Open Space Element incorporates SB 1425 requirements throughout. Goals POS-6 and POS-7 emphasize rewilding, habitat restoration, climate resilience, and multi-benefit open space management. Policies POS-7.1 and POS-7.2 highlight equitable access and climate adaptation. Programs POS-x, POS-y, POS-aa, and POS-bb commit to naturalization pilots, mapping habitat linkages, pursuing funding, and developing a climate-resilient open space web viewer.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FOSTER CITY RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL REPEAL THE 2003 CONSERVATION ELEMENT AND AMEND THE GENERAL PLAN BY ADOPTING THE 2025 CONSERVATION ELEMENT AND FINDING THAT THE ADOPTION OF THE ELEMENT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES 15061(B)(3)

CITY OF FOSTER CITY

WHEREAS, a general plan contains the community vision for future growth, California law also requires each general plan to address the mandated elements listed in Government Code section 65302; and

WHEREAS, the mandatory elements for all jurisdictions are Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety; and

WHEREAS, Foster City's Conservation Element was last adopted in May 2003 and reprinted as a separate element in September 2009; and

WHEREAS, the State Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, LCI (previously known as the Office of Planning and Research or OPR) recommends comprehensively updating a General Plan every 10-15 years to reflect changes in community values, economic conditions, and emerging issues and challenges; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill (SB) 1425 requires that the Open Space Element be updated by January 1, 2026, with expanded requirements including consideration of climate resilience in coordination with the Safety Element; and

WHEREAS, SB 1425 also explicitly focuses on "rewilding opportunities," or creating and preserving open space networks to support biological and recreational uses; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill (AB) 1889 requires the General Plan Conservation Element to consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction on the movement of wildlife and habitat connectivity; and

WHEREAS, AB 1889 requires the Conservation Element, upon the next update of one or more elements on or after January 1, 2028, to, among other things, identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction, identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features, and consider the impacts of development and the barriers caused by development to wildlife, as defined, and habitat connectivity; and

WHEREAS, to ensure compliance with SB 1425 and AB 1889 requirements in a timely manner, the City of Foster City began work on updating the two (2) Elements, including the Parks and Open Space Element, and Conservation Element; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Sections 65352 – 65352.4 require that before a legislative body takes action to adopt or substantially amend a general plan, the planning agency shall refer the proposed action to a number of entities or conduct consultations with California Native American tribes that are on the contact list. The City has referred the Parks and Open Space Element to all California Native American tribes on the contact list provided by the Native American Heritage Commission; and

WHEREAS, no California Native American Tribe has requested consultation; and

WHEREAS, the City conducted extensive community outreach, including one (1) joint workshop, two (2) focus groups, two (2) pop-up events, a dedicated webpage, and one (1) community priorities survey and social media, e-news, emails, and notices; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2025, the City published an administrative draft of the Conservation Element and requested public comment on the draft until September 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, as provided in Government Code Section 65353, the Planning Commission shall hold at least one (1) public hearing before approving a recommendation on the adoption or amendment of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, as provided in Government Code Section 65354, the Planning Commission shall make a written recommendation on the adoption or amendment of a general plan; and

WHEREAS, on September 17, 2025, a public hearing notice was published in the newspaper (Foster City Islander) and posted in three public places pursuant to California Government Code Section 65090 for the Planning Commission public hearing on October 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, on October 2, 2025, the Planning Commission conducted a duly and properly noticed public hearing to take public testimony and consider this Resolution regarding the 2025 Conservation Element, reviewed the Element and all pertinent documents and exhibits, staff report and all attachments, and oral and written public comments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission hereby finds that, based on substantial evidence in the record:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated by reference into this action.
2. The proposed project conforms to the provisions and standards of the General Plan in that the proposed amendments are internally consistent with all other

provisions of the General Plan and do not conflict with any of the previously adopted goals, policies, or programs of the General Plan.

3. The proposed General Plan Amendment complies with, and is required by, applicable State law.
4. The proposed amendments will not be detrimental to the public interest, convenience, and general welfare of the City. The amendments will ensure Foster City's General Plan is consistent with current state law (including AB 1889 requirements on wildlife movement and habitat connectivity). The updated Element establishes the City's vision, goals, policies, and implementation programs for conserving and managing natural resources such as biological habitats, air and water quality, energy, cultural and historic resources, and the urban forest. It also integrates climate resilience by addressing issues such as sea level rise, groundwater rise, and extreme heat.
5. The City, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), has completed analysis, and the 2025 Parks and Open Space Element and 2025 Conservation Element and determined that the Updates are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) based on the "common sense exemption" in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), which applies if it can be seen with certainty that a project will not have the potential to cause a significant effect on the environment. The Updates involve the adoption of policy documents to establish the City's vision, goals, policies, and programs for the provisioning and management of natural and recreational areas within the city, as well as the protection of natural and cultural resources. These policy documents, in and of themselves, do not include any proposed projects or development. The Updates do not propose or approve any physical development and will not result in changes to the physical environment, nor will they result in potential environmental impacts. To the extent that the Updates do identify potential future projects or development, those would be analyzed if and when the City approves those projects in accordance with CEQA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City therefore recommends that the City Council repeal the 2003 Conservation Element and adopt the 2025 Conservation Element as set forth in Exhibit A, incorporated herein by this reference and attached hereto.

PASSED AND ADOPTED as a resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City at the regular meeting held on the 2nd day of October 2025, by the following vote:

AYES, COMMISSIONERS:

NOES, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT, COMMISSIONERS:

ROBERT PEDRO, CHAIR

ATTEST:

SOFIA MANGALAM, SECRETARY

EXHIBIT A

Conservation Element – Final Clean Version

EXHIBIT B

Conservation Element Legislative Consistency Checklist

Conservation Introduction



Foster City, 2025.

Purpose

The Conservation Element fulfills the State’s requirements for a Conservation Element and articulates Foster City’s long-term vision for conserving and managing its natural and cultural resources. Within this, it emphasizes environmental sustainability, community well-being, and climate resilience as central to the City’s management of natural resources.

This Element outlines the city’s environmental setting, highlights unique local resources, and establishes goals, policies, and implementation actions to support their protection, restoration, and sustainable use. It guides stewardship of wildlife movement and connectivity and wildlife habitat, the urban forest, surface and groundwater, and historic, cultural, and tribal resources. It also supports efforts to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with state mandates.

This Element is organized into four primary sections: *Requirements*, *Background*, *Goals and Policies*, and *Implementation Programs*. The *Requirements* section outlines legal requirements for the content of this element. The *Background* section provides existing conditions and key conservation considerations for Foster City. The *Goals and Policies* section defines the City’s goals and policy direction for the conservation of natural resources. The *Implementation Programs* section outlines specific actions the City will take to achieve the vision set by the Goals and Policies.

Clarification of Terminology

The Conservation Element and the Parks and Open Space Element both address land and resource stewardship in Foster City, but each with a distinct purpose and emphasis:



Park: A developed public space designed primarily for recreation and community use. Parks typically include landscaping and features such as play areas, sports courts, athletic fields, picnic facilities, or community centers. They provide opportunities for physical activity, social connection, and access to nature within the built environment.



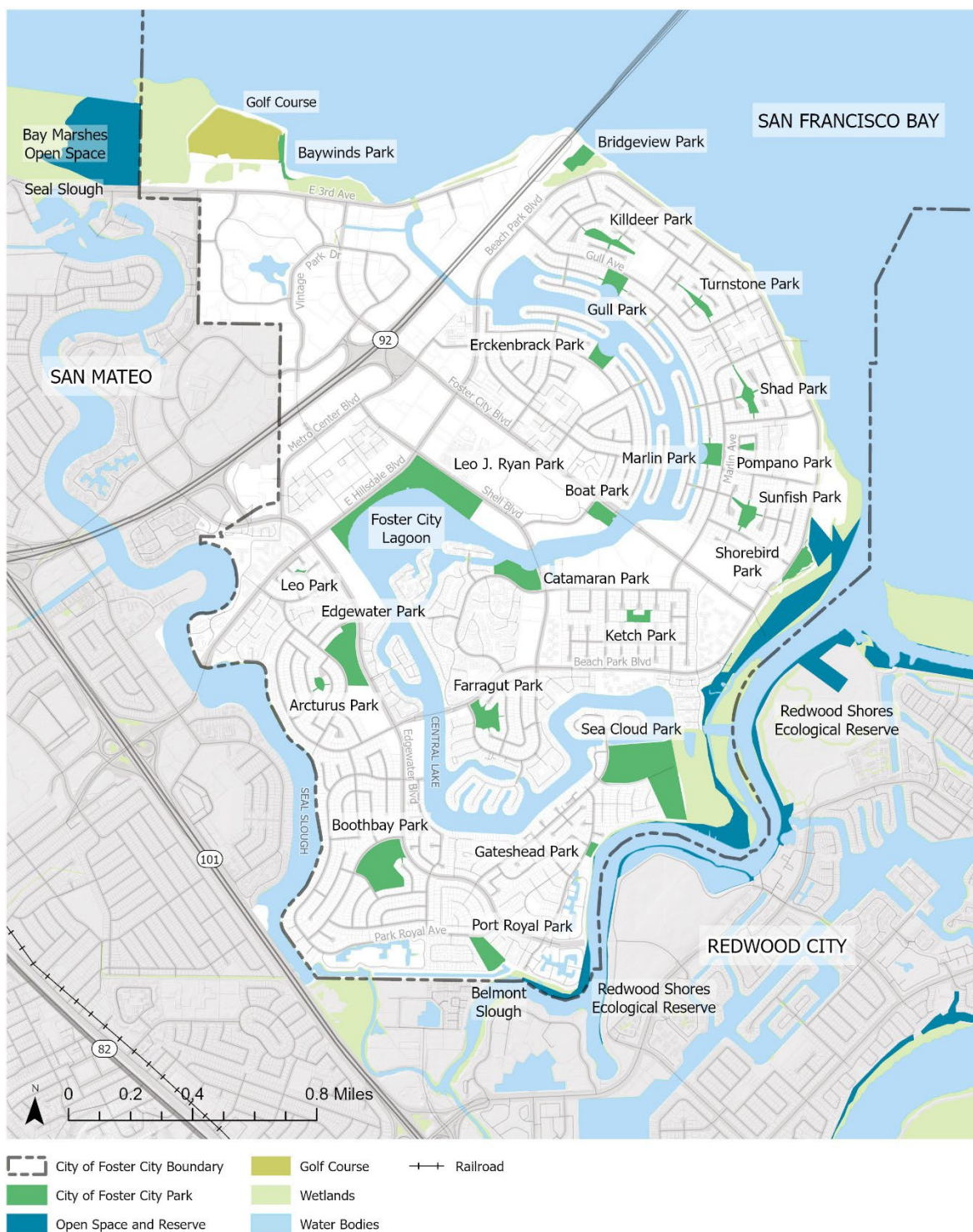
Open Space: Land that remains largely undeveloped, often preserved for its scenic, ecological, or buffering functions. Open space may support passive recreation, such as trails and viewpoints, and also contribute to habitat value, stormwater management, and climate resilience. While not always actively used, open spaces help define the character and environmental function of the city.



Conservation: The active management and protection of natural resources—including water, air, soil, vegetation, habitat, and wildlife—throughout the entire city, across all land types. Conservation is not limited to specific areas; it is a citywide approach applied to parks, open spaces, developed areas, waterways, and infrastructure. It includes efforts to restore habitat, enhance biodiversity, improve ecosystem health, and ensure the sustainable use of environmental resources for future generations.

While these categories differ in focus, they are deeply interconnected. Open space and parks often serve as the physical setting where conservation strategies are implemented. For example, a park may include restored habitat, and an open space corridor may function as both a scenic buffer and a wildlife pathway. Conservation provides the guiding framework that weaves these uses together, ensuring Foster City's green spaces support not only recreation and beauty, but long-term ecological health and resilience.

Figure 1 identifies the parks and open spaces within Foster City. Figure 2 identifies protection responsibilities for each type of park, open space, and conservation area.

Figure 1 Parks and Open Spaces

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

Figure 2 Protected Areas



Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

Legal Requirements

The Conservation Element of the General Plan is guided by State law, regional plans, and local priorities that collectively aim to preserve natural resources, support ecological health, and support the sustainable management of environmental systems. Key statutes and policies include the following:

California Government Code §65302(d) – Conservation Element Requirement

The primary legal foundation for the Conservation Element is Government Code §65302(d), which requires all general plans to include policies addressing the conservation, development, and use of natural resources. These include watersheds, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural systems. The statute emphasizes that policies must reflect local conditions, support long-term resource management, and be coordinated with efforts to protect air and water quality.

California Air Resources Board (CARB) and BAAQMD Guidance

Statewide air quality policy is administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which sets emission standards, regulates fuels and vehicles, and oversees programs aimed to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. At the regional level, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) prepares the Clean Air Plan to reduce pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, with an emphasis on cumulative pollution burdens in disproportionately impacted communities. The Conservation Element supports these goals by promoting land use patterns and infrastructure that reduce vehicle emissions, increase urban greening, and limit exposure to harmful pollutants, particularly near homes, schools, and other sensitive land uses.

Senate Bill 1425 (2022) – Open-Space Element: Updates

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 added Government Code §65565.5 to require that the Open Space Element prioritize the multi-benefit use of green spaces, particularly in historically underserved communities. The law directs jurisdictions to include plans and an action program in any update to address access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice policies in the general plan, address climate resilience strategies such as flood mitigation and cooling, and to address rewilding opportunities. While most of the requirements of SB 1425 are met within the Parks and Open Space Element, many of the topics in this Element are closely related to the those covered within the Conservation Element.

Assembly Bill 1889 (2024) – Conservation Element: Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity

AB 1889 amended Government Code §65302(d), requiring jurisdictions to identify and analyze wildlife connectivity and movement corridors, and consider the impact of development on species movement and ecological resilience. Any impacts and barriers to wildlife movement are then required to be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to the extent feasible. It encourages alignment with State and regional agencies, conservation goals, and efforts in developing wildlife and habitat connectivity strategies.

Regional and Local Planning

In addition to meeting State requirements, the Conservation Element must align with several key regional and local planning efforts that support natural resource protection, habitat restoration, and climate resilience.

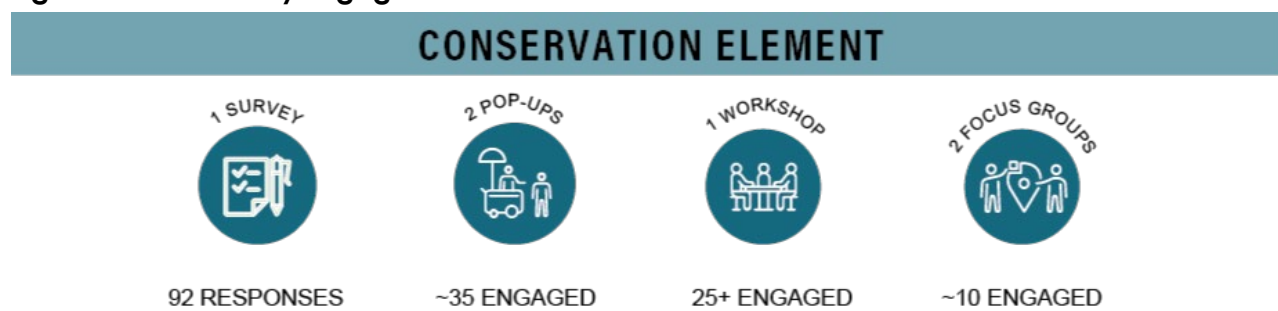
- The **Climate Action Plan (CAP)** establishes strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resilience through energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and sustainable land use.
- The **Lagoon Management Plan** outlines policies for maintaining water quality, controlling aquatic vegetation, and managing wildlife populations within the City's lagoon system. It also provides a framework for public education and monitoring.
- The **Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan** provides strategies for managing Canada goose populations in Foster City's parks and lagoon system to minimize impacts on water quality, vegetation, and recreation.
- The **Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan** outline Foster City's water supply reliability, drought management strategies, and contingency measures for shortages.
- The **Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Basin Plans (Basin Plans)** establish water quality objectives, identify beneficial uses of water bodies (such as habitat or recreation), and include strategies to control pollution and manage watershed health. These Basin Plans are legally enforceable by the RWQCB and guide stormwater discharge permitting and waterway protection at the local level.
- The **San Mateo County Sustainable Streets and Green Infrastructure Plan** provides a framework for integrating green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavements, into street design and public projects. It helps cities meet stormwater permit requirements while improving water quality, habitat, and streetscape aesthetics.
- The **San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program** provides a coordinated framework for cities to reduce stormwater pollution through infrastructure upgrades, public education, and monitoring.
- **OneShoreline**, the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, coordinates regional adaptation efforts related to sea level rise, tidal flooding, and shoreline ecosystem restoration. Its work supports integrated infrastructure projects that reduce flood risk while enhancing natural habitat.
- In compliance with SB 18 (Gov. Code § 65352.3), the City contacted all California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as traditionally and culturally affiliated with the area. No responses requesting consultation were received.

This regional and local framework ensures that the Conservation Element is grounded in practical, science-based strategies that address both ecological function and community well-being.

Background

The process for updating the Conservation Element included a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions; evaluating the city’s natural resources, habitat areas, water and air quality, and energy infrastructure; and identifying opportunities to enhance ecological health and climate resilience. In addition, the analysis evaluated future considerations on sea level rise, groundwater rise, extreme heat, and air quality, and highlighted opportunities to enhance biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and equitable access to green space. As shown in Figure 3, community outreach was conducted in coordination with the Parks Master Plan (discussed further in the Parks and Open Space Element), ensuring that the voices of residents and stakeholders guided the direction of this Element. Together, the assessment and engagement serve as the foundation for the goals and policies of the Conservation Element.

Figure 3 Community Engagement Overview



The public engagement process for the Conservation Element update was designed to gather input on key issues such as species preservation, habitat conservation, and water quality, while ensuring alignment with the ongoing Parks Master Plan update. A key tool in this effort was a dedicated project website that provided ongoing updates and hosted the Community Priorities Survey, which built on the Parks Master Plan survey by focusing on natural resources and conservation topics. This survey gathered valuable feedback from a diverse range of residents, with particular emphasis on underrepresented communities, helping shape policies related to biodiversity, open space access, and environmental equity. Pop-up events were also used to engage the community directly, allowing them to provide input on conservation priorities while also participating in the broader parks-related discussions.

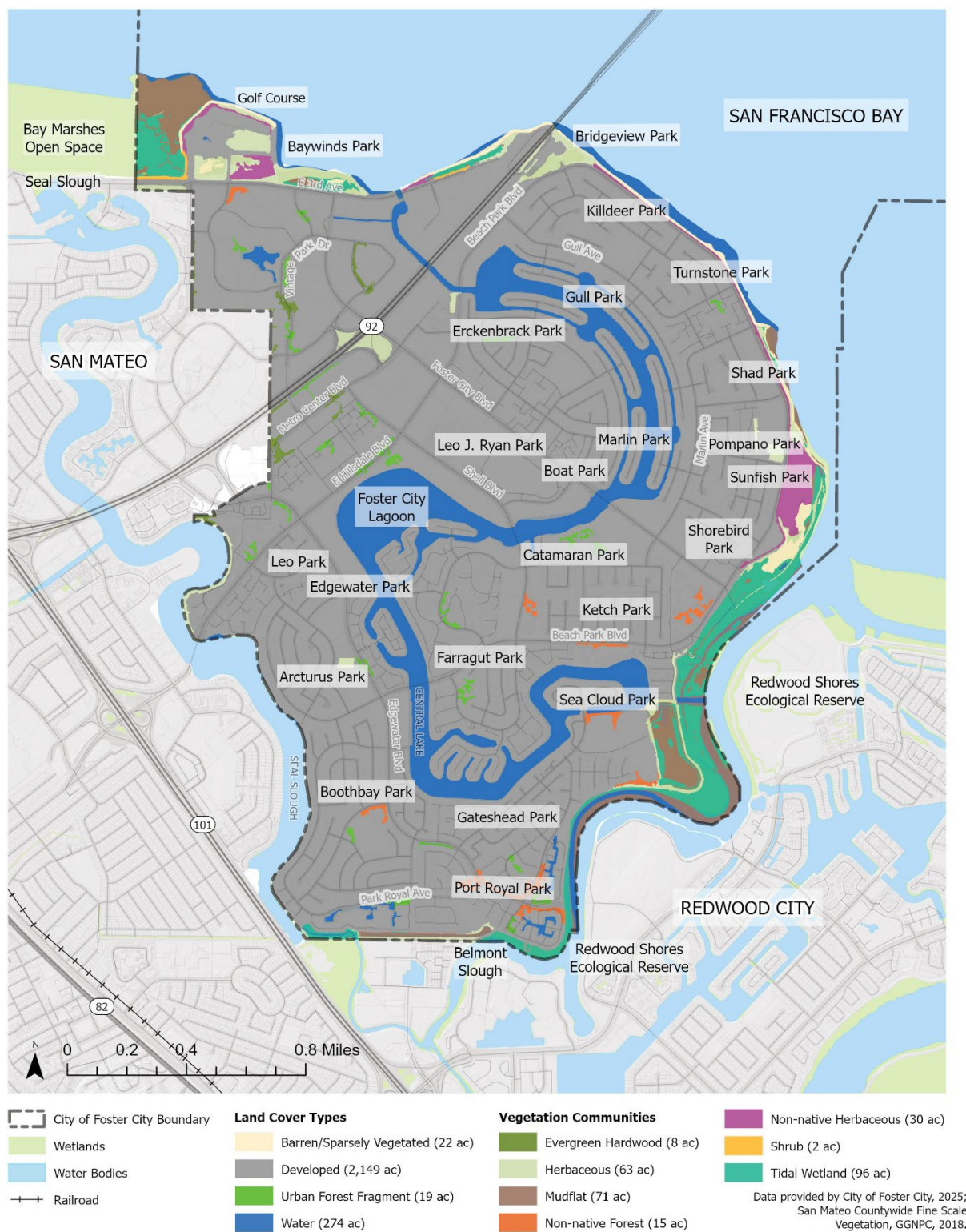
Biological Resources

Despite its highly urbanized setting and origins as reclaimed marshland, Foster City continues to support a mosaic of natural habitats. Key ecological areas include tidal wetlands, mudflats, and the centrally located lagoon system, which together provide important habitat for migratory birds, small mammals, and aquatic species. The San Francisco Bay also borders the city to the north and east and is the largest estuary on the West Coast, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and plant species. It provides critical habitat for migratory birds, fish nurseries, and endangered species such as the Ridgway’s rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. As shown in Figure 4, vegetation mapping has identified several habitat types within the city, including salt marsh, non-native forest, and native herbaceous communities. Notably, 21 special-status animal species and six plant species have been observed or are presumed present,

including the endangered Ridgeway's rail and salt-marsh harvest mouse, both dependent on the city's remaining tidal marshes.

Foster City's biological resources face ongoing challenges from habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and urban runoff. Shoreline habitats are often constrained by levees and adjacent development, limiting their ecological function and the ability of species to migrate or adapt to environmental change. These pressures are compounded by climate-related stressors such as rising sea levels and shifting precipitation patterns.

Within this complex landscape, areas along Belmont Slough, Seal Slough, and underutilized park edges offer potential for habitat restoration and rewilding. These efforts could strengthen native biodiversity, improve habitat connectivity, and help restore key ecosystem services. In addition, Foster City's extensive park system presents a valuable resource for targeted naturalization and improved linkages between natural areas to support wildlife movement and expand urban habitat in meaningful ways.

Figure 4 Vegetation and Land Cover

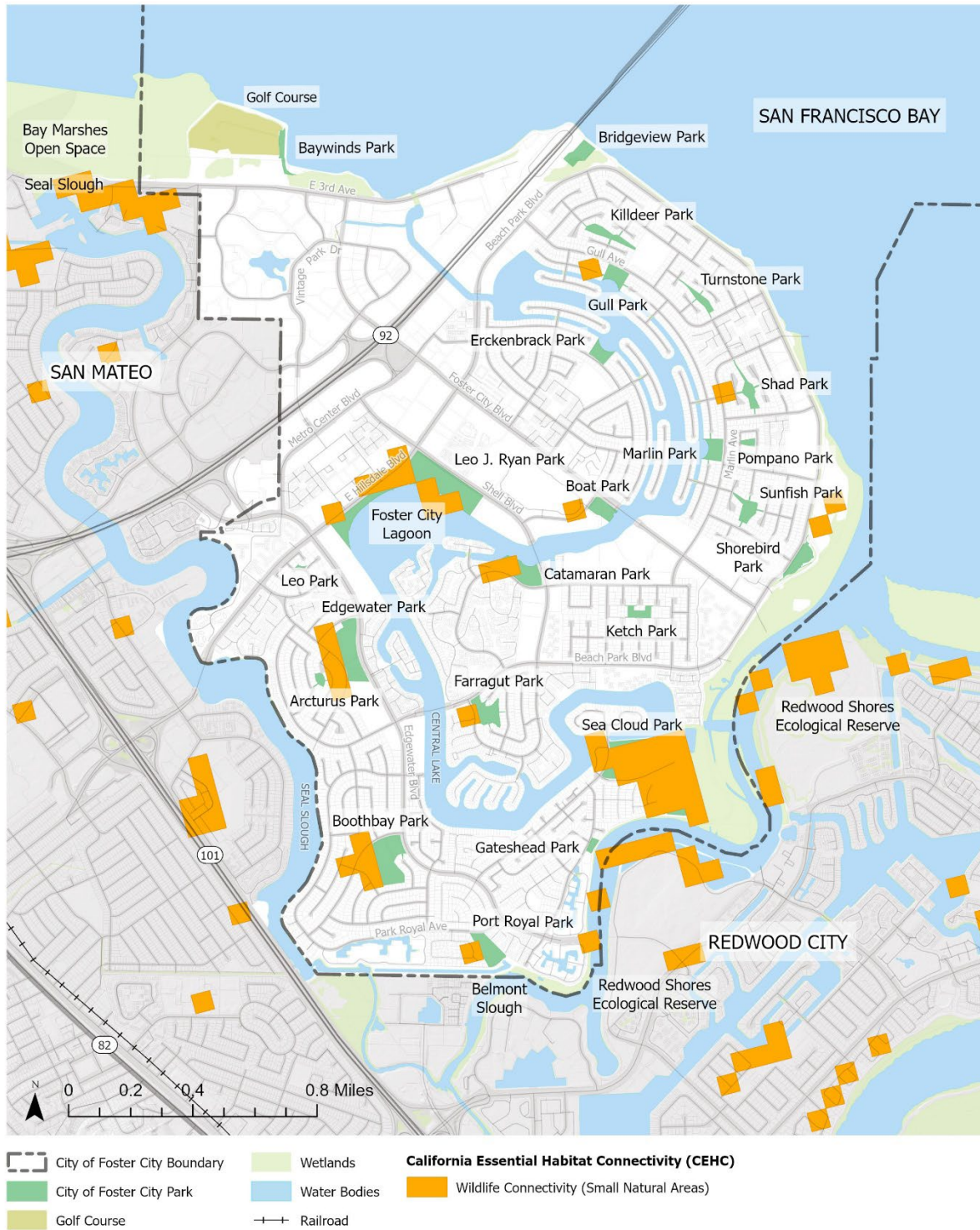
Wildlife Connectivity

Wildlife movement in Foster City is shaped, and often limited, by urban infrastructure such as roads, levees, and dense development. Natural movement corridors are limited, typically confined to narrow greenways, fragmented shoreline edges, and the lagoon system. While the lagoon offers aesthetic and recreational value to residents and visitors as well as some habitat potential, its channelized design, steep edges, and proximity to human activity reduces its habitat value for many species.

Recognizing the importance of habitat connectivity, State law (AB 1889) now requires cities and counties to assess and enhance habitat connectivity for wildlife through their general plans. In Foster City, barriers to wildlife movement include:

- Highway 92, which disrupts north–south continuity
- Urban lighting, which interferes with the behavior of nocturnal species
- Recreational activity, which can fragment habitats and deter sensitive wildlife

As shown in Figure 5, much of Foster City is either urban or suburban, and therefore wildlife corridors and nursery sites are not present in much of the city. Wildlife connectivity areas are fragmented, and green spaces are often landscaped for recreation rather than habitat value, reducing their ecological function. However, with strategic design and targeted improvements, these spaces can support both human and ecological needs. Enhancing shoreline habitats, planting suitable vegetation, and implementing wildlife-friendly infrastructure such as culverts or buffer zones can create pathways for wildlife movement and better contribute to a resilient and biodiverse city.

Figure 5 Wildlife Connectivity Areas

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
Caltrans and CDFG, 2025.

Coastal Resources



Foster City, 2025.

Foster City's shoreline borders the San Francisco Bay and includes estuarine and brackish marshes, particularly near Belmont Slough and the Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve. These areas serve as vital feeding and nesting grounds for numerous bird species, including some species of special concern. The Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve, a protected 268-acre salt marsh, supports sensitive species such as the Alameda song sparrow and Ridgeway's rail and serves as a critical ecological buffer against urban development.

Foster City has made significant investments in engineered flood protection systems, including recent upgrades to its levee system, which play a critical role in safeguarding the community from storm surge and sea level rise. These infrastructure improvements represent an essential layer of protection for residents and assets. At the same time, this flood protection infrastructure can constrain natural ecological processes and limit the inland migration of wetlands, which play a vital role in preserving local ecological integrity by providing habitat for diverse wildlife, serving as temporary resting areas for migrating species, filtering water pollutants, and offering natural flood protection. As climate change accelerates, coastal ecosystems face increasing stress from rising groundwater, saline intrusion, and greater exposure of infrastructure. The continued loss of tidal marshes would reduce habitat availability and diminish the shoreline's natural ability to buffer wave energy and filter pollutants.

Regional planning efforts, such as those led by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and OneShoreline, recognize the importance of complementing traditional infrastructure with natural systems, such as tidal marshes and mudflats, to strengthen shoreline resilience. By restoring degraded habitat and integrating nature-based features into levee design, Foster City can build on its recent investments to ensure long-term ecological and community resilience.

Climate Considerations

Climate change presents significant risks to Foster City's biological resources. Rising temperatures, shifts in precipitation patterns, and sea level rise pose risks to habitat health, food and water availability for

wildlife, while potentially limiting access to necessary wildlife connectivity and migration corridors. Low-lying shoreline habitats face potential inundation in the future, which would result in the loss of critical wetlands, biodiversity corridors, and coastal buffer zones. Urban green spaces, such as parks and vegetated areas along the lagoon and coastline, can serve as important refuges and movement corridors for wildlife. However, they currently offer limited climate resilience opportunities due to sparse tree canopy and fragmented natural areas.

Adapting to climate change requires a multifaceted strategy that includes nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration, permeable surfaces, and urban forestry. These solutions can help preserve biodiversity and support species resilience, as well as other benefits such as mitigating flooding, reducing urban heat, and supporting habitat migration. In addition, the city is exploring a citywide tree canopy study, which, when paired with surface heat mapping and social vulnerability data, could guide future investments in climate-resilient green infrastructure and improve neighborhood-level adaptation strategies.

Water Resources



Foster City, 2025.

Foster City maintains a network of engineered lagoons and canals designed primarily for stormwater management, flood control, and community recreation. These water features also provide secondary habitat for birds and aquatic species and are not used for potable water supply. The city's drinking water is entirely imported via the Estero Municipal Improvement District, supplied by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Hetch Hetchy system. While Foster City does not currently utilize local groundwater for its municipal supply, it remains vulnerable to regional groundwater-level fluctuations driven by climate change. The development of this Element included coordination with EMID, and review of and alignment with applicable water supply, water quality, and groundwater management plans.

Water Quality

Drinking water quality in Foster City is high, with the Estero Municipal Improvement District meeting or exceeding all State and federal standards. Water is treated at regional facilities before distribution and is continuously monitored. However, water quality issues are more pronounced in the city's lagoon system, where elevated bacteria levels, especially enterococci, have led to periodic beach closures. These issues are largely attributed to wildlife waste, stormwater runoff, and overgrown aquatic vegetation.

To address lagoon water quality, the City has adopted a Lagoon Management Plan, emphasizing routine monitoring, vegetation control, and public education. The city also participates in regional programs to prevent stormwater pollution and maintain compliance with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. While efforts are underway, water quality in the lagoon and shoreline areas will remain a concern until planned actions for improving runoff management, enhancing ecological buffers, and managing urban wildlife populations are implemented.

Water Supply

Foster City's water supply is entirely imported through the Hetch Hetchy system, managed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. During normal years, supply is projected to be adequate through 2045. However, in single and multiple dry years, demand is projected to outpace supply, with deficits exceeding 800 million gallons annually by 2045 under drought conditions. In the event of a water shortage, the Estero Municipal Improvement District would implement its Water Shortage Contingency Plan which outlines a suite of water demand reduction measures of varying severity designed to protect health and safety, minimize economic disruption, and preserve environmental and community assets. Nonetheless, the City is vulnerable to regional supply constraints, especially as climate change increases the frequency of dry periods.

Given this dependency, continued participation in regional conservation programs, alternative supply planning, and demand management will be essential. The Estero Municipal Improvement District's Urban Water Management Plan identifies the need for coordinated planning with regional partners and highlights the importance of preparing for worst-case drought scenarios. While recycled water is not currently used, it presents potential opportunities to supplement current and future water supplies and serve as an emergency backup option as climate risks evolve.

Climate Considerations

Climate change poses several risks to Foster City's water infrastructure and management systems. Rising sea levels may compromise the lagoon's drainage function, particularly during high tides or storm events. Higher average temperatures could increase lagoon evaporation and elevate potential for harmful algal blooms. This increased potential is driven by higher concentrations of contaminants and warmer water temperatures that promote algal growth, threatening habitat quality and recreational use. Additionally, altered precipitation patterns are expected to intensify stormwater runoff, potentially degrading lagoon water quality and overwhelming existing infrastructure. Groundwater rise is also projected to threaten buried infrastructure due to rising sea levels, leading to potential seawater intrusion, and contribute to inland flooding. Although the city is not dependent on groundwater as a water source, rising water tables could affect public utilities, natural open spaces, and impact natural and landscaped vegetation.

To proactively address these risks, Foster City can continue to implement targeted adaptation strategies such as strengthening of levees, improved lagoon circulation, shoreline wetland restoration, and

integration of green stormwater infrastructure. Proactive monitoring of groundwater conditions, in collaboration with regional agencies, will be critical for planning for future risks. Ensuring the continued function of the lagoon as both a flood control and ecological system will be essential in the face of climate variability and sea level rise.

Air Quality

Air quality in Foster City is significantly influenced by regional emissions, increasing wildfire smoke frequency due to climate change, and local traffic. The city currently lacks comprehensive, localized air quality monitoring infrastructure to track these impacts accurately and instead relies on nearby stations for data, which may not accurately reflect localized conditions. Indoor air quality trends in public buildings are also not well-documented, leaving gaps in understanding the full scope of exposure.

Emerging challenges for air quality in Foster City include increased wildfire smoke events, rising temperatures, and cumulative pollution from nearby urban centers. High temperatures can increase the formation of ground-level ozone, while inversions can trap pollutants close to the ground, leading to increased concentrations of harmful substances. Low-cost sensor deployment, improved building ventilation systems, and cumulative exposure mapping can better assess air quality risks. Coordinated efforts with Bay Area Air Quality Management District and regional grant programs may support these actions and contribute to healthier environments for vulnerable populations.

Energy Resources

Foster City has implemented a range of initiatives that provide a strong foundation for further opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy resilience through upgrades to its parks, public buildings, and community infrastructure. Existing municipal facilities, including - community centers powered by Peninsula Clean Energy's 100 percent carbon-free electricity program, ECO100, can further reduce electricity use and light pollution through energy efficiency upgrades like LED lighting, motion sensors, timers, and renewable-powered water management systems. In areas where conventional grid connections are costly or impractical, solar-powered lighting offers a low-maintenance, renewable solution. Energy conservation also supports broader climate and sustainability goals, particularly when paired with smart building materials and all-electric systems in future facility upgrades or new construction.

The City is also well-positioned to expand on-site renewable energy and support clean transportation infrastructure. The Foster City Library currently includes roof-mounted solar panels and a recent feasibility study identified other municipal buildings, such as the forthcoming recreation center, as viable sites for photovoltaic (PV) systems. These, along with potential solar canopies over parking lots or maintenance buildings, could be paired with battery storage to improve emergency preparedness and grid reliability. Parks and civic buildings are also key locations for expanding EV charging infrastructure, particularly through public-private partnerships. Education and community engagement will play a central role in cultivating support for these initiatives, using public spaces as platforms for demonstrations, signage, and workshops that promote energy literacy and sustainable living practices.

Engagement Results for Conservation

During the development of the Conservation Element, residents shared priorities and perspectives on the natural resources and conservation strategies for Foster City through pop-up events, focus group discussions, a workshop, and a survey. Key findings from these activities are summarized below.

Community Priorities Survey

A critical component of community input was the Community Priorities Survey conducted in June 2025 via online questionnaire. The Foster City community expressed strong support for enhancing parks, trails, and natural spaces, with a focus on comfort, connectivity, and safety. Amenities such as restrooms, shade, seating, and wildlife viewing platforms were identified as top priorities for improving trail use. The Levee Pedway is frequently used by residents, and there is significant interest in expanding trail and bike lane connections. Conservation emerged as a clear community value, with most respondents rating it as very or extremely important and voicing strong support for rewilding efforts like native habitat restoration and pollinator-friendly landscaping. While enthusiasm for rewilding was high, some concerns were raised about pests, upkeep, and potential changes to recreational spaces.

Survey participants identified key environmental concerns, including sea level rise, storm flooding, water scarcity, and poor air quality. Residents placed a high value on open spaces that offer opportunities to connect with nature, support biodiversity, provide shade, and reduce climate-related risks. The most desired improvements included more walking and biking paths, increased tree cover, and restoring natural areas with native vegetation. There was also strong support for integrating green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and wetlands, and expanding educational features and access for all ages and abilities.

The community supported a wide range of strategies to protect open space and natural resources, including stronger zoning regulations, public-private partnerships, volunteer maintenance programs, and development incentives. Residents expressed a clear desire for the Foster City Lagoon to support both active and passive recreation, along with aesthetic and community uses. In terms of climate communication, respondents wanted more information on local flood risks, sea level rise, and ways to prepare for climate impacts. Overall, the results reflect a community that values nature, recognizes the urgency of climate adaptation, and is eager to engage in shaping a more sustainable and resilient future.

Community Engagement Takeaways

Key themes emerged from the outreach and engagement process:

Support for Rewilding with Thoughtful Design



- There is strong community interest in rewilding efforts that restore native habitats, support pollinators, and enhance the ecological function of parks and open spaces.
- At the same time, many want these naturalized areas to be designed and maintained in ways that remain usable, safe, and visually appealing – balancing ecological goals with everyday recreation and comfort.

- Concerns were raised about the potential to attract nuisance wildlife such as geese, as well as the need for clear upkeep and visibility. The feedback underscores a desire for rewilding that enhances, rather than limits, the public's experience of open space.

Naturalized and Functional Open Spaces



- Community members want parks and open spaces to feel more ecologically rich while remaining comfortable and accessible, with amenities like shade, seating, and natural materials integrated into the landscape.
- There is interest in expanding tree cover and using native vegetation to provide cooling, habitat value, and a more natural aesthetic across the city's open spaces.
- Some suggested that conservation-oriented spaces still need to accommodate daily use, such as keeping restrooms open longer and providing places to rest, so that naturalized areas remain welcoming and inclusive.

Concern for Climate Risks



- Sea level rise, stormwater flooding, water scarcity, and declining air quality were repeatedly raised as major concerns.
- Open space is seen as a critical tool for addressing climate impacts, offering functions like cooling, habitat protection, and stormwater infiltration.
- Community members want more communication from the City about local flood risks, sea level rise adaptation, and practical steps households can take to prepare.

Sustainable Open Space



- There is strong backing for strategies like zoning protections, green infrastructure, and developer incentives that prioritize open space and ecological function.
- Volunteer programs and partnerships with local organizations are viewed as effective ways to support ongoing restoration and stewardship.
- People value the Foster City Lagoon as a space for both active and passive recreation, and want it protected for future generations.

Conservation Goals, Policies and Programs

Biological Resources

Goal C-1 **Natural habitat is protected and restored to support native biodiversity, improve ecological function, and enhance the resilience of open spaces.**

Policy C-1.1 **Wildlife Habitat.** Protect and enhance Foster City's existing habitats, including tidal wetlands, mudflats, and urban forests, to support native biodiversity and ecological health.

Policy C-1.2 **Habitat Protection.** Promote the restoration and naturalization of degraded or underutilized areas, particularly along the shoreline and coastal trails, through native vegetation planning and habitat enhancement.

Policy C-1.3 **Support Biodiversity.** Implement maintenance strategies that prioritize native vegetation and manage detrimental invasive plant and animal species in natural habitat areas. Allow non-native plants only if they support aesthetics or habitat without harming biodiversity. Select vegetation that attracts desirable species and discourages those that pose nuisance or ecological risks.

Goal C-2 **Ecological connections between fragmented habitats are strengthened to facilitate wildlife movement, support species adaptation, and minimize the impacts of urban development on biodiversity.**

Policy C-2.1 **Habitat Connectivity.** Improve connectivity between fragmented parks, shoreline areas, and natural spaces to support wildlife movement through restored corridors and green infrastructure.

Policy C-2.2 **Wildlife Movement Design.** Incorporate wildlife-friendly infrastructure, such as underpasses, vegetated buffers, and light controls into public infrastructure and land use planning.

Policy C-2.3 **Movement Mitigation.** Assess and mitigate barriers to wildlife movement caused by roads, levees, and urban development.

Policy C-2.4 **Connectivity Partnerships.** Coordinate with regional partners, including OneShoreline, to support connectivity and flood resilience through multi-benefit projects.

- Policy C-2.5 **Habitat Improvements.** Identify and prioritize habitat improvements that benefit migratory species, including birds and small mammals, in accordance with AB 1889.
- Goal C-3 Foster City's natural systems are resilient to the impacts of climate change.**
- Policy C-3.1 **Climate Conscious Shoreline Management.** Integrate sea level rise, flooding, and extreme weather considerations into shoreline habitat management and restoration.
- Policy C-3.2 **Nature-Based Solutions.** Implement nature-based solutions, such as wetland buffers and marsh migration zones, to protect both ecological and human systems.
- Policy C-3.3 **Ecological Transitions.** Support conservation strategies account for sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, and climate-driven shifts in habitat type, extent, and species composition.
- Goal C-4 A community-wide ethic of environmental stewardship is fostered by engaging residents, regional partners, and organizations in the protection and enhancement of local natural resources.**
- Policy C-4.1 **Public Awareness.** Increase public awareness of urban wildlife, habitat conservation, and sustainable coexistence through education and outreach.
- Policy C-4.2 **Community Stewardship.** Encourage community participation in habitat restoration, monitoring, and stewardship activities.
- Policy C-4.3 **Conservation Partnerships.** Partner with regional agencies, nonprofits, and academic institutions to advance conservation and resilience objectives.

Water Resources

- Goal C-5 Water resources are efficiently managed to support a sustainable, high-quality water supply for the community while promoting conservation, reducing demands, and protecting water systems from climate change.**
- Policy C-5.1 **Water Quality Risk Prevention.** Address water quality risks associated with climate change, including warming temperatures, increased turbidity, and the potential for algal blooms in the lagoon and stormwater systems.
- Policy C-5.2 **Water Quality Maintenance.** Support ongoing maintenance and timely replacement of aging lagoon, stormwater, and water infrastructure to protect ecological function and recreational use.

Policy C-5.3 **Pollution Reduction.** Improve lagoon circulation and implement pollution control measures to maintain water quality and mitigate contamination from urban runoff and other sources.

Policy C-5.4 **Water Quality Programing.** Expand participation in regional water quality programs, including the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program, to better manage stormwater runoff and protect the San Francisco Bay.

Policy C-5.5 **Water Quality Monitoring.** Incorporate regular monitoring and public reporting of water quality conditions into city operations to support data-driven decision-making and transparency.

Goal C-6 Foster City maintains a secure and sustainable water supply to support current and future community needs.

Policy C-6.1 **Water Reliability.** Collaborate with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to improve long-term water reliability, conservation strategies, and demand forecasting, especially under future drought conditions.

Policy C-6.2 **Supplemental Water Supply.** Encourage the Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) to explore alternative or supplemental water supply options and regularly update reliability assessments in response to climate trends.

Policy C-6.3 **Water Neutrality.** Implement and enforce the 2023 Water Neutrality Ordinance so that new development and redevelopment do not increase overall water demand.

Policy C-6.4 **Water Conservation.** Integrate water conservation, reuse, and efficiency measures into new development, infrastructure upgrades, and public education initiatives.

Air Quality

Goal C-7 Foster City is a healthy and climate-resilient community through reduced air pollution and improved air quality.

Policy C-7.1 **Land Use Alignment.** Align Foster City's land use, transportation, and development decisions with air quality thresholds and best practices established by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and California Air Resources Board (CARB).

Policy C-7.2 **Air Quality Mitigation.** Incorporate air quality mitigation strategies into land use planning by requiring vegetative buffers, enhanced filtration systems, and site design strategies to reduce exposure near major transportation corridors and pollution sources.

- Policy C-7.3 **Complete Streets.** Encourage smart growth and complete streets principles that integrate air quality protection measures, such as shade trees and green infrastructure.
- Policy C-7.4 **VMT Reduction.** Prioritize transportation and mobility improvements that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and emissions, including expansion of pedestrian, bicycle, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure.
- Policy C-7.5 **Regional Air Quality Coordination.** Enhance regional coordination and compliance with BAAQMD programs and participate in local implementation of Spare the Air and other outreach initiatives.
- Goal C-8 Foster City's neighborhoods are healthy, resilient, and equitable, with clean air and access to green spaces for all residents.**
- Policy C-8.1 **Greening Air Improvements.** Expand urban greening strategies that improve air quality and reduce urban heat, including targeted tree canopy expansion and the use of vegetated buffers in high-exposure areas.
- Policy C-8.2 **Tree City.** Pursue Tree City USA designation and adopt a citywide tree ordinance that guides planting, removal, and long-term care of public trees, with a focus on air quality and shade equity.
- Policy C-8.3 **Air Quality Co-Benefits.** Design public parks and open spaces to maximize air quality benefits while supporting climate adaptation and equitable access to green space.
- Policy C-8.4 **Air Quality Engagement.** Promote public awareness and engagement on air quality topics through education programs, signage, and collaboration with regional partners.

Energy Resources

- Goal C-9 Foster City's public facilities and infrastructure operate sustainably with low-energy use and resilient systems that support a clean and climate-ready future.**
- Policy C-9.1 **Improved Energy Efficiency.** Improve energy efficiency in parks, public buildings, and community centers through lighting upgrades, smart controls, and design strategies that reduce both electricity consumption and light pollution.
- Policy C-9.2 **Renewable Energy Expansion.** Expand the use of on-site renewable energy systems, particularly photovoltaic (PV) installations and battery storage, on City-owned facilities where cost-effective.

- Policy C-9.3 **EV Charging.** Support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in public parks, community centers, and City parking lots to enable a transition to clean transportation.
- Policy C-9.4 **Low-Carbon Construction.** Promote all-electric systems and low-carbon construction practices in the design and retrofit of new municipal facilities.
- Policy C-9.5 **Energy Outreach.** Use public spaces, such as parks, libraries, and community centers, as platforms for energy-related education, outreach, and engagement.
- Policy C-9.6 **Energy Efficiency in Green Infrastructure.** Integrate energy efficiency and renewable energy into green infrastructure projects to enhance co-benefits for climate resilience, water conservation, and long-term cost savings.

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-a	Explore opportunities for habitat restoration and naturalization within the existing parks system through the following steps: ▪ Assess and map high-potential sites (e.g., degraded park edges, canal embankments, underutilized shoreline areas); ▪ Integrate habitat strategies into the next Parks Master Plan update or as part of implementation actions; ▪ Develop guidance for incorporating native habitat elements into future park renovations, new park development, and routine maintenance; and ▪ Coordinate with restoration partners, schools, and community groups for implementation and stewardship.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.1, C-1.2, C-1.3
C-b	Seek funding for a long-term maintenance plan for restored and naturalized habitat areas that includes seasonal invasive species removal, native plant reestablishment, irrigation reduction, and trash/debris removal. Consider pilot programs with community stewardship groups to assist with hands-on maintenance and monitoring.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.1, C-1.2
C-c	Design and introduce educational signage at key natural areas (e.g., Belmont Slough, shoreline parks) with clear, engaging content about native ecosystems, local wildlife, and restoration goals. Include multilingual content, maps, and QR codes linking to informational websites. Encourage stewardship behaviors through signage, like staying on trails and avoiding disturbance of wildlife.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Mid-term	C-1.3
C-d	Continue to explore suitable levee-adjacent zones to retrofit with ecotone features that support both flood protection and habitat enhancement. Engage with OneShoreline, regional restoration partners, and permitting agencies to align with long-term sea level rise adaptation planning and pursue funding for design and implementation.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.3

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-e	Explore opportunities to better understand and improve ecological connectivity across the city. This may include studying ecological connectivity and mapping of habitat patches, identifying barriers (e.g., roads, fences, lighting), and evaluating where enhancements could support multi-species movement, especially along Belmont Slough, lagoon edges, and gaps between open spaces. Where feasible, consider coordination with regional experts and agencies to assess general habitat needs and potential improvements over time.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	C-2.1, C-2.2, C-2.3, C-2.5
C-f	Encourage the inclusion of wildlife-supportive features into infrastructure and discretionary development projects where appropriate. These features may include safe road crossings, native vegetative buffers, wildlife-friendly fencing, down-shielded lighting, and mitigation measures for existing barriers.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	C-2.2, C-2.3, C-2.5
C-g	Assess local habitat mitigation opportunities (e.g., offsetting development impacts) and create a grant funding strategy targeting AB 1889, Wildlife Conservation Board, and Proposition 1 programs. Design packaged projects with detailed scopes, cost estimates, and co-benefits to enhance competitiveness for funding.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	C-2.1, C-2.5
C-h	Coordinate with OneShoreline, San Mateo Resource Conservation District, nonprofit organizations, and research institutions on joint grant applications, technical studies, and pilot projects that advance shared conservation goals, consistent with this Conservation Element.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-4.3
C-i	Enhance the City's water quality monitoring program to include indicators influenced by climate change, such as water temperature, turbidity, algal growth, and bacteria levels. Encourage the installation of real-time sensors at key locations in the lagoon system and stormwater outfalls, and use this data to inform water quality advisories, infrastructure upgrades, and restoration planning.	Public Works		Mid-term	C-5.1
C-j	Consider capital improvement project phasing to minimize disruption and align with sea level rise adaptation efforts.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-5.2

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-k	Continue to implement targeted strategies to reduce non-point source pollution, such as installing pet waste stations in parks, increasing street sweeping near outfalls, and adding trash capture devices in key storm drains. Coordinate these efforts with the Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan to reduce the impacts of the goose population on water quality. Seek to pair these efforts with a multilingual public education campaign on pollution prevention, lagoon protection, and green infrastructure.	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Community Development	Ongoing	C-5.3
C-l	Support increased City participation in regional water quality initiatives, such as the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program. Identify City staff to represent Foster City in interagency meetings and explore co-funding or joint implementation of stormwater retrofits.	Public Works	Community Development	Mid-term	C-5.4
C-m	Encourage the Estero Municipal Improvement District to explore use of alternative water sources such as greywater or direct potable reuse to support the city's long-term water reliability and sustainability goals.	Public Works/Community Development		Long-term	C-6.2
C-n	Explore additional opportunities to establish partnerships with local and regional agencies and organizations to develop a public outreach campaign to increase awareness of existing water conservation programs and provide education on water conservation, targeting residents, schools, and businesses.	Public Works	Community Development	Long-term	C-6.4
C-o	Develop a set of planning and design guidelines for locating sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, senior housing) near high-traffic roadways. The guidelines should recommend best practices such as building orientation, MERV-13 or higher HVAC filtration, vegetated screening, and site layout strategies to reduce pollutant exposure. Integrate these standards into development review and environmental review processes where feasible.	Community Development	Public Works	Mid-term	C-7.1, C-7.2
C-p	As part of future maintenance projects, identify opportunities to install vegetative buffers, such as hedgerows, or bioswales between roads and sensitive land uses. Prioritize high-performing vegetation species suited to pollution absorption and local climate when installing new landscaping in these areas.	Public Works	Community Development	Ongoing	C-7.2, C-7.3

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-q	Review and enhance the City's Complete Streets and public realm guidelines to include stormwater planters, permeable paving, and native landscaping as standard components of street design to support air quality, active transportation, and neighborhood cooling, particularly in areas with higher pollution exposure.	Public Works	Community Development	Long-term	C-5.1, C-5.3, C-7.3, C-7.4
C-r	Support ongoing coordination with BAAQMD to help keep the City's plans and policies generally align with regional air quality standards and emission reduction targets. Participate in updates to the Clean Air Plan and pursue grant funding to implement local air quality improvement projects.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Annual	C-7.5
C-s	Conduct a tree inventory and prioritize new plantings near schools and major roads where vegetation can mitigate air quality and urban heat impacts.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Mid-term	C-8.1, C-8.3
C-t	Pursue the development of a tree ordinance that governs planting, maintenance, and removal of City-owned and potentially private trees, including a permit system, replacement ratios, and performance standards. Align ordinance goals with air quality, climate, and equity outcomes.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Short-term	C-8.2
C-u	As part of future updates to the Climate Action Plan, update audits of energy use in existing municipal buildings to evaluate efficacy of energy conservation measures. Implement upgrades such as LED lighting, motion sensors, timers, and smart ventilation and irrigation systems in buildings, restrooms, pathways, and sports facilities.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Mid-term	C-9.1, C-9.6
C-v	Advance photovoltaic installations at City-owned buildings and parking lots based on the recent feasibility study, beginning with priority sites like the Library/Community Center and planned Recreation Center. Explore solar canopies over large, paved areas and pair installations with battery storage for emergency backup and energy cost optimization.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Long-term	C-9.2, C-9.6
C-w	Identify opportunities to install EV charging stations at high-traffic public facilities such as community centers, parks, and libraries that are accessible to all residents.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Long-term	C-9.3
¹ Timeframes are categorized as short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years). Programs that are on an ongoing or annual basis are identified as such.					

EXHIBIT B

Conservation Element Legislative Consistency Checklist

Gov. Code, §§ 65302(d)(1), 65352.5	The Conservation Element must plan for the conservation, sustainable development, and utilization of water resources, including their hydraulic force and role in ecological systems.	Addressed	The Element discusses Foster City's lagoon and stormwater systems, regional water supply (Hetch Hetchy via EMID), groundwater vulnerability, and flood control levees. Goals C-5 and C-6, and programs C-i through C-n, specifically address water quality, water supply reliability, conservation, and hydraulic risks.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(3)	The Conservation Element must provide strategies to conserve and accommodate floodwaters, including watershed management, stormwater retention, and groundwater recharge.	Addressed	The Element identifies the lagoon and bay as floodwater accommodation for the city. Goals C-3 and C-5 highlight sea level rise, flood risk adaptation, and stormwater infrastructure planning (Programs C-d, C-j, C-q).
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must conserve forest resources and manage them for sustainability, including coordination with wildfire risk reduction and carbon sequestration goals.	Addressed	While Foster City does not have traditional forests, the Element treats its urban forest as a conservation resource. Policies C-1.1, C-1.2, and Goal C-8 (Tree City ordinance, tree canopy expansion) emphasize ecological and air quality functions of tree cover.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must promote the responsible use and conservation of soils, addressing agricultural productivity, erosion control, and protection of prime farmland.	Addressed	The Element addresses erosion indirectly via shoreline stabilization, wetland restoration, and ecotone design (Goal C-3, Program C-d). While Foster City is highly urbanized, soil stability and shoreline resilience are considered under climate and flood planning.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must conserve and protect rivers, streams, wetlands, and other waters by addressing watershed protection, water quality, and ecological function.	Addressed	Covers lagoon system, Belmont and Seal Slough, and San Francisco Bay shoreline. Policies C-5.3–C-5.5 and Programs C-i through C-l address water quality, stormwater pollution reduction, and habitat functions of these waters.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must provide for the conservation and planned use of harbors and associated coastal resources to support commerce, recreation, and environmental quality.	Not Applicable	Foster City does not contain harbors; only lagoons and shoreline recreation.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must support the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries, including aquatic habitat protection and long-term viability of fish populations.	Not Applicable	Foster City does not have commercial fisheries.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must conserve wildlife and their habitats, ensuring biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and protection of sensitive species.	Addressed	Extensive coverage in narrative, as well as Goals C-1 and C-2, Policies C-1.1–C-2.5, and Programs C-a–C-g, which emphasize habitat protection, restoration, biodiversity, wildlife movement, and AB 1889 compliance.

Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must inventory, protect, and manage mineral resources, including guiding extraction and reclamation consistent with State mapping and conservation policies.	Not Applicable	No mineral resources identified in Foster City.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(1)	The Conservation Element must consider and provide policies for the conservation of other locally significant natural resources, such as geothermal, scenic, or unique ecological features.	Addressed	Energy, air quality, and cultural/tribal resources are included. Policies C-7.1 through C-9.6 address air, energy, and climate resilience.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Reclamation of land and waters (optional)	Addressed	The Element acknowledges Foster City's history of reclaimed marshland and emphasizes ongoing shoreline restoration and rewilding strategies (Background: Biological Resources; Policies C-1.2, C-3.2; Program C-a).
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Pollution of streams and other waters (optional)	Addressed	The Element includes lagoon water quality challenges, stormwater management, and regional compliance. Policies C-5.3–C-5.5 and Programs C-k, C-l directly address water pollution prevention.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Land use in stream channels and other areas (optional)	Addressed	Policies C-2.1, C-2.2, and Program C-o incorporate land use and infrastructure planning near waterways, balancing ecological and recreational functions.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Erosion (optional)	Addressed	The Element discusses shoreline erosion and wetland migration constraints. Programs C-d (levee ecotone retrofits) and C-j (phasing infrastructure to reduce impacts) address erosion.
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Protection of watersheds (optional)	Addressed	Watershed protection measures appear in coordination with RWQCB, stormwater pollution prevention, and green infrastructure planning (Policies C-5.4, C-5.5; Programs C-l, C-q).
Gov. Code, § 65302(d)(2)	Rock, sand, and gravel resources (optional)	Not Applicable	No local deposits identified.
AB 1889 (2024) – Gov. Code §65302(d), §65302(e)	Requires updates to the conservation element of the general plan to address wildlife movement and habitat connectivity. This includes identifying and analyzing connectivity areas and existing or planned wildlife passage features, as well as implementing measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate barriers to wildlife movement.	Addressed	Fully integrated – Background includes wildlife connectivity mapping; Goals C-2 and Policies C-2.1–C-2.5 specifically align with AB 1889. Programs C-e through C-g commit to mapping corridors, incorporating wildlife-friendly design, and pursuing funding

Parks and Open Space Introduction



Boardwalk along the Foster City Lagoon near Leo J. Ryan Park, a central open space known for its scenic waterfront and community gathering areas Foster City, 2025.

Purpose

The Parks and Open Space Element fulfills the State's requirements for an Open Space Element while also establishing Foster City's vision for how its natural and recreational areas, including parks, natural open space, facilities, and recreation programs, are developed, maintained, and enriched.

The Parks and Open Space Element leverages the city's parks and open space areas as a vital framework for community well-being and natural stewardship. It guides the use of parks and open spaces for recreation, social connection, and enrichment, and plays a role in building resilience to natural hazards such as flooding and extreme heat. By weaving these aspects together, the City can enhance livability for all residents and foster deeper relationships with Foster City's natural environment.

This Element is organized into four primary sections: *Requirements*, *Background*, *Goals and Policies*, and *Implementation Programs*. The *Requirements* section outlines legal requirements for this element. The *Background* section provides existing conditions and key trends related to parks, open space, and recreation. The *Goals and Policies* section defines the City's goals and policy direction for parks, open space, and recreation. The *Implementation Programs* section outlines specific actions the City will take to achieve the vision set by the Goals and Policies.

Clarification of Terminology

The Conservation Element and the Parks and Open Space Element both address land and resource stewardship in Foster City, but each with a distinct purpose and emphasis:



Park: A developed public space designed primarily for recreation and community use. Parks typically include landscaping and features such as play areas, sports courts, athletic fields, picnic facilities, or community centers. They provide opportunities for physical activity, social connection, and access to nature within the built environment.



Open Space: Land that remains largely undeveloped, often preserved for its scenic, ecological, or buffering functions. Open space may support passive recreation, such as trails and viewpoints, and also contribute to habitat value, stormwater management, and climate resilience. While not always actively used, open spaces help define the character and environmental function of the city.



Conservation: The active management and protection of natural resources—including water, air, soil, vegetation, habitat, and wildlife—throughout the entire city, across all land types. Conservation is not limited to specific areas; it is a citywide approach applied to parks, open spaces, developed areas, waterways, and infrastructure. It includes efforts to restore habitat, enhance biodiversity, improve ecosystem health, and ensure the sustainable use of environmental resources for future generations.

While these categories differ in focus, they are deeply interconnected. Open space and parks often serve as the physical setting where conservation strategies are implemented. For example, a park may include restored habitat, and an open space corridor may function as both a scenic buffer and a wildlife pathway. Conservation provides the guiding framework that weaves these uses together, ensuring Foster City's green spaces support not only recreation and beauty, but long-term ecological health and resilience.

Legal Requirements

The Parks and Open Space Element of the General Plan is guided by state law, regional plans, and local priorities that collectively aim to preserve natural resources, promote ecological health, and support the sustainable management of environmental systems. Key statutes and policies include the following:

California Government Code §65302(e) – Open Space Element Requirements

California Government Code §65302(e) requires all general plans to include an Open Space Element that addresses the long-term preservation of open space lands. This includes open space for natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, hazard mitigation (such as flood and fire zones), and the production of resources like agriculture. Additional considerations include open space that supports military readiness or protects tribal resources.

Quimby Act

Government Code §66477, known as the Quimby Act, allows cities and counties to require residential subdivisions to dedicate land or pay in-lieu fees for park and recreational purposes. These dedications or fees are then used to fund new park and open space development in consideration of population growth necessitating additional public open spaces.

Public Park Preservation Act

The Public Park Preservation Act (§5400–§5409) restricts the sale, lease, or disposal of public parkland unless a replacement of equivalent size and function is provided. This protects publicly accessible parks from being converted to non-recreational uses without due process and community benefit.

Senate Bill 1425 (2022) – Open-Space Element: Updates

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 added Government Code §65565.5 to require that the Open Space Element prioritize the multi-benefit use of open spaces, particularly in historically underserved communities. The law directs jurisdictions to include plans and an action program in any update to address access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice policies in the general plan, address climate resilience strategies such as flood mitigation and cooling, and to address rewilding opportunities.

Assembly Bill 1889 (2024) – Conservation Element: Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity

AB 1889 amended Government Code §65302(d), requiring jurisdictions to identify and analyze wildlife connectivity and movement corridors, and consider the impact of development on species movement and ecological resilience. Any impacts and barriers to wildlife movement are then required to be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to the extent feasible. It encourages alignment with State and regional agencies, conservation goals, and efforts in developing wildlife and habitat connectivity strategies.

Regional and Local Planning

In addition to meeting State requirements, the Parks and Open Space Element must be aligned with regional priorities and local planning efforts. On the regional scale, open space planning is often coordinated through countywide or multi-jurisdictional strategies. For Foster City, relevant partners include OneShoreline, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), each of which plays a role in guiding land use and resource conservation within the San Francisco Bay Area. These agencies provide policy guidance and mapping resources that help local governments identify priority areas for natural infrastructure, shoreline buffers, habitat corridors, and sea level rise adaptation.

At the local level, the Parks and Open Space Element provides the overarching vision implemented by Foster City's Parks Master Plan and Capital Improvement Program. These documents identify specific opportunities for acquiring, improving, and maintaining parks and recreational spaces in alignment with the vision of the Parks and Open Space Element. The Element also integrates the City's broader environmental goals, such as climate resilience, stormwater management, and habitat restoration by incorporating nature-based solutions and equitable access principles into the design and stewardship of

open spaces. The alignment between regional frameworks and local initiatives ensures that Foster City's open space planning supports both community priorities and broader environmental sustainability goals.

Several local and regional plans and programs provide additional guidance and are referenced throughout this Element. Brief descriptions are provided below to give context when these plans are mentioned.

- The **Parks Master Plan** was developed concurrently with this Element, the Parks Master Plan provides a detailed systemwide analysis of park conditions, recreational needs, and community priorities. It includes site-specific recommendations, amenity standards, and an implementation strategy to guide future investments.
- The City's **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)** identifies, prioritizes, and funds infrastructure projects, including park and open space improvements.
- The **Lagoon Management Plan** provides policies and actions for long-term stewardship of the City's lagoon system, including water quality monitoring, vegetation control, and public education. The Plan also addresses ecological concerns such as runoff, algal blooms, and wildlife impacts, ensuring the lagoon remains a safe, healthy, and enjoyable resource for recreation and habitat.
- The **Integrated Canada Goose Population Management Plan** establishes strategies for managing Canada goose populations in Foster City's parks and lagoon system to minimize impacts on water quality, vegetation, and recreational use. This plan complements the Lagoon Management Plan by addressing a major source of non-point pollution and nuisance conditions.
- The **Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan (2026)** will guide the creation of a connected network of trails and bikeways that link parks, open spaces, neighborhoods, and the Levee Pedway. The Plan will aim to support active transportation, recreation, and access to natural areas.

Relationship to the Foster City Parks Master Plan

The update to the Parks and Open Space Element was developed concurrently with the 2025 Parks Master Plan. These two documents are closely linked; the Parks and Open Space Element establishes a citywide vision and high-level framework to guide the planning, development, and stewardship of Foster City's parks, recreational facilities, and open space resources. As shown in Figure 1, the Parks Master Plan builds on this foundation with a more detailed assessment of community needs and priorities. The Parks Master Plan includes specific recommendations and an implementation strategy to help realize the City's long-term vision and ensure that parks and open spaces continue to support both ecological functions and community well-being.

Because these efforts were conducted in parallel, much of the detailed community engagement and needs assessment from the Parks Master Plan has been integrated into this Element, further strengthening its vision and policy framework for the future of parks and open space in Foster City.

Figure 1 Relationship Between the Parks and Open Space Element and the Parks Master Plan

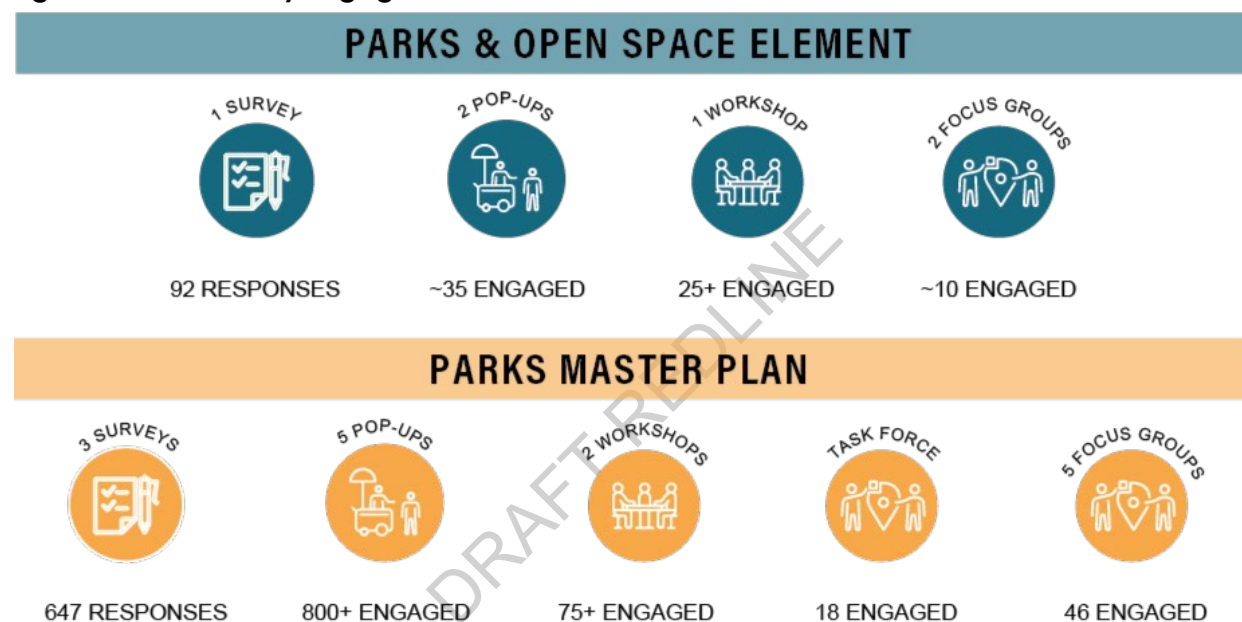


DRAFT REDLINE

Background

The update process for the Parks and Open Space Element included a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions, featuring both a systemwide analysis that covered level of service, access, connectivity, usage, and amenities, as well as detailed evaluations of individual park sites. As shown in Figure 2, extensive community outreach was conducted in coordination with the Parks Master Plan, ensuring that the voices of residents and stakeholders guided the direction of both the Parks Master Plan and this Element. Together, the assessment and engagement serve as the foundation for the goals and policies of the Parks and Open Space Element.

Figure 2 Community Engagement Overview



**Note: The Parks & Open Space Workshop was held in conjunction with the Park Master Plan's second workshop. Parks and Open Space Focus Groups will be conducted in August of 2025, and number engaged subsequently added.*

Parks and Open Space System

Parks

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 3, Foster City has approximately ~~133~~ 113 acres of publicly accessible parks ~~and open spaces~~ that shape the city's recreational and ecological landscape. Many of these spaces are notable for features such as well-maintained landscaping, lagoon and bayfront views, shaded picnic areas, and family-friendly playgrounds that encourage regular use. The city is anchored by four large community parks, Leo J. Ryan Park, Sea Cloud Park, Boothbay Park, and Edgewater Park, which offer a wide range of amenities such as sports fields and courts, playgrounds, and group picnic areas that attract diverse users from across the community. Leo J. Ryan Park serves as a hub for major community events and is the site of Foster City's new community center. The center will offer flexible spaces and upgraded amenities to better serve residents' needs.

In addition to community parks, Foster City is home to a network of smaller neighborhood and mini parks nestled within residential areas. These parks provide everyday recreational opportunities and are designed to meet the specific needs of nearby residents. The city also includes three special-use parks dedicated to unique recreational activities such as windsurfing and dog play.



Foster City's park system includes large community parks like Sea Cloud Park (left), popular neighborhood parks like Catamaran (middle) and mini parks that serve local needs, like Ketch Park (right).

Open Space

Foster City contains a diverse range of open spaces that enhance environmental quality and provide recreational and ecological value. In addition to the 24 parks, the city includes approximately 22 acres of publicly accessible open space along trails and 41 acres of open space with restricted access, much of which consists of sensitive habitat along the levee system and protected by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Public access is generally discouraged as these areas consist of sensitive habitat along the levee pedway. The shorelines along the Belmont Slough are protected as a part of the Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve. The CDFW oversees the ecological health and wildlife protection in the area. Natural areas like the Belmont Slough offer scenic trails and habitat for wildlife, and the city features the Foster City Lagoon, described further below. The lagoon primarily supports drainage and water-based recreation, and has some ecological value.

Water Bodies

The Foster City Lagoon is a major recreational ~~and ecological~~ feature and is central to the community's identity. The Lagoon covers approximately 218 acres, holding approximately 1,300 acre-feet of water, and winds through several neighborhoods in Foster City, fronting many of the City's parks and open spaces. Residents engage in water-based recreational activities such as kayaking, paddling, and boating, and the Lagoon is central to many Foster City community events. Water testing in the lagoon has detected avian DNA, and while the lagoon supports a large Canada Geese population, the results cannot be traced specifically to geese or to any single location. Nevertheless, the presence of Canada Geese contributes to ongoing challenges with cleanliness and maintenance. Outside of designated beach areas, water quality is generally similar to bay water. Poor water quality and an abundant Canadian Geese population has created maintenance and operations challenges for the City and has discouraged recreational use of the Lagoon.

Just as important, the San Francisco Bay creates an enhanced experience for people using the Levee Pedway and Bay-adjacent parks such as Baywinds, Gateshead, Shorebird, and Bridgeview. The San Francisco Bay is the largest estuary on the West Coast, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and plant species. It provides critical habitat for migratory birds, fish nurseries, and endangered species such as

the Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. The Bay also offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including kayaking, sailing, birdwatching, and waterfront trails, making it a vital natural and cultural resource that connects communities to the region's environmental heritage while promoting outdoor access and stewardship.



The Foster City Lagoon (left and middle) and the San Francisco Bay are important recreational assets in the community.

Trails

Wrapping around the perimeter of Foster City's waterfront edge is the Levee Pedway. This multi-use pathway is a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail, and serves as a recreational asset for people walking, jogging, and biking. The trail runs past several parks and open spaces while also providing a continuous path without requiring on-street travel. In addition to the Levee Pedway, neighborhood trails provide local connections throughout Foster City. The Levee Pedway and other trails in Foster City are managed by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, which oversees maintenance and improvements to ensure support safe, accessible routes for walking, biking, and recreation.

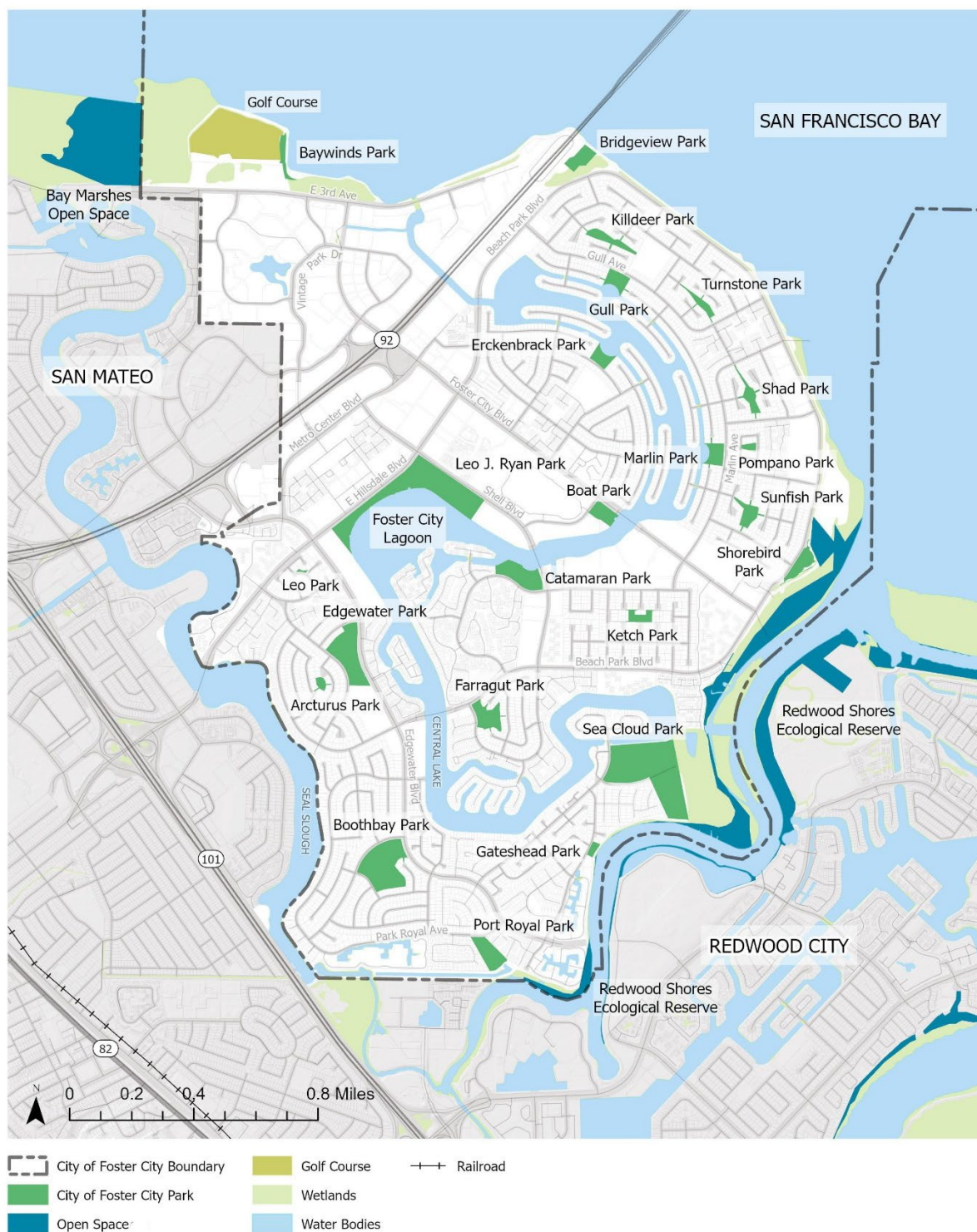


The Levee Pedway (left and middle) is a heavily-used regional route that is supported by the City's local neighborhood trails (right, source: Google Streetview).

Table 1 Parks and Open Space Inventory

Park	Number	Acres	Major Amenities
Community Parks	4	64.7	
Boothbay		11.2	Playground, Ballfield, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Courts, Volleyball Court, Restroom, Picnic Shelter, BBQ
Edgewater		8.5	Playground, Ballfield, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Courts, Restroom, Picnic Shelter
Leo J. Ryan		20.7	Basketball Court, Pickleball Courts, Bocce Ball Courts, Tennis Courts, Beach, Boat Launch, Parking Lot

Park	Number	Acres	Major Amenities
Sea Cloud		24	Playground, Ballfields, Soccer/Multipurpose Fields, Restroom, Picnic Shelter
Neighborhood Parks	10	4.9 33.7	
Catamaran		5.9	Playground, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Tennis Court, Volleyball Courts, Restroom
Erckenbrack		3.5	Playground, Restroom, Beach
Farragut		3.9	Playground, Restroom
Gull		3.1	Playground, Restroom, <u>Beach</u>
Kildeer		2.4	Playground
Marlin		3.1	Playground, Restroom, <u>Beach</u>
Port Royal		4.0	Playground, Basketball Court, Soccer/Multipurpose Field, Restroom, Parking Lot
Pilgrim Triton*	-	1.2	Playground, Picnic Area
Shad		2.1	Playground, Basketball Court, Restroom
Shorebird		3.5	Restroom
Sunfish		2.4	Playground, Basketball Court, 7
Mini Parks	6 8	5.7 7.5	
Arcturus		0.75 0.8	Playground
Gateshead		0.1 0.7	None
Ketch		1.6	Playground, Basketball Court
Leo		0.015 0.1	None
Pompano		0.5	None
Turnstone		1.5	Playground, Basketball Court, 7
Town Center Park*		1.1	None
Pilgrim Triton*	-	1.2	Playground, Picnic Area
Special Use Parks	3	7.7	
Bridgeview		3.2	Restroom, Parking Lot
Baywinds		1.3	Restroom, Shower, BBQ
Boat/Dog		3.2	Restroom, Boat Launch, Dog Park, Parking Lot
Subtotal, Parks	22 25	2.2 113.6	
Open Space		63	
Publicly Accessible Open Space		22	
Restricted Access Open Space		41	
Lagoon		218	
*Pilgrim Triton and Town Center Park are private parks, but are publicly accessible.			
Source: City of Foster City 2025.			

Figure 3 Foster City Parks & Open Spaces

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2023.

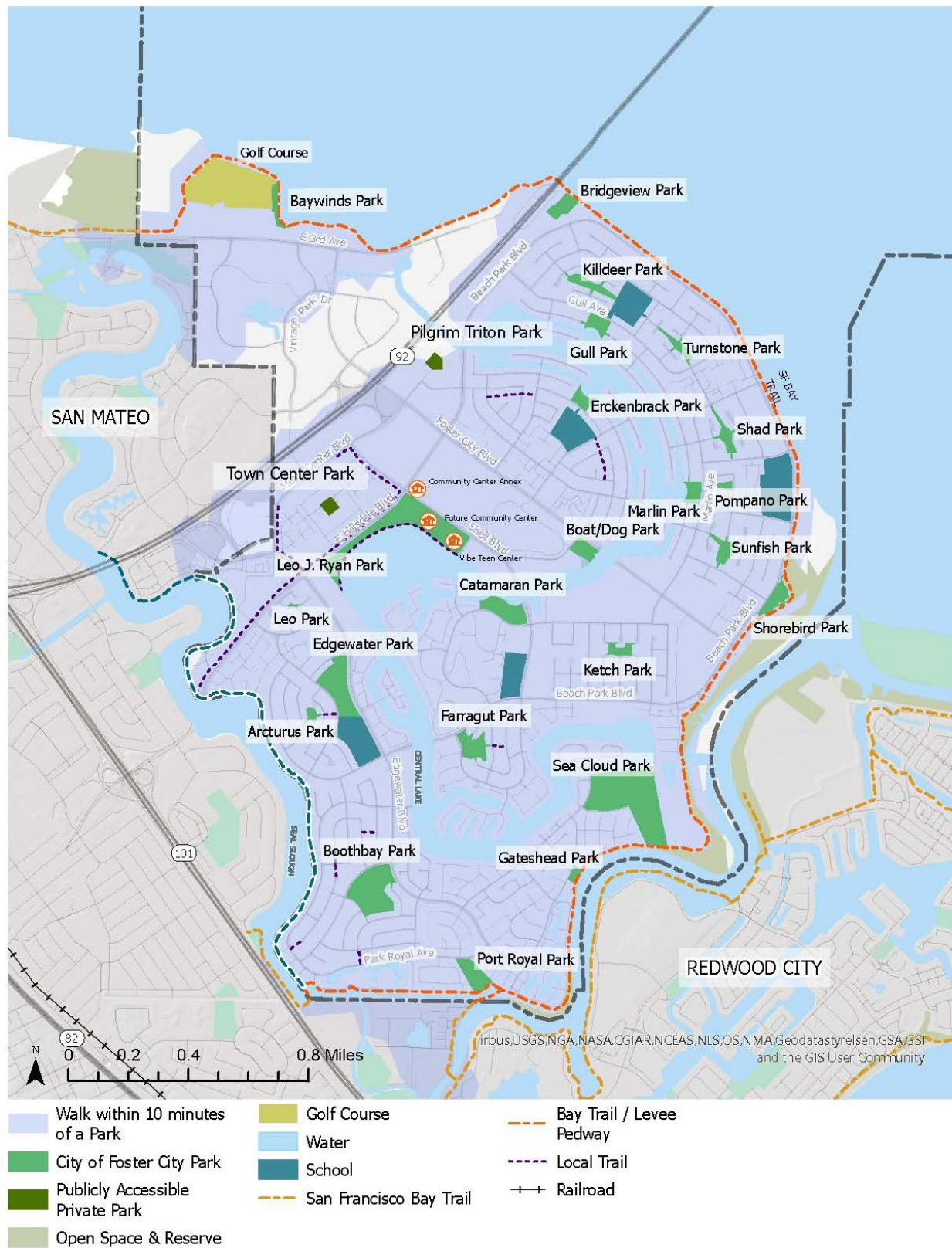
Source: City of Foster City, County of San Mateo Open Data portal, 2024.

Park Access

As shown in Figure 4, all of Foster City's residential neighborhoods are within a 10-minute walk of a park, an aspirational standard that many cities struggle to achieve. While there are portions of the City that are beyond a 10-minute walk from a park, these are primarily employment areas.

Demographic patterns offer insight into how park access and recreational resources can best serve the community. In central Foster City, particularly along the Foster City Boulevard corridor, a larger population of older adults (65 and over) presents an opportunity to enhance amenities and programs that support seniors. Youth, by contrast, are more evenly spread throughout the city, although central neighborhoods overall tend to have the highest population density. Park access is generally well-distributed across all racial and income groups. While Foster City's population is predominantly Asian and/or White, there are no distinct clusters of culturally specific communities that would require targeted outreach or specialized facilities.

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Figure 4 Foster City Park Walksheds

Park Acreage

Park acreage level of service (LOS) measures the availability of parks and recreational facilities relative to a community's population, helping ensure promote equitable access and adequate resources. As shown in Table 2, Foster City currently offers 3.2 acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents, which is somewhat higher than the average of similar local communities. Given Foster City residents' strong park access and general satisfaction with the overall amount of parkland, the Parks and Open Space Element recommends establishing the current ratio of 3.2 acres per 1,000 residents as a standard. Based on projected population growth, meeting this standard would require an additional 12.9 acres of parkland by 2040. The Parks and Open Space Element recommends maintaining the existing developed parkland acreage of 113.6 acres. The City could explore adding additional parkland by exploring conversion of Sea Cloud II site, as discussed in detail below (see *Opportunity Sites*). It shall be noted that the LOS in 2040 with additional growth and without additional parkland would be 2.9.

As Foster City grows, the Parks and Open Space Element also recommends establishing an appropriate LOS balances future housing and community preference.

Table 2 Park Acreage Level of Service

	City Acres	Publicly Accessible Private Acres	Total Acres	Current Level of Service (LOS) (acres/1000 residents)	Local Average LOS ¹ (acres/1000 residents)
Parks	110.6	2.3	112.9 113.6	3.2	2.8
Open Space	22.0	0	22.0	0.6	NA
Grand Total	132.6	2.3	134.9 135.6	3.8	NA

1. Average level of service for comparable Bay Area communities (Belmont, Burlingame, Menlo Park, Millbrae, San Bruno, San Carlos, San Mateo, South San Francisco). Source: Parks Master Plan Benchmark Analysis.
Source: WRT and City of Foster City, 2024.

Recreation Amenities

Table 3 summarizes the inventory of recreation amenities in Foster City's parks, indicates existing level of service for these amenities, and establishes recreation amenity standards based on local and national trends, as well as Foster City's unique needs. Foster City provides a high level of service for most major recreational amenities, particularly multi-use fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playgrounds. By 2040, additional amenities needed to meet projected demand include at least four pickleball courts, one volleyball court, and four reservable picnic shelters. This analysis focuses on traditional park amenities commonly tracked by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). However, it does not capture other important community needs, such as trails, shade trees, walking paths within parks, community gardens, and more, which were highlighted through community engagement (see *Engagement Results for Parks & Open Space*).

Table 3 Park Recreation Amenity Level of Service

Amenity	Inventory	Current LOS (pop. per amenity)	Local Average LOS 1 (pop. per amenity)	National Average LOS (pop. per amenity) 2	Priority Investment Rating (PIR) ³	LOS Standard (pop. per amenity)	2040 Additional Amenities Needed
Diamond Field	10	3,500	4,878	3,007	Low	4,000	0
Soccer Multipurpose Field	12	2,917	8,212	3,333	Low	4,000	0
Basketball Court	8	4,376	7,294	7,501	Low	7,000	0
Tennis Court	13	2,693	6,151	5,461	Medium	4,000	0
Pickleball Court	6	5,834	9,124	7,737	Medium	4,000	4
Bocce Ball Court	4	8,751	N/A	N/A	Low	9,000	0
Volleyball Court	2	17,502	N/A	14,280	Medium	15,000	1
Dog Park	1	35,004	31,087	27,508	Medium	30,000	0
Playgrounds	15	2,334	3,973	3,105	Low	3,500	0
Reservable Picnic Tables	3	11,668	6,572	N/A	Medium/ High	6,000	4

1 Average level of service for comparable Bay Area communities (Belmont, Burlingame, Menlo Park, Millbrae, San Bruno, San Carlos, San Mateo, South San Francisco). Source: Parks Master Plan Benchmark Analysis.

2 For agencies serving communities of between 20,000 and 49,999 residents. Source: National Recreation and Park Association, 2024.

3 Priority Investment Rating is an index score based on residents' level of unmet need and level of importance for each amenity. Source: Parks Master Plan Community Survey, 2024

Park Use

A park usage analysis was also conducted based on data from Placer.ai and revealed how amenities and user demographics influence visitation patterns, offering insights that can guide future planning, investment, and improvements in Foster City's parks.¹

Catering to Residents and Visitors

Foster City parks primarily cater to residents. However, parks like Baywinds Park and Leo J. Ryan Park attract significant non-resident visitation and have the potential for cost recovery opportunities through user fees, equipment rentals, or other strategies. Other parks with desirable recreation amenities, like Sea Cloud, may also have potential to be leveraged for more cost recovery.

Extending Use

Lighting and shade play a role in shaping park usage patterns, both seasonally and throughout the day. Enhanced lighting can extend usability into evening hours while being designed to not disturb surrounding residential areas. Adding shade trees and structures could also improve comfort and attract

¹ PlacerAI is an analytics platform that leverages anonymous mobile location data to analyze how people move through and interact with different spaces.

more users during peak sunlight. These upgrades could also promote greater year-round accessibility and enjoyment of parks.

Understanding Park Users

Foster City's parks should reflect the diversity of the community and the varying ways residents engage with outdoor spaces. Young adults, Hispanic/Latino families, and households with lower to moderate incomes tend to use parks frequently, while seniors, middle-aged adults, and Asian residents, who make up the city's largest demographic group, appear less represented in park use.² These patterns point to opportunities to broaden the appeal of Foster City's parks by ensuring amenities remain affordable and accessible, offering culturally inclusive programs, improving language access, and enhancing park features that meet the needs of all residents.

Park Site Assessment



Foster City Parks are safe, well-maintained and have diverse recreational amenities, though key challenges include Geese habitation and lack of comfort amenities.

Foster City parks were evaluated for access, safety, functionality, and condition. Each park was considered from the perspective of strengths and areas for improvement. Stunning waterfront views at Leo J. Ryan Park and the variety of diverse activities at Sea Cloud Park make those parks attractive destinations for local and regional community members. The park system also faces challenges, including geese droppings particularly at parks with access to the lagoon, and a lack of signage and pathways at parks like Edgewater and Pompano parks. Strengths and challenges are summarized below.

² It should be noted that visitor demographic data is inferred based on a visitor's census block group, providing insights into the demographic composition of neighborhoods rather than the specific traits of individual users.

PARK ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Foster City parks were evaluated for access, safety, functionality, and condition. Using a qualitative approach tailored to the city, it identified strengths and areas for improvement.

STRENGTHS



Safe & Maintained Environments

Most parks are well-maintained, with minimal vandalism or safety concerns.



Diverse Activities in Large Parks

Large parks like Boothbay and Sea Cloud offer a variety of amenities.



Scenic Waterfront Locations

Parks like Leo J. Ryan and Marlin offer stunning views and access to the lagoon.

CHALLENGES



Cleanliness Issues

Waterfront parks, such as Marlin and Erckenbrack, are significantly impacted by goose droppings.



Lack of Signage & Pathways

Parks like Edgewater and Pompano are harder to navigate due to unclear signage and limited pathways.



Limited Comfort Amenities

Many parks lack sufficient shade, seating, and lighting.

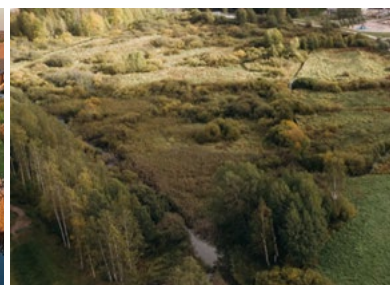
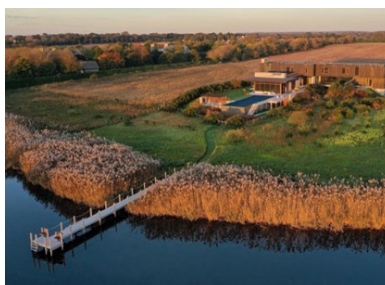
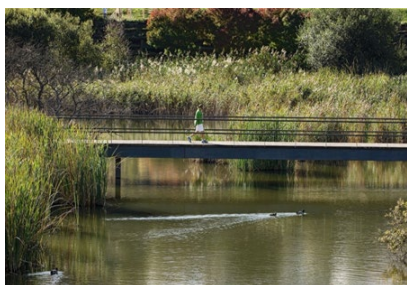
Opportunity Sites

Foster City is a nearly built-out community with a well-distributed park system and relatively limited undeveloped open space areas. Foster City's greatest opportunities to expand recreation opportunities lie in enhancing existing parks and facilities. However, two key sites, Sea Cloud II and the Baywinds area, present unique opportunities to introduce new public open spaces that may both provide additional recreational value and also support multiple ecological and resiliency benefits.

Sea Cloud II Site

Adjacent to Sea Cloud Park lies a 21-acre, City-owned open space known as Sea Cloud II, shown in Figure 5. Designated by the Army Corps of Engineers as a dredge material deposit site in 2018, the area has since evolved into a seasonal retention basin and wetland, supporting a mix of natural and invasive vegetation. In recent years, protected bird species have been observed nesting on-site, highlighting the ecological significance of the area and the importance of thoughtful stewardship. Currently fenced off and inaccessible to the public, the site also lacks direct connectivity to Sea Cloud Park and the Bay Trail. With further study, community visioning, and targeted improvements, it has the potential to become a valuable ecological resource and a **passive** recreation asset.

Due to the potential presence of wetland and sensitive habitat areas on portions of the site, the scope of potential improvements is not yet fully known. Additional environmental analysis and close coordination with State and regional regulatory agencies will be necessary to clarify the site's constraints and opportunities. With that understanding, the City could develop a long-term vision that protects and enhances the site's natural features while improving connectivity to the Bay Trail and **potentially** introducing **low-impact** recreational amenities **such as wildlife viewing, nature exploration, and picnicking.**

Figure 5 Sea Cloud II Site Opportunities

Inspirational images of habitat restoration and passive recreation including elevated boardwalk, wildlife viewing areas, and docks.

Baywinds Park

At just 1.3 acres, Baywinds Park is one of Foster City's smallest parks, tucked into the northwestern edge of the city along the Bay. The park is popular for windsurfing and attracts people from around the region for that activity. However, the surrounding properties include extensive wetlands, open space, and recreational assets, most notably the 25-acre Mariners Point Golf Center and Driving Range and approximately 25 acres of Caltrans-owned undeveloped land including wetlands. Together, these sites (shown in Figure 6) present a unique opportunity to create a more integrated, nature-focused recreation destination that could support habitat restoration, wildlife viewing, environmental education, picnicking, and other passive uses.

The Mariners Point Golf Center is a valued recreational amenity, currently leased by the City and the Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) to a private operator. While the long-term vision for the site has not yet been determined, its future use could significantly influence the area's recreational potential. If the golf course remains indefinitely, improvements could enhance connectivity with Baywinds Park and surrounding open space. If the site is ever repurposed, there may be an opportunity to expand parkland, restore natural habitat, or introduce other recreational facilities.

The Caltrans-owned parcels also represent a strategic opportunity. The City may pursue partnerships or acquisition opportunities that would support site improvements, habitat restoration, and expanded public access.

Figure 6 Baywinds Park Opportunities



Inspirational images of habitat restoration and passive recreation, including a board walk, nature center, and relaxation areas.

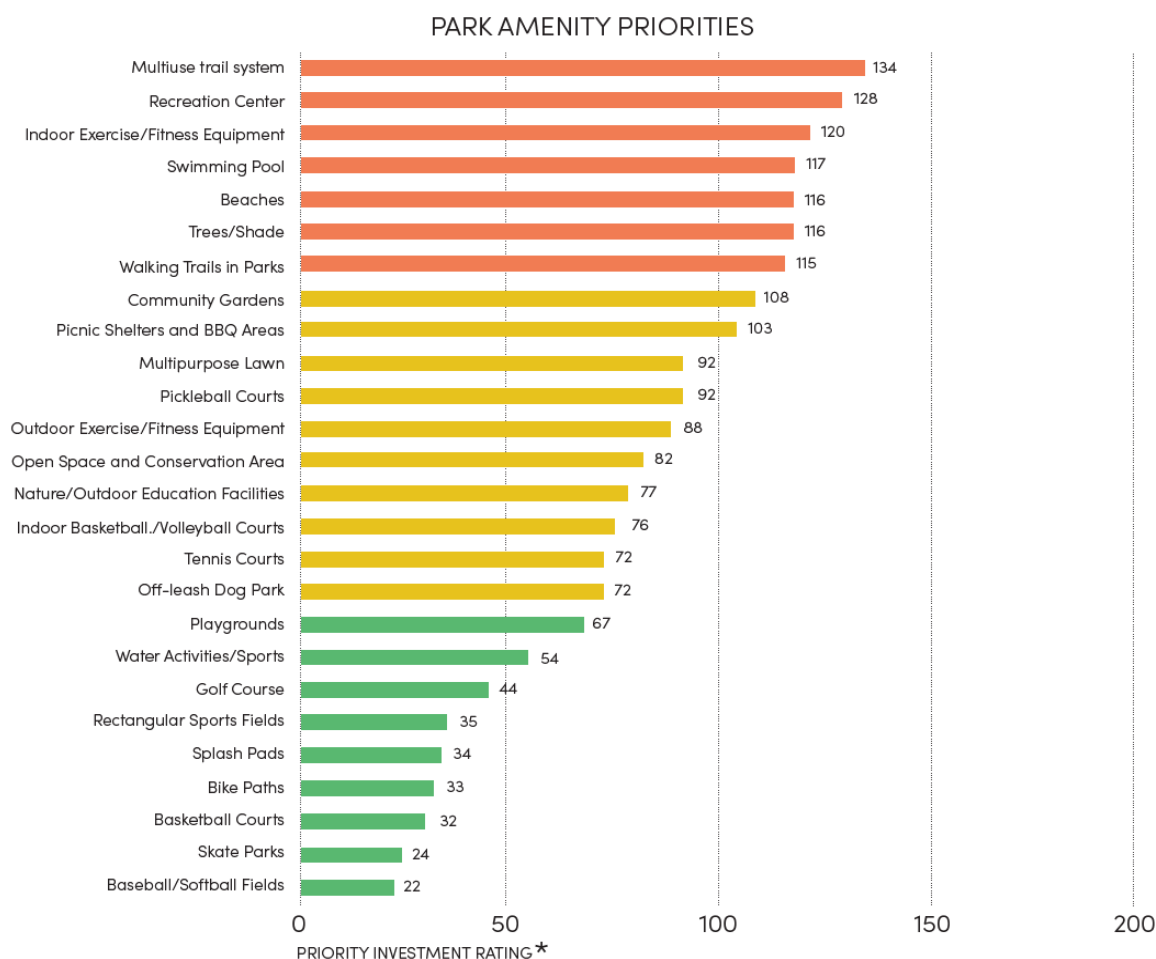
Engagement Results for Parks & Open Space

During the planning process, hundreds of residents shared their insights on the parks and open space system through a variety of engagement opportunities, including workshops, pop-up events, surveys, focus groups, and more. Key findings from these activities are summarized below.

Parks Master Plan Community Survey

A strong indicator of community preferences came from the Parks Master Plan Community Survey, conducted by ETC Institute in winter 2024–2025 through a mailed and online questionnaire sent to a random sample of Foster City households. With over 300 participants and a 95 percent confidence level, the survey results are considered reflective of the city's population. The survey found that 85 percent of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with Foster City's parks and recreation system—well above the national average of 62 percent. To identify resident priorities for recreation amenities and programming, ETC used its Priority Investment Rating (PIR) tool, which equally weighs the importance of a facility and the level of unmet need, as reported by survey respondents. As shown in Figure 7, top priorities identified include multi-use trails, a recreation center, indoor fitness equipment, a swimming pool, beaches, trees and shade, and walking trails in parks.

Figure 7 Foster City Park Amenity Priorities



Source: ETC Institute, 2025.

Community Engagement Takeaways

Hundreds of engaged residents have shed light on the aspects of the parks and recreation system that should be improved, added, or prioritized. Key themes emerged from the outreach and engagement process:

Trails & Connectivity



- Trails are highly valued, and residents greatly appreciate the Levee Pedway.
- Residents desire additional trails connecting neighborhoods, parks, and the Levee Pedway.
- Trail improvements are needed, including increased lighting, signage, and safety.

Beaches & Water Quality



- Issues with water quality and beach conditions deter recreational use.
- There are opportunities to activate the water through additional amenities, access points, and water-related programming.
- Community members have strong interest in activating the Lagoon's edges, especially through outdoor dining.

New Park Experiences



- Foster City has a great park system, with fantastic active recreation facilities.
- Residents would welcome new features to further activate and increase identity through new and unique experiences.
- There is demand for more passive spaces, such as walking paths, picnic areas, beaches, and natural open spaces.

Park Comfort



- Park users would benefit from more comfortable places to relax and walk through improved shade, pathways, and seating.
- Some highly visited parks need improved or expanded restrooms.

Indoor Recreation & Swimming



- Residents share a desire for fitness, senior, arts, and cultural programs, reinforcing the need for the new Community Center.
- Indoor fitness equipment and a swimming pool are community needs that are so far unmet with current plans.
- School joint-use agreements are essential for the community's access to gymnasiums.

Programming and Events

Programming and events are key elements of park facilities and open spaces in Foster City. Participation is reinforced by the settings themselves: waterfront views at Leo Ryan, shaded lawns at Boothbay, and playgrounds near picnic areas all create inviting environments for both organized programs and casual community use. The City offers a variety of programs and services that fall into the following core program areas:

- **Afterschool Programs:** Provide programming on elementary school campuses on early dismissal days.
- **Athletics:** Foster healthy lifestyles and promoting lifelong wellness throughout the community.
- **Camps:** Full-day camps for children ages 4 to 13.
- **Community Events:** Engage Foster City residents and visitors with free to low-cost events.
- **Lifelong Learning and Wellness:** Various classes offered year-round that provide opportunities for community engagement.
- **Reservations and Rentals:** Rentable rooms and park spaces that accommodate different types of events, meetings and parties.

Serving All Ages

The Foster City Parks and Recreation Department provides a balance of programs and services across all age segments. The Department should continue to provide programs across all age groups and reevaluate program offerings each year to ensure programs are responding to with the goal of keeping programs responsive to user needs. Table 4 provides a summary of the various recreational programs offered to different age groups within Foster City.

Table 4 Ages Served by Recreational Core Program Area

Core Program Area	Ages Served						
	Preschool (5 and under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Young Adult (18-34)	Adult (35-54)	Active Adult (55-64)	Senior (65+)
Afterschool Enrichment Program		X					
Athletics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Facility & Park Rentals				X	X	X	X
Youth & Adult Contract Classes & Specialty Camps		X	X	X	X	X	X
Teen Afterschool Program			X				
Youth & Teen Camps	X	X	X				

Source: Foster City Parks Master Plan Program and Services Assessment, PROS Consulting, 2025.

Engagement Results on Programming

The Parks Master Plan Community Survey sheds light on community interests and needs for programming and events:

- 46 percent **of** residents have participated in Foster City programs in the past 12 months, significantly more than the national average of 36 percent. By weighing the importance of a program and the level of unmet need, fitness/wellness programs, community special events, outdoor recreation, programs for seniors, cultural enrichment programs, visual arts/crafts programs, performing arts programs, and pickleball lessons and leagues emerged as top priorities for residents (see Figure 8).
- The biggest barrier to program participation was a lack of awareness, with 27 percent of residents indicating they did not know what was being offered. Other top barriers included inconvenient program times (23 percent) and being too busy or not interested in participating (15 percent).

Figure 8 Program and Event Priorities from the Statistically Valid Community Survey



Source: ETC Institute, 2025.

Operations and Maintenance

Maintenance is needed for many parks, facilities, and amenities to ~~ensure~~ promote functionality, safety, and aesthetic appeal for Foster City residents.

Engagement Results on Maintenance

The community engagement process surfaced several key insights related to park operations and maintenance. Feedback from the survey and open-ended comments highlighted both areas of satisfaction and specific concerns that can help guide future improvements.

- **Physical Condition Generally Rated Well, But Gaps Remain.**
While 90 percent of residents rated park conditions as “excellent” or “good,” 9 percent rated them as only “fair” or “poor,” signaling pockets of maintenance issues that may be addressed through targeted interventions.
- **Restroom and Trail Maintenance Need Greater Emphasis.**
An Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) analysis identified paved path/trails, restrooms, and waterways/beaches as the top two priorities for maintenance. These areas had high importance but relatively lower satisfaction scores, indicating strong community demand for better upkeep.
- **Cleanliness and Environmental Conditions Are Concerns.**
Although not always formally listed, geese droppings were repeatedly mentioned in open-ended comments as a major deterrent to park use, suggesting the need for more proactive sanitation and environmental management as part of routine maintenance.

Maintenance Assessment

A Park Maintenance and Operations Assessment was conducted as part of the Foster City Parks Master Plan, analyzing current maintenance practices, staffing levels, service standards, and operational challenges across the city’s park system. The assessment evaluated how the City maintains its parks and open spaces and reviewed key functions such as turf management, irrigation, equipment upkeep, and trail maintenance.

Key challenges that came out of this assessment included:

- **Lack of a Formal Maintenance Management Plan**
While some standards exist, the City does not have a fully documented plan tracking work performance and outcomes by park.
- **No GIS-Based Asset Management System**
The absence of such a system limits the City’s ability to track maintenance needs, costs, and asset lifecycles efficiently.
- ~~**Slight Staffing Deficiency**~~
~~The City staffing levels for parks falls short compared to best-practice benchmarks for park maintenance operations.~~
- **Underfunding of Maintenance Operations**
Annual park maintenance funding falls short compared to the level needed for optimal service.

- **Well-Equipped but Needs Continued Investment**

The City currently has the necessary vehicles and equipment but must reinvest as the system grows to maintain service levels.

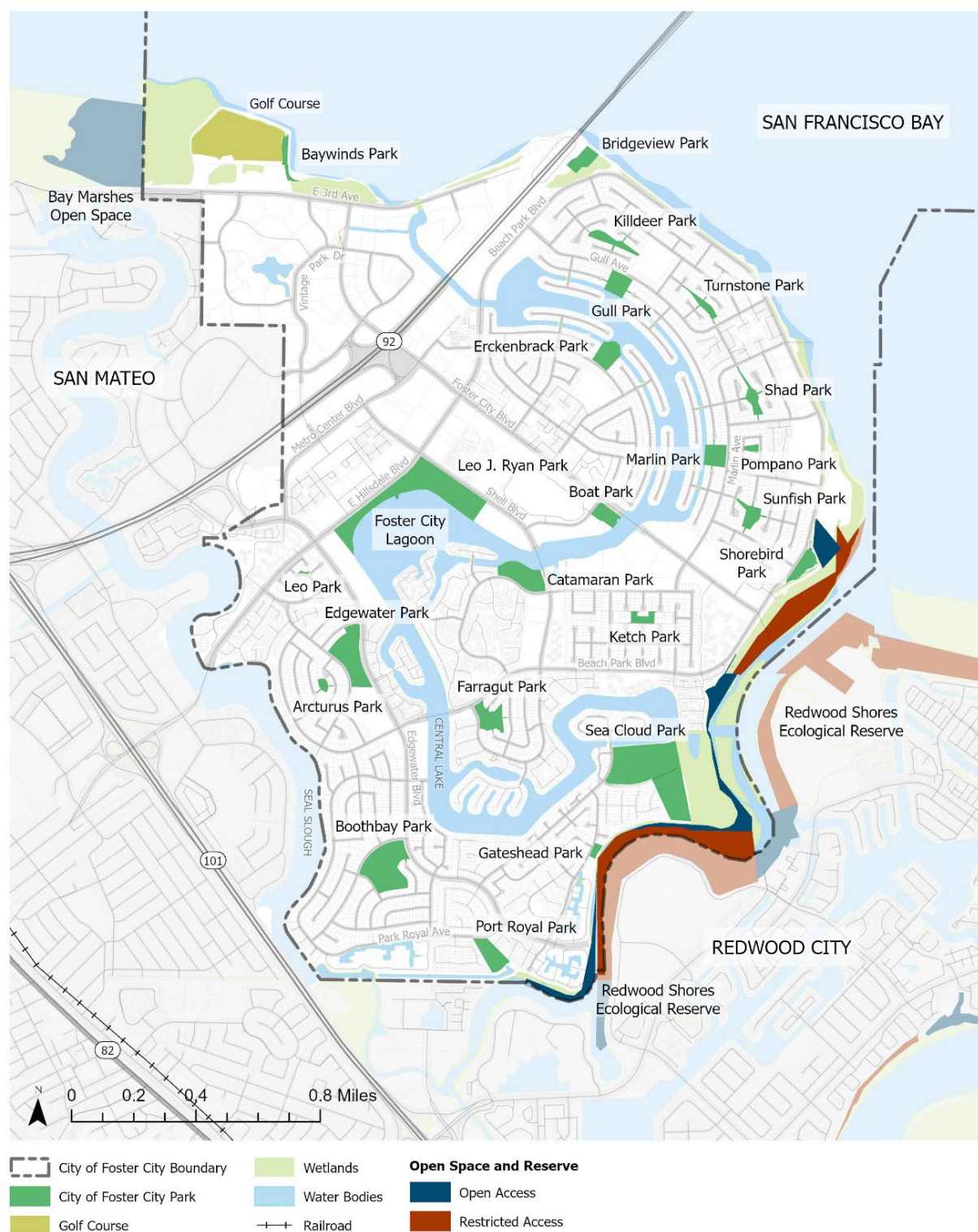
Open Space Value for Natural Resources

Foster City's open space network presents several meaningful opportunities for enhancing natural habitat and wildlife compatibility, including targeted rewilding that can enhance ecological integrity and restore natural processes across the urban landscape. Guided by the provisions of SB 1425, the City can pursue strategies that preserve, enhance, and expand habitat areas within and adjacent to developed zones. The City's open spaces are identified in Figure 9, below.

Belmont Slough, which forms a natural boundary between Foster City and Redwood Shores, is a prime opportunity area for rewilding. The surrounding wetlands provide vital habitat for shorebirds and native plant communities such as cordgrass and pickleweed. With portions of the shoreline under the management of the CDFW and others privately owned, there are opportunities for both targeted and coordinated restoration efforts such as marshland expansion, the creation of buffer zones using native vegetation, and formal habitat restoration plans that involve multiple local and regional agencies and funding sources.

Seal Slough, also known as Marina Lagoon, represents another opportunity to support habitat connectivity and ecological health. While much of the slough is managed by the City of San Mateo, Foster City shares responsibility for adjacent areas and could support and collaborate on restoration efforts. Strategies may include riparian plantings, removal of invasive species, and the establishment of small-scale wildlife corridors.

Beyond these tidal and riparian corridors, Foster City's urban parks and landscaped areas offer potential for small-scale rewilding. Parks such as Boothbay and Port Royal could be enhanced by replacing portions of ornamental lawns with native, drought-tolerant plants, introducing wildflower meadows, or establishing gardens focused on native species. Even highly engineered shoreline areas could benefit from nature-based enhancements, such as vegetated buffer strips and boardwalks that improve both habitat quality and public engagement with natural spaces. For additional information and policies on habitat and wildlife management and connectivity, please see the Conservation Element.

Figure 9 Publicly Accessible Open Space

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2023.

Climate Resiliency

Foster City's open spaces also play a critical role in advancing the City's climate resiliency goals by serving as buffers against climate-related hazards and offering natural systems that help moderate environmental stressors. Coastal wetlands and shoreline open spaces, such as those near Belmont Slough and the Bay Trail, absorb floodwaters, reduce wave energy, and space for marsh migration and living-shoreline measures needed to accommodate sea level rise over time.

Mapping of sea level rise scenarios illustrates that while Foster City's upgraded levee provides critical protection against current coastal hazards, the community remains vulnerable to future conditions driven by climate change. Figure 10 shows a mid-century scenario of approximately 0.8 feet of SLR (about the increase expected during typical daily high tides by 2050, absent any storms). Under this scenario, portions of the shoreline, including parks, trails, and some low-lying residential areas (such as those along Beach Park Boulevard and the fringes of the central lagoon) could experience more frequent tidal flooding. Vulnerability increases further when considering the added impact of severe coastal storms or King Tide events on top of elevated sea levels. Figure 11 illustrates Foster City's present-day 100-year storm surge scenario, which in combination with sea level rise could exceed the capacity of existing flood protection. Such an event could affect residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, critical infrastructure, and transportation routes, including portions of Highway 101.

Preserving, enhancing, and restoring these areas with native vegetation and habitat restoration strengthens their ability to sequester and store carbon, filter pollutants, and reduce the impacts of storm surges on adjacent neighborhoods and critical infrastructure. Open spaces also bolster ecological resilience by preserving habitat for habitat corridors that allow species to migrate and adapt to rising temperatures and shifting ecosystems, countering regional habitat fragmentation in line with AB 1889.

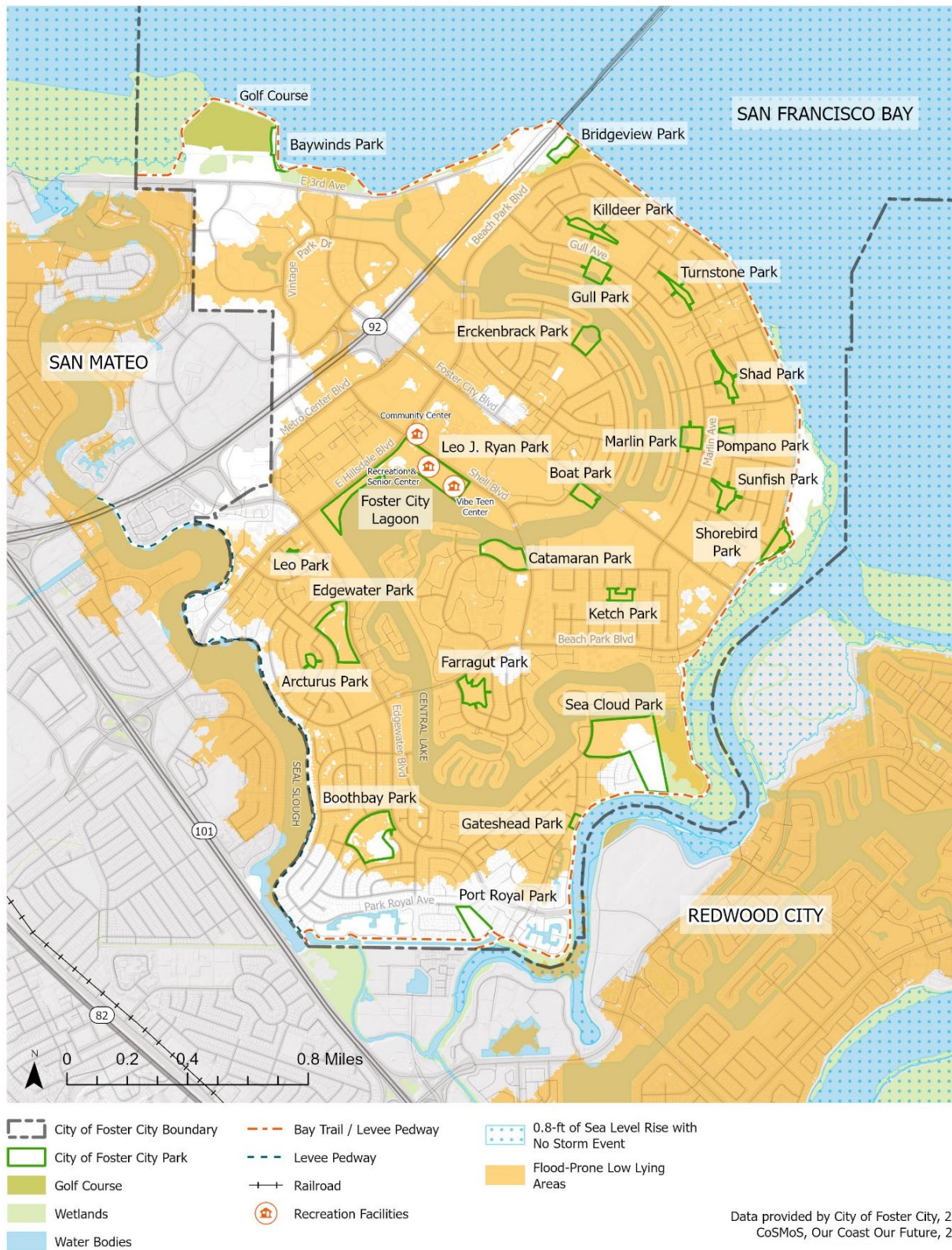
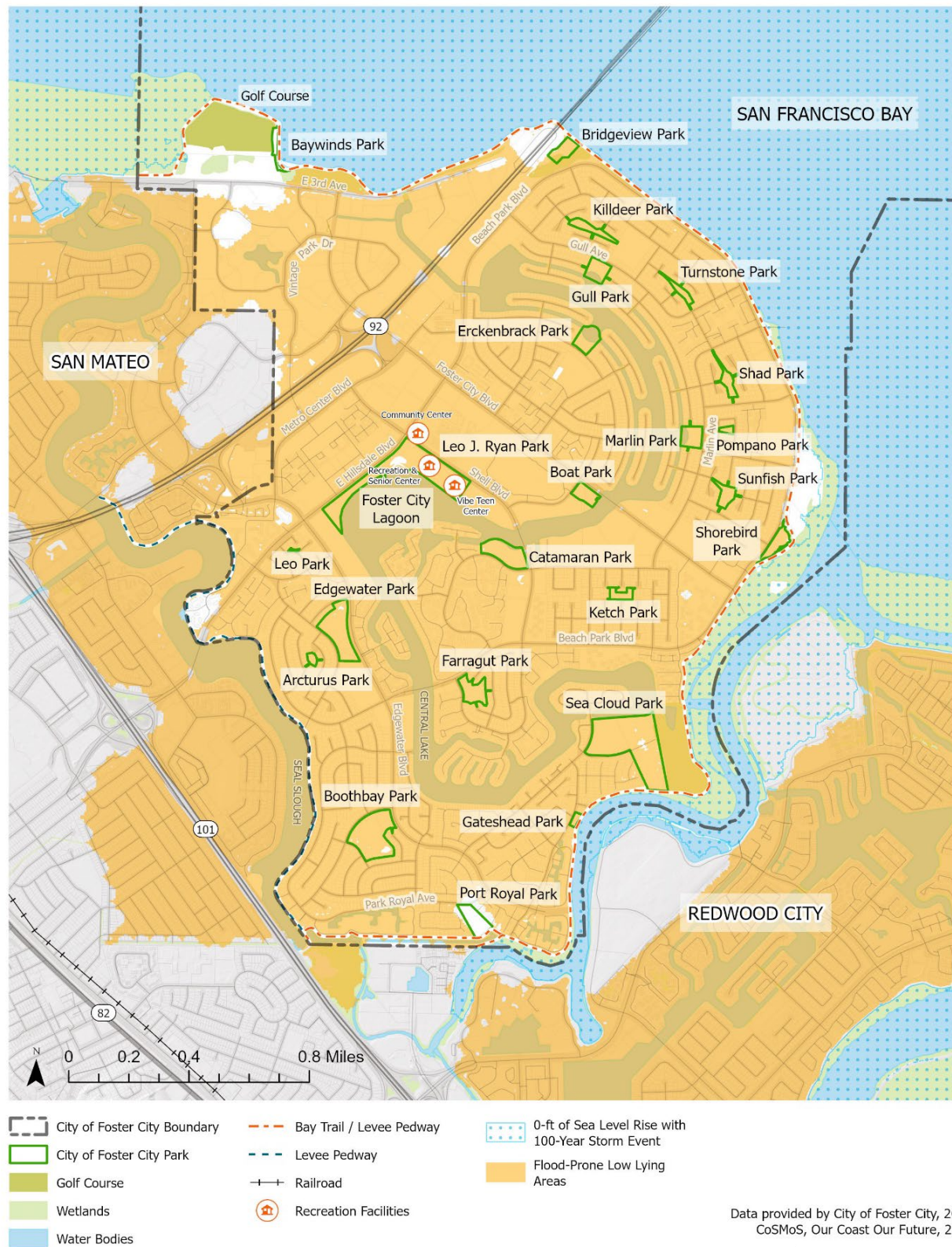
Figure 10 Sea Level Rise Inundation (0.8 feet)

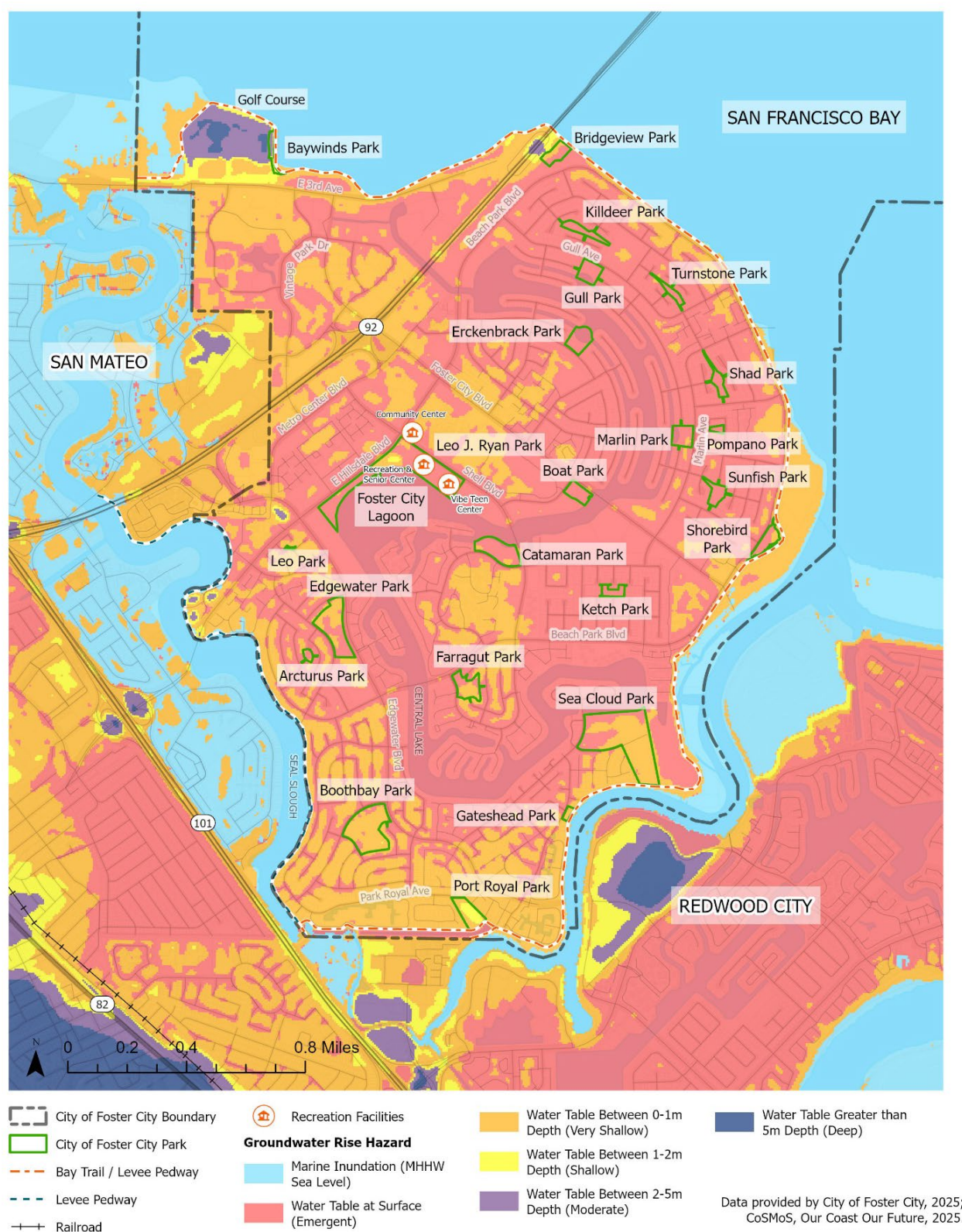
Figure 11 Present-Day (No Sea Level Rise) 100-Year Storm Inundation Risk

Another emerging concern is groundwater rise. As sea level rises, the water table in Foster City will rise as well, since the city is built on permeable fill and former marsh and the water table will rise as sea level rises. Rising groundwater can lead to flooding from below, even if surface levees hold back the Bay from direct coastal inundation. Figure 12 displays a groundwater rise hazard map for Foster City, highlighting areas particularly susceptible to groundwater rise, particularly the shoreline zones and lands around the lagoon. In these areas, the water table will likely eventually breach the surface or infiltrate underground infrastructure, causing flooding of housing foundations, road base materials, or within storm sewers. Groundwater rise could also induce soil instability or mobilize pollutants in soils.

To strengthen climate resilience and meet SB 1425 goals, Foster City should implement nature-based strategies, such as permeable surfaces, expanded tree canopy, and green stormwater infrastructure, to reduce heat, retain stormwater, and recharge shallow groundwater. For example, native plantings in shoreline parks and undeveloped parcels can strengthen soil stability, support pollinator populations, and reduce the need for irrigation. Meadow restoration and the creation of microhabitats within urban green spaces offer additional benefits by moderating temperatures and supporting localized ecosystems. As climate pressures intensify, integrating open space into the City's adaptation strategy is vital for ecological function and for protecting the public health and safety of residents. These spaces offer cooler environments during heat waves, areas for passive stormwater retention, and opportunities for environmental education that can foster long-term stewardship and community resilience.

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Figure 12 Present Day (No Sea Level Rise) Groundwater Hazard



Goals and Policies

Parks and Recreation System

Goal POS-1 Foster City's parks and recreation system is vibrant, comfortable and responsive.

Policy POS 1.1 **Vibrant and Unique Parks.** ~~Ensure~~ Aim for all Foster City parks ~~are to be~~ vibrant and have a unique identity, incorporating in-demand and innovative features for evening activation.

Policy POS 1.2 **Comfortable Parks.** ~~Ensure~~ Support parks ~~are~~ comfortable and ~~inviting~~ appeal by adding or improving key features such as seating, lighting, shade, and restrooms.

Policy POS 1.3 **Community Needs.** ~~Ensure~~ Strive to make the parks and recreation system ~~is~~ responsive to the recreation needs identified in the Parks Master Plan and through continued engagement.

Goal POS-2 Foster City has a connected and accessible parks and recreation system.

Policy POS 2.1 **Connected Trail System.** Create a citywide network of paths and trails for walking and biking that is safe and comfortable.

Policy POS 2.2 **Navigating Parks.** ~~Ensure~~ Promote easy access to and navigation within the City's parks, lagoon, and trails by installing wayfinding signage and creating plans for multi-modal access.

Policy POS 2.3 **Accessible & Inclusive.** Promote accessibility and inclusivity in park facilities and programs through universal design and diverse, community-responsive activities.

Goal POS-3 The Foster City Lagoon is active and well-integrated with its surroundings.

Policy POS 3.1 **Lagoon Access & Amenities.** Provide places and amenities to view, enjoy and access the Lagoon.

Policy POS 3.2 **Waterfront Activation.** Increase Lagoon activation through programming and events, improved water quality, and increased water-front activity.

Programming and Events

Goal POS-4 Foster City has lively and inclusive events and programs.

Policy POS 4.1 **Programming.** Invest in high priority programs and services that bring residents together, serve all age groups, and are responsive to community needs and desires.

Policy POS 4.2 **Community Events.** Strengthen community events in Foster City by improving and expanding offerings and collaborating with other recreation providers.

Operations and Maintenance

Goal POS-5 Operational efficiency and economic feasibility are core to park and recreation management in Foster City.

Policy POS 5.1 **High Quality Maintenance.** Continue to support high-quality park and facility maintenance by focusing on key maintenance priorities and investing in maintenance staff, tools, and equipment.

Policy POS 5.2 **Funding Strategy.** Develop and implement a funding strategy to realize the City's vision for its parks and recreation system.

Policy POS 5.3 **Plan and Engage Proactively.** Promote long-term success through regular planning, transparent reporting, and ongoing community engagement.

Open Space Value for Natural Resources

Goal POS-6 Foster City's parks and open spaces support native biodiversity, climate resilience, and ecological function through targeted rewilding, habitat restoration, and nature-based solutions.

Policy POS 6.1 **Urban Rewilding.** Implement urban rewilding projects to reintroduce natural processes, restore natural ecosystems, and promote biodiversity.

Policy POS 6.2 **Habitat Linkages.** Prioritize rewilding in areas that enhance or create new habitat linkages and corridors for wildlife movement.)

Policy POS 6.3 **Resilient Landscaping.** Prioritize the use of native, drought-tolerant, and climate-resilient vegetation in existing parks and landscaped open

spaces to enhance habitat value, reduce water demand, and support pollinators.

Policy POS 6.4 **Ecologically Beneficial Features.** Integrate ecologically beneficial features, such as pollinator gardens, wildflower meadows, bioswales, and native plant corridors, into public parks, medians, and along trail networks.

Policy POS 6.5 **Community Participation.** Encourage inclusive community participation in habitat restoration through stewardship programs, youth engagement, and interpretive signage in rewilded open spaces.

Climate Resiliency

Goal POS-7 Foster City's open space network is adaptively managed to strengthen resilience to climate change impacts, including sea level rise, extreme heat, and flood risk.

Policy POS 7.1 **Multi-benefit Prioritization.** Prioritize the preservation and restoration of undeveloped open spaces and natural areas that provide multi-benefit climate services, including flood protection, carbon sequestration, heat reduction, and habitat connectivity, particularly in underserved areas.

Policy POS 7.2 **Climate Data Integration.** Integrate future climate scenarios, such as sea level rise, groundwater rise, and extreme heat, into open space design, planning, and management decisions to ensure support ecological resilience, adaptive capacity, and equitable public access.

Policy POS 7.3 **Green Streets.** Encourage the use of "green streets" that incorporate native vegetation, permeable surfaces, and stormwater features to enhance habitat and reduce runoff.

Policy POS 7.4 **Green Infrastructure.** Support the development of rooftop gardens, vertical greenery, and other integrated green infrastructure that enhances biodiversity and reduces energy use.

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-a	Enhance park activation and identity by reprogramming underutilized park spaces with in-demand or innovative park amenities/experiences, referencing the park-specific improvements identified in the Parks Master Plan.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-1.1
POS-b	As part of future park improvement and maintenance projects, support the expansion of passive amenities such as walking trails, picnic areas, and natural open spaces.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Ongoing	POS-1.1
POS-c	As part of future park improvement and maintenance projects, seek opportunities to increase shade in parks by planting trees and/or constructing shade structures, particularly at playgrounds and picnic areas.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Ongoing	POS-1.2
POS-d	Add or improve seating, lighting, water fountains/refill stations, trash receptacles, restrooms, and bike racks to all parks where needed.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Long-term	POS-1.2
POS-e	Explore opportunities to expand access to indoor recreation and swimming facilities by pursuing or strengthening partnerships with San Mateo-Foster City School District and private recreation providers.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-1.3
POS-f	As Foster City grows, strive to maintain the City's existing park acreage level of service of 3.2 acres per 1,000 residents <u>the City will continue to maintain the existing developed parkland of 113.6 acres in Foster City.</u>	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Long-term	POS-1.3
<u>POS-g</u>	<u>Determine an appropriate LOS that balances future housing and community preference and make necessary edits to Chapter 16.36 Parks and Recreation Facilities of Foster City Municipal Code.</u>	<u>Parks and Recreation</u>	<u>Community Development</u>	<u>Mid-term</u>	<u>POS-1.3</u>
POS-h	Conduct a study of open space opportunity areas to assess their environmental constraints and natural assets. Use these insights to create a master plan that balances ecological restoration with expanded recreational access and amenities.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Short-term	POS-1.3
POS-i	Explore opportunities for creating a network of paths and trails that connect existing city parks, trails, and community destinations. Work cross-departmentally to implement the Bike Pedestrian Master Plan 2026.	Public Works	Community Development/Parks and Recreation	Long-term	POS-2.1
POS-j	Consider additional improvements to the Levee Peway, including distance markers, signage, and lighting, to create comfortable conditions for all trail users.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation/Community Development	Long-term	POS-2.1

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-k	Explore strategies for establishing clear and consistent signage across the park and recreation system.	Parks and Recreation		Long-term	POS-2.2
POS-l	Enhance ADA-compliant access at all parks.	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Long-term	POS-2.3
POS-m	Promote cross-cultural and multi-generational programming and facilities, recognizing the full diversity of Foster City residents.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-2.3
POS-n	Explore opportunities to enhance the integration of the design of lagoon-adjacent parks with the lagoon, providing places to view, enjoy, and access the water, including boat docking opportunities.	Parks and Recreation		Long-term	POS-3.1
POS-o	Collaborate across departments to continue to implement the Lagoon Water Quality Management Plan and Canada Goose Population Management Plan to improve cleanliness of lagoon-adjacent parks and lagoon water quality.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-p	Support land use regulatory changes to encourage public access and activation along the lagoon as part of future development.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-q	Continue to support the use of the lagoon for community events such as regattas, performances, etc.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-3.2
POS-r	Explore opportunities to activate recreational use of the lagoon.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-3.2
POS-s	Pursue opportunities to expand high-demand recreational programs/events that serve residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-4.1
POS-t	Continue to support and expand special events that activate community parks in all seasons.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Ongoing	POS-4.2
POS-u	Complement and connect with other recreation providers and event sponsors, developing partnerships when advantageous.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-4.2
POS-v	Encourage the dedication of staff resources to help identify and secure funding that supports park improvements, maintenance, and recreation programming and events.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-5.3
POS-w	Continue to foster the provision of high-quality parks and recreation services through the strategic allocation of funds for recreation programming, park/facility maintenance, and lifecycle improvements to ensure maintain consistent financial support for meeting accepted service levels.	Parks and Recreation		Ongoing	POS-5.3
POS-x	Promote the use of consistent community engagement practices, such as surveys, town halls, and focus groups, to continue to gather input on evolving recreational needs and preferences.	Parks and Recreation	Communications	Ongoing	POS-5.4

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implements Policy(ies)
POS-y	Support the identification of at least one City park or trail-adjacent open space for pilot naturalization projects that include, but are not limited to, replacement of turf or ornamental plantings with native vegetation. Monitor for habitat use, water savings, and community reception.	Parks and Recreation		Mid-term	POS-6.1, POS-6.3
POS-z	Explore opportunities to map and identify areas within the City's parks and open spaces to naturalize with the aim of connecting natural areas with rewilded areas. Prioritize rewilding efforts in places where the clearest linkages for species movement between areas.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Long-term	POS-6.2
POS-aa	Seek opportunities to host seasonal events in collaboration with local schools, nonprofits, or native plant societies to involve residents in habitat restoration activities and promote awareness of urban ecology.	Parks and Recreation	Communications	Bi-Annual	POS-6.4
POS-bb	Actively seek State and federal funding opportunities that support land conservation, shoreline resilience, or wetland restoration, and coordinate with regional agencies for joint applications.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development/City Manager's Office	Ongoing	POS-7.1, POS-7.2
POS-cc	Pursue the development of a climate-resilient open space web viewer that overlays sea level rise projections, habitat corridors, and flood-prone areas and use as a tool for determining the highest impact naturalization and resilience-focused projects to prioritize.	Community Development	City Manager's Office	Long-term	POS-7.2
¹ Timeframes are categorized as short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years). Programs that are on an ongoing or annual basis are identified as such.					

Conservation Introduction



Foster City, 2025.

Purpose

The Conservation Element fulfills the State's requirements for a Conservation Element and articulates Foster City's long-term vision for conserving and managing its natural and cultural resources. Within this, it emphasizes environmental sustainability, community well-being, and climate resilience as central to the City's management of natural resources.

This Element outlines the city's environmental setting, highlights unique local resources, and establishes goals, policies, and implementation actions to support their protection, restoration, and sustainable use. It guides stewardship of wildlife movement and connectivity and wildlife habitat, the urban forest, surface and groundwater, and historic, cultural, and tribal resources. It also supports efforts to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with state mandates.

This Element is organized into four primary sections: *Requirements*, *Background*, *Goals and Policies*, and *Implementation Programs*. The *Requirements* section outlines legal requirements for the content of this element. The *Background* section provides existing conditions and key conservation considerations for Foster City. The *Goals and Policies* section defines the City's goals and policy direction for the conservation of natural resources. The *Implementation Programs* section outlines specific actions the City will take to achieve the vision set by the Goals and Policies.

Clarification of Terminology

The Conservation Element and the Parks and Open Space Element both address land and resource stewardship in Foster City, but each with a distinct purpose and emphasis:



Park: A developed public space designed primarily for recreation and community use. Parks typically include landscaping and features such as play areas, sports courts, athletic fields, picnic facilities, or community centers. They provide opportunities for physical activity, social connection, and access to nature within the built environment.



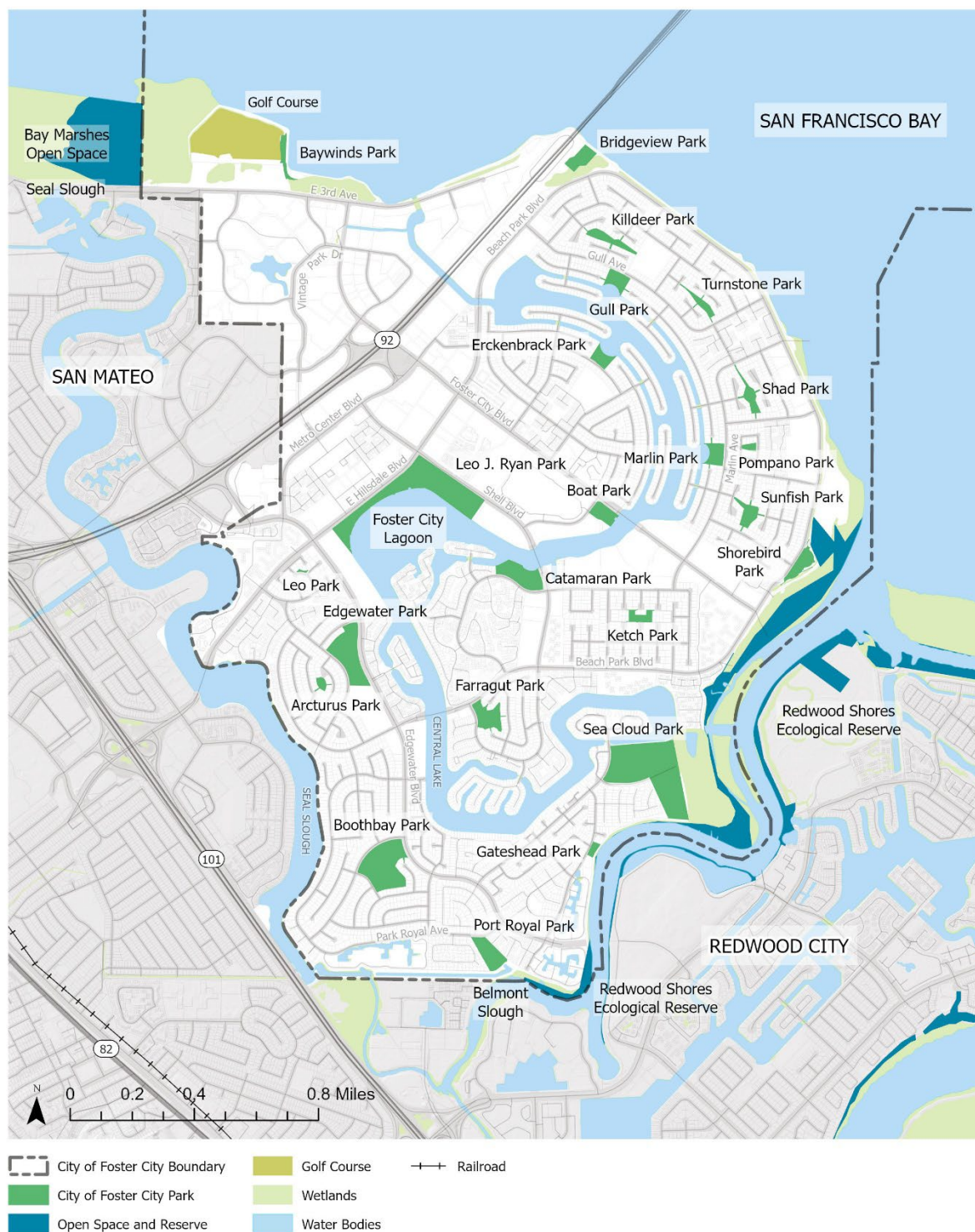
Open Space: Land that remains largely undeveloped, often preserved for its scenic, ecological, or buffering functions. Open space may support passive recreation, such as trails and viewpoints, and also contribute to habitat value, stormwater management, and climate resilience. While not always actively used, open spaces help define the character and environmental function of the city.



Conservation: The active management and protection of natural resources—including water, air, soil, vegetation, habitat, and wildlife—throughout the entire city, across all land types. Conservation is not limited to specific areas; it is a citywide approach applied to parks, open spaces, developed areas, waterways, and infrastructure. It includes efforts to restore habitat, enhance biodiversity, improve ecosystem health, and ensure the sustainable use of environmental resources for future generations.

While these categories differ in focus, they are deeply interconnected. Open space and parks often serve as the physical setting where conservation strategies are implemented. For example, a park may include restored habitat, and an open space corridor may function as both a scenic buffer and a wildlife pathway. Conservation provides the guiding framework that weaves these uses together, ensuring Foster City's green spaces support not only recreation and beauty, but long-term ecological health and resilience.

Figure 1 identifies the parks and open spaces within Foster City. Figure 2 identifies protection responsibilities for each type of park, open space, and conservation area.

Figure 1 Parks and Open Spaces

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

24-16899 EPS Community Assessment
Fig X Parks and Open Space

Figure 2 Protected Areas



Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
CPAD, 2025.

Legal Requirements

The Conservation Element of the General Plan is guided by State law, regional plans, and local priorities that collectively aim to preserve natural resources, support ecological health, and support the sustainable management of environmental systems. Key statutes and policies include the following:

California Government Code §65302(d) – Conservation Element Requirement

The primary legal foundation for the Conservation Element is Government Code §65302(d), which requires all general plans to include policies addressing the conservation, development, and use of natural resources. These include watersheds, forests, soils, rivers and other waters, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, and other natural systems. The statute emphasizes that policies must reflect local conditions, support long-term resource management, and be coordinated with efforts to protect air and water quality.

California Air Resources Board (CARB) and BAAQMD Guidance

Statewide air quality policy is administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which sets emission standards, regulates fuels and vehicles, and oversees programs aimed to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. At the regional level, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) prepares the Clean Air Plan to reduce pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, with an emphasis on cumulative pollution burdens in disproportionately impacted communities. The Conservation Element supports these goals by promoting land use patterns and infrastructure that reduce vehicle emissions, increase urban greening, and limit exposure to harmful pollutants, particularly near homes, schools, and other sensitive land uses.

Senate Bill 1425 (2022) – Open-Space Element: Updates

Senate Bill (SB) 1425 added Government Code §65565.5 to require that the Open Space Element prioritize the multi-benefit use of green spaces, particularly in historically underserved communities. The law directs jurisdictions to include plans and an action program in any update to address access to open space for all residents in a manner that considers social, economic, and racial equity, correlated with the environmental justice policies in the general plan, address climate resilience strategies such as flood mitigation and cooling, and to address rewilding opportunities. While most of the requirements of SB 1425 are met within the Parks and Open Space Element, many of the topics in this Element are closely related to the those covered within the Conservation Element.

Assembly Bill 1889 (2024) – Conservation Element: Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity

AB 1889 amended Government Code §65302(d), requiring jurisdictions to identify and analyze wildlife connectivity and movement corridors, and consider the impact of development on species movement and ecological resilience. Any impacts and barriers to wildlife movement are then required to be avoided, minimized, or mitigated to the extent feasible. It encourages alignment with State and regional agencies, conservation goals, and efforts in developing wildlife and habitat connectivity strategies.

Regional and Local Planning

In addition to meeting State requirements, the Conservation Element must align with several key regional and local planning efforts that support natural resource protection, habitat restoration, and climate resilience.

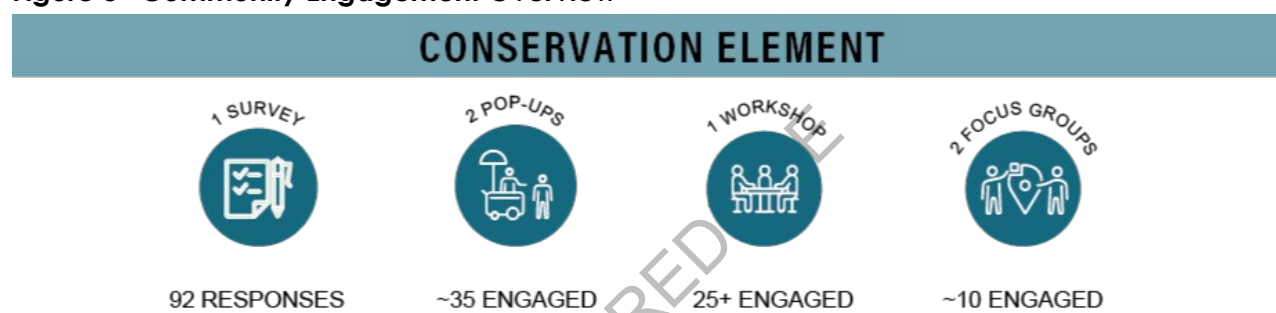
- The **Climate Action Plan (CAP)** establishes strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resilience through energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and sustainable land use.
- The **Lagoon Management Plan** outlines policies for maintaining water quality, controlling aquatic vegetation, and managing wildlife populations within the City's lagoon system. It also provides a framework for public education and monitoring.
- The **Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan** provides strategies for managing Canada goose populations in Foster City's parks and lagoon system to minimize impacts on water quality, vegetation, and recreation.
- The **Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan** outline Foster City's water supply reliability, drought management strategies, and contingency measures for shortages.
- **The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Basin Plans (Basin Plans)** establish water quality objectives, identify beneficial uses of water bodies (such as habitat or recreation), and include strategies to control pollution and manage watershed health. These Basin Plans are legally enforceable by the RWQCB and guide stormwater discharge permitting and waterway protection at the local level.
- The **San Mateo County Sustainable Streets and Green Infrastructure Plan** provides a framework for integrating green infrastructure, —such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavements, — into street design and public projects. It helps cities meet stormwater permit requirements while improving water quality, habitat, and streetscape aesthetics.
- The **San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program** provides a coordinated framework for cities to reduce stormwater pollution through infrastructure upgrades, public education, and monitoring.
- **OneShoreline**, the San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District, coordinates regional adaptation efforts related to sea level rise, tidal flooding, and shoreline ecosystem restoration. Its work supports integrated infrastructure projects that reduce flood risk while enhancing natural habitat.
- In compliance with SB 18 (Gov. Code § 65352.3), the City contacted all California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as traditionally and culturally affiliated with the area. No responses requesting consultation were received.

This regional and local framework ensures that the Conservation Element is grounded in practical, science-based strategies that address both ecological function and community well-being.

Background

The process for updating the Conservation Element included a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions; evaluating the city’s natural resources, habitat areas, water and air quality, and energy infrastructure; and identifying opportunities to enhance ecological health and climate resilience. In addition, the analysis evaluated future considerations on sea level rise, groundwater rise, extreme heat, and air quality, and highlighted opportunities to enhance biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and equitable access to green space. As shown in Figure 3, community outreach was conducted in coordination with the Parks Master Plan (discussed further in the Parks and Open Space Element), ensuring that the voices of residents and stakeholders guided the direction of this Element. Together, the assessment and engagement serve as the foundation for the goals and policies of the Conservation Element.

Figure 3 Community Engagement Overview



** Note: Conservation Focus Groups will be conducted in August of 2025, and number engaged subsequently added.*

The public engagement process for the Conservation Element update was designed to gather input on key issues such as species preservation, habitat conservation, and water quality, while ensuring alignment with the ongoing Parks Master Plan update. A key tool in this effort was a dedicated project website that provided ongoing updates and hosted the Community Priorities Survey, which built on the Parks Master Plan survey by focusing on natural resources and conservation topics. This survey gathered valuable feedback from a diverse range of residents, with particular emphasis on underrepresented communities, helping shape policies related to biodiversity, open space access, and environmental equity. Pop-up events were also used to engage the community directly, allowing them to provide input on conservation priorities while also participating in the broader parks-related discussions.

Biological Resources

Despite its highly urbanized setting and origins as reclaimed marshland, Foster City continues to support a mosaic of natural habitats. Key ecological areas include tidal wetlands, mudflats, and the centrally located lagoon system, which together provide important habitat for migratory birds, small mammals, and aquatic species. The San Francisco Bay also borders the city to the north and east and is the largest estuary on the West Coast, supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and plant species. It provides critical habitat for migratory birds, fish nurseries, and endangered species such as the Ridgway’s rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. As shown in Figure 4, vegetation mapping has identified several habitat types within the city, including salt marsh, non-native forest, and native herbaceous communities. Notably, 21 special-status animal species and six plant species have been observed or are presumed present,

including the endangered Ridgeway's rail and salt-marsh harvest mouse, both dependent on the city's remaining tidal marshes.

Foster City's biological resources face ongoing challenges from habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and urban runoff. Shoreline habitats are often constrained by levees and adjacent development, limiting their ecological function and the ability of species to migrate or adapt to environmental change. These pressures are compounded by climate-related stressors such as rising sea levels and shifting precipitation patterns.

Within this complex landscape, areas along Belmont Slough, Seal Slough, and underutilized park edges offer potential for habitat restoration and rewilding. These efforts could strengthen native biodiversity, improve habitat connectivity, and help restore key ecosystem services. In addition, Foster City's extensive park system presents a valuable resource for targeted naturalization and improved linkages between natural areas to support wildlife movement and expand urban habitat in meaningful ways.

DRAFT REDLINE

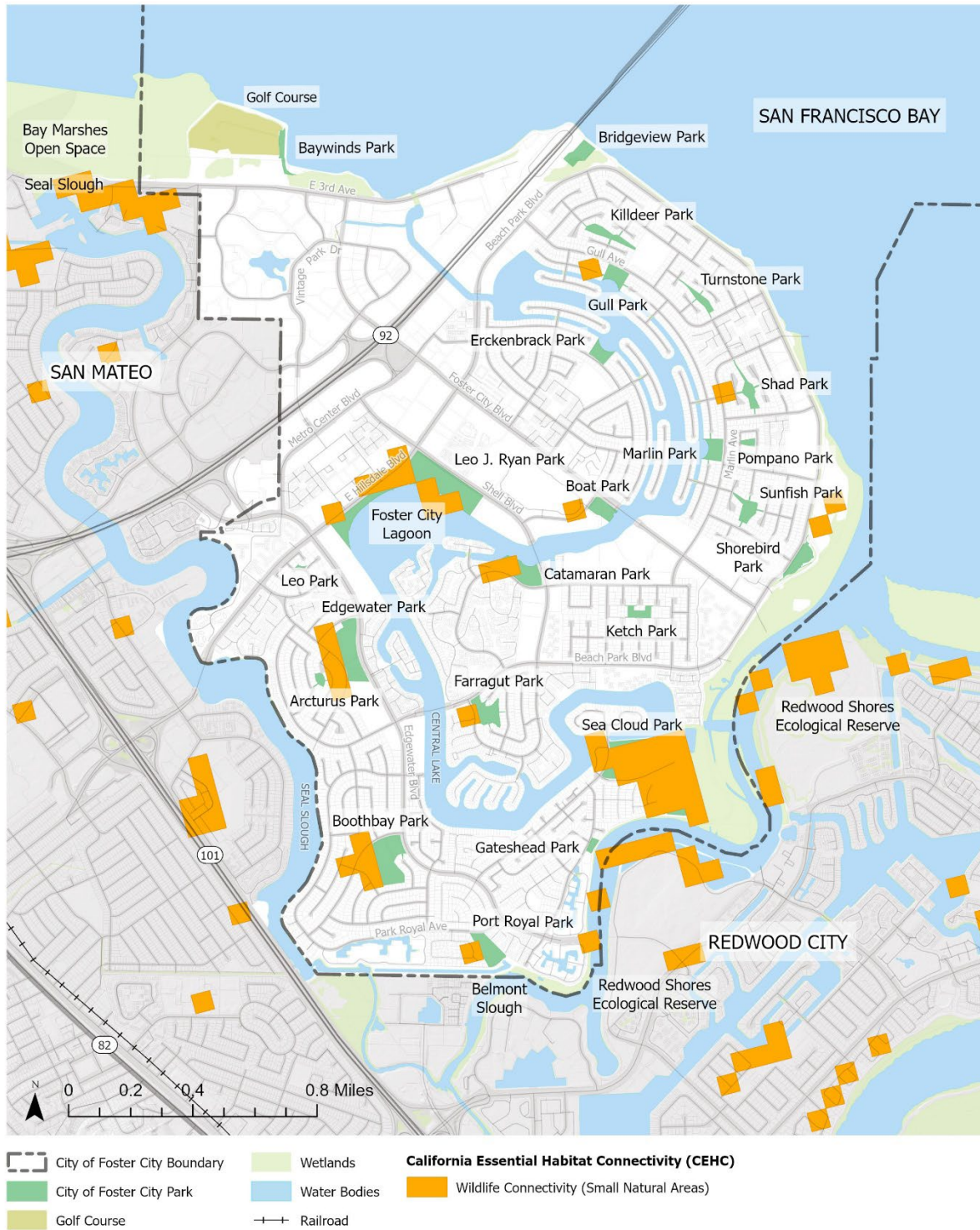
Wildlife Connectivity

Wildlife movement in Foster City is shaped, and often limited, by urban infrastructure such as roads, levees, and dense development. Natural movement corridors are limited, typically confined to narrow greenways, fragmented shoreline edges, and the lagoon system. While the lagoon offers aesthetic and recreational value to residents and visitors as well as some habitat potential, its channelized design, steep edges, and proximity to human activity reduces its habitat value for many species.

Recognizing the importance of habitat connectivity, State law (AB 1889) now requires cities and counties to assess and enhance habitat connectivity for wildlife through their general plans. In Foster City, barriers to wildlife movement include:

- Highway 92, which disrupts north–south continuity
- Urban lighting, which interferes with the behavior of nocturnal species
- Recreational activity, which can fragment habitats and deter sensitive wildlife

As shown in Figure 5, much of Foster City is either urban or suburban, and therefore wildlife corridors and nursery sites are not present in much of the city. Wildlife connectivity areas are fragmented, and green spaces are often landscaped for recreation rather than habitat value, reducing their ecological function. However, with strategic design and targeted improvements, these spaces can support both human and ecological needs. Enhancing shoreline habitats, planting suitable vegetation, and implementing wildlife-friendly infrastructure such as culverts or buffer zones can create pathways for wildlife movement and better contribute to a resilient and biodiverse city.

Figure 5 Wildlife Connectivity Areas

Data provided by City of Foster City, 2025;
Caltrans and CDFG, 2025.

Coastal Resources



Foster City, 2025.

Foster City's shoreline borders the San Francisco Bay and includes estuarine and brackish marshes, particularly near Belmont Slough and the Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve. These areas serve as vital feeding and nesting grounds for numerous bird species, including some species of special concern. The Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve, a protected 268-acre salt marsh, supports sensitive species such as the Alameda song sparrow and Ridgeway's rail and serves as a critical ecological buffer against urban development.

Foster City has made significant investments in engineered flood protection systems, including recent upgrades to its levee system, which play a critical role in safeguarding the community from storm surge and sea level rise. These infrastructure improvements represent an essential layer of protection for residents and assets. At the same time, this flood protection infrastructure can constrain natural ecological processes and limit the inland migration of wetlands, which play a vital role in preserving local ecological integrity by providing habitat for diverse wildlife, serving as temporary resting areas for migrating species, filtering water pollutants, and offering natural flood protection. As climate change accelerates, coastal ecosystems face increasing stress from rising groundwater, saline intrusion, and greater exposure of infrastructure. The continued loss of tidal marshes would reduce habitat availability and diminish the shoreline's natural ability to buffer wave energy and filter pollutants.

Regional planning efforts, such as those led by [the BCDP San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission](#) and OneShoreline, recognize the importance of complementing traditional infrastructure with natural systems, such as tidal marshes and mudflats, to strengthen shoreline resilience. By restoring degraded habitat and integrating nature-based features into levee design, Foster City can build on its recent investments to ensure long-term ecological and community resilience.

Climate Considerations

Climate change presents significant risks to Foster City's biological resources. Rising temperatures, shifts in precipitation patterns, and sea level rise pose risks to habitat health, food and water availability for

wildlife, while potentially limiting access to necessary wildlife connectivity and migration corridors. Low-lying shoreline habitats face potential inundation in the future, which would result in the loss of critical wetlands, biodiversity corridors, and coastal buffer zones. Urban green spaces, such as parks and vegetated areas along the lagoon and coastline, can serve as important refuges and movement corridors for wildlife. However, they currently offer limited climate resilience opportunities due to sparse tree canopy and fragmented natural areas.

Adapting to climate change requires a multifaceted strategy that includes nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration, permeable surfaces, and urban forestry. These solutions can help preserve biodiversity and support species resilience, as well as other benefits such as mitigating flooding, reducing urban heat, and supporting habitat migration. In addition, the city is exploring a citywide tree canopy study, which, when paired with surface heat mapping and social vulnerability data, could guide future investments in climate-resilient green infrastructure and improve neighborhood-level adaptation strategies.

Water Resources



Foster City, 2025.

Foster City maintains a network of engineered lagoons and canals designed primarily for stormwater management, flood control, and community recreation. These water features also provide secondary habitat for birds and aquatic species and are not used for potable water supply. The city's drinking water is entirely imported via the Estero Municipal Improvement District, supplied by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's Hetch Hetchy system. While Foster City does not currently utilize local groundwater for its municipal supply, it remains vulnerable to regional groundwater-level fluctuations driven by climate change. The development of this Element included coordination with EMID, and review of and alignment with applicable water supply, water quality, and groundwater management plans.

Water Quality

Drinking water quality in Foster City is high, with the Estero Municipal Improvement District meeting or exceeding all State and federal standards. Water is treated at regional facilities before distribution and is continuously monitored. However, water quality issues are more pronounced in the city's lagoon system, where elevated bacteria levels, especially enterococci, have led to periodic beach closures. These issues are largely attributed to wildlife waste, stormwater runoff, and overgrown aquatic vegetation.

To address lagoon water quality, the City has adopted a Lagoon Management Plan, emphasizing routine monitoring, vegetation control, and public education. The city also participates in regional programs to prevent stormwater pollution and maintain compliance with the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. While efforts are underway, water quality in the lagoon and shoreline areas will remain a concern until planned actions for improving runoff management, enhancing ecological buffers, and managing urban wildlife populations are implemented.

Water Supply

Foster City's water supply is entirely imported through the Hetch Hetchy system, managed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. During normal years, supply is projected to be adequate through 2045. However, in single and multiple dry years, demand is projected to outpace supply, with deficits exceeding 800 million gallons annually by 2045 under drought conditions. In the event of a water shortage, the Estero Municipal Improvement District would implement its Water Shortage Contingency Plan which outlines a suite of water demand reduction measures of varying severity designed to protect health and safety, minimize economic disruption, and preserve environmental and community assets. Nonetheless, the City is vulnerable to regional supply constraints, especially as climate change increases the frequency of dry periods.

Given this dependency, continued participation in regional conservation programs, alternative supply planning, and demand management will be essential. The Estero Municipal Improvement District's Urban Water Management Plan identifies the need for coordinated planning with regional partners and highlights the importance of preparing for worst-case drought scenarios. While recycled water is not currently used, it presents potential opportunities to supplement current and future water supplies and serve as an emergency backup option as climate risks evolve.

Climate Considerations

Climate change poses several risks to Foster City's water infrastructure and management systems. Rising sea levels may compromise the lagoon's drainage function, particularly during high tides or storm events. Higher average temperatures could increase lagoon evaporation and elevate potential for harmful algal blooms. This increased potential is driven by higher concentrations of contaminants and warmer water temperatures that promote algal growth, threatening habitat quality and recreational use. Additionally, altered precipitation patterns are expected to intensify stormwater runoff, potentially degrading lagoon water quality and overwhelming existing infrastructure. Groundwater rise is also projected to threaten buried infrastructure due to rising sea levels, leading to potential seawater intrusion, and contribute to inland flooding. Although the city is not dependent on groundwater as a water source, rising water tables could affect public utilities, natural open spaces, and impact natural and landscaped vegetation.

To proactively address these risks, Foster City can continue to implement targeted adaptation strategies such as strengthening of levees, improved lagoon circulation, shoreline wetland restoration, and

integration of green stormwater infrastructure. Proactive monitoring of groundwater conditions, in collaboration with regional agencies, will be critical for planning for future risks. Ensuring the continued function of the lagoon as both a flood control and ecological system will be essential in the face of climate variability and sea level rise.

Air Quality

Air quality in Foster City is significantly influenced by regional emissions, increasing wildfire smoke frequency due to climate change, and local traffic. The city currently lacks comprehensive, localized air quality monitoring infrastructure to track these impacts accurately and instead relies on nearby stations for data, which may not accurately reflect localized conditions. Indoor air quality trends in public buildings are also not well-documented, leaving gaps in understanding the full scope of exposure.

Emerging challenges for air quality in Foster City include increased wildfire smoke events, rising temperatures, and cumulative pollution from nearby urban centers. High temperatures can increase the formation of ground-level ozone, while inversions can trap pollutants close to the ground, leading to increased concentrations of harmful substances. Low-cost sensor deployment, improved building ventilation systems, and cumulative exposure mapping can better assess air quality risks. Coordinated efforts with Bay Area Air Quality Management District and regional grant programs may support these actions and contribute to healthier environments for vulnerable populations.

Energy Resources

Foster City has implemented a range of initiatives that provide a strong foundation for further opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy resilience through upgrades to its parks, public buildings, and community infrastructure. Existing municipal facilities, including - community centers powered by Peninsula Clean Energy's 100 percent carbon-free electricity program, ECO100, can further reduce electricity use and light pollution through energy efficiency upgrades like LED lighting, motion sensors, timers, and renewable-powered water management systems. In areas where conventional grid connections are costly or impractical, solar-powered lighting offers a low-maintenance, renewable solution. Energy conservation also supports broader climate and sustainability goals, particularly when paired with smart building materials and all-electric systems in future facility upgrades or new construction.

The City is also well-positioned to expand on-site renewable energy and support clean transportation infrastructure. [The Foster City Library currently includes roof-mounted solar panels and a](#) recent feasibility study identified [other](#) municipal buildings, such as the ~~library and~~ forthcoming recreation center, as viable sites for photovoltaic (PV) systems. These, along with potential solar canopies over parking lots or maintenance buildings, could be paired with battery storage to improve emergency preparedness and grid reliability. Parks and civic buildings are also key locations for expanding EV charging infrastructure, particularly through public-private partnerships. Education and community engagement will play a central role in cultivating support for these initiatives, using public spaces as platforms for demonstrations, signage, and workshops that promote energy literacy and sustainable living practices.

Engagement Results for Conservation

During the development of the Conservation Element, residents shared priorities and perspectives on the natural resources and conservation strategies for Foster City through pop-up events, focus group discussions, a workshop, and a survey. Key findings from these activities are summarized below.

Community Priorities Survey

A critical component of community input was the Community Priorities Survey conducted in June 2025 via online questionnaire. The Foster City community expressed strong support for enhancing parks, trails, and natural spaces, with a focus on comfort, connectivity, and safety. Amenities such as restrooms, shade, seating, and wildlife viewing platforms were identified as top priorities for improving trail use. The Levee Pedway is frequently used by residents, and there is significant interest in expanding trail and bike lane connections. Conservation emerged as a clear community value, with most respondents rating it as very or extremely important and voicing strong support for rewilding efforts like native habitat restoration and pollinator-friendly landscaping. While enthusiasm for rewilding was high, some concerns were raised about pests, upkeep, and potential changes to recreational spaces.

Survey participants identified key environmental concerns, including sea level rise, storm flooding, water scarcity, and poor air quality. Residents placed a high value on open spaces that offer opportunities to connect with nature, support biodiversity, provide shade, and reduce climate-related risks. The most desired improvements included more walking and biking paths, increased tree cover, and restoring natural areas with native vegetation. There was also strong support for integrating green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and wetlands, and expanding educational features and access for all ages and abilities.

The community supported a wide range of strategies to protect open space and natural resources, including stronger zoning regulations, public-private partnerships, volunteer maintenance programs, and development incentives. Residents expressed a clear desire for the Foster City Lagoon to support both active and passive recreation, along with aesthetic and community uses. In terms of climate communication, respondents wanted more information on local flood risks, sea level rise, and ways to prepare for climate impacts. Overall, the results reflect a community that values nature, recognizes the urgency of climate adaptation, and is eager to engage in shaping a more sustainable and resilient future.

Community Engagement Takeaways

Key themes emerged from the outreach and engagement process:

Support for Rewilding with Thoughtful Design



- There is strong community interest in rewilding efforts that restore native habitats, support pollinators, and enhance the ecological function of parks and open spaces.
- At the same time, many want these naturalized areas to be designed and maintained in ways that remain usable, safe, and visually appealing – balancing ecological goals with everyday recreation and comfort.

- Concerns were raised about the potential to attract nuisance wildlife such as geese, as well as the need for clear upkeep and visibility. The feedback underscores a desire for rewilding that enhances, rather than limits, the public's experience of open space.

Naturalized and Functional Open Spaces



- Community members want parks and open spaces to feel more ecologically rich while remaining comfortable and accessible, with amenities like shade, seating, and natural materials integrated into the landscape.
- There is interest in expanding tree cover and using native vegetation to provide cooling, habitat value, and a more natural aesthetic across the city's open spaces.
- Some suggested that conservation-oriented spaces still need to accommodate daily use, such as keeping restrooms open longer and providing places to rest, so that naturalized areas remain welcoming and inclusive.

Concern for Climate Risks



- Sea level rise, stormwater flooding, water scarcity, and declining air quality were repeatedly raised as major concerns.
- Open space is seen as a critical tool for addressing climate impacts, offering functions like cooling, habitat protection, and stormwater infiltration.
- Community members want more communication from the City about local flood risks, sea level rise adaptation, and practical steps households can take to prepare.

Sustainable Open Space



- There is strong backing for strategies like zoning protections, green infrastructure, and developer incentives that prioritize open space and ecological function.
- Volunteer programs and partnerships with local organizations are viewed as effective ways to support ongoing restoration and stewardship.
- People value the Foster City Lagoon as a space for both active and passive recreation, and want it protected for future generations.

Conservation Goals, Policies and Programs

Biological Resources

Goal C-1 **Natural habitat is protected and restored to support native biodiversity, improve ecological function, and enhance the resilience of open spaces.**

Policy C-1.1 **Wildlife Habitat.** Protect and enhance Foster City's existing habitats, including tidal wetlands, mudflats, and urban forests, to support native biodiversity and ecological health.

Policy C-1.2 **Habitat Protection.** Promote the restoration and naturalization of degraded or underutilized areas, particularly along the shoreline and coastal trails, through native vegetation planning and habitat enhancement.

Policy C-1.3 **Support Biodiversity.** Implement maintenance strategies that prioritize native vegetation and manage detrimental invasive plant and animal species in natural habitat areas. Allow non-native plants only if they support aesthetics or habitat without harming biodiversity. Select vegetation that attracts desirable species and discourages those that pose nuisance or ecological risks.

Goal C-2 **Ecological connections between fragmented habitats are strengthened to facilitate wildlife movement, support species adaptation, and minimize the impacts of urban development on biodiversity.**

Policy C-2.1 **Habitat Connectivity.** Improve connectivity between fragmented parks, shoreline areas, and natural spaces to support wildlife movement through restored corridors and green infrastructure.

Policy C-2.2 **Wildlife Movement Design.** Incorporate wildlife-friendly infrastructure, such as underpasses, vegetated buffers, and light controls into public infrastructure and land use planning.

Policy C-2.3 **Movement Mitigation.** Assess and mitigate barriers to wildlife movement caused by roads, levees, and urban development.

Policy C-2.4 **Connectivity Partnerships.** Coordinate with regional partners, including OneShoreline, to support connectivity and flood resilience through multi-benefit projects.

- Policy C-2.5 **Habitat Improvements.** Identify and prioritize habitat improvements that benefit migratory species, including birds and small mammals, in accordance with AB 1889.
- Goal C-3 Foster City's natural systems are resilient to the impacts of climate change.**
- Policy C-3.1 **Climate Conscious Shoreline Management.** Integrate sea level rise, flooding, and extreme weather considerations into shoreline habitat management and restoration.
- Policy C-3.2 **Nature-Based Solutions.** Implement nature-based solutions, such as wetland buffers and marsh migration zones, to protect both ecological and human systems.
- Policy C-3.3 **Ecological Transitions.** ~~Ensure-Support~~ conservation strategies account for sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, and climate-driven shifts in habitat type, extent, and species composition.
- Goal C-4 A community-wide ethic of environmental stewardship is fostered by engaging residents, regional partners, and organizations in the protection and enhancement of local natural resources.**
- Policy C-4.1 **Public Awareness.** Increase public awareness of urban wildlife, habitat conservation, and sustainable coexistence through education and outreach.
- Policy C-4.2 **Community Stewardship.** Encourage community participation in habitat restoration, monitoring, and stewardship activities.
- Policy C-4.3 **Conservation Partnerships.** Partner with regional agencies, nonprofits, and academic institutions to advance conservation and resilience objectives.

Water Resources

- Goal C-5 Water resources are efficiently managed to ~~ensure-support~~ a sustainable, high-quality water supply for the community while promoting conservation, reducing demands, and protecting water systems from climate change.**
- Policy C-5.1 **Water Quality Risk Prevention.** Address water quality risks associated with climate change, including warming temperatures, increased turbidity, and the potential for algal blooms in the lagoon and stormwater systems.
- Policy C-5.2 **Water Quality Maintenance.** Support ongoing maintenance and timely replacement of aging lagoon, stormwater, and water infrastructure to protect ecological function and recreational use.

- Policy C-5.3 **Pollution Reduction.** Improve lagoon circulation and implement pollution control measures to maintain water quality and mitigate contamination from urban runoff and other sources.
- Policy C-5.4 **Water Quality Programing.** Expand participation in regional water quality programs, including the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program, to better manage stormwater runoff and protect the San Francisco Bay.
- Policy C-5.5 **Water Quality Monitoring.** Incorporate regular monitoring and public reporting of water quality conditions into city operations to support data-driven decision-making and transparency.
- Goal C-6 Foster City maintains a secure and sustainable water supply to support current and future community needs.**
- Policy C-6.1 **Water Reliability.** Collaborate with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to improve long-term water reliability, conservation strategies, and demand forecasting, especially under future drought conditions.
- Policy C-6.2 **Supplemental Water Supply.** Encourage the Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) to explore alternative or supplemental water supply options and regularly update reliability assessments in response to climate trends.
- Policy C-6.3 **Water Neutrality.** Implement and enforce the 2023 Water Neutrality Ordinance ~~to ensure so~~ that new development and redevelopment do not increase overall water demand.
- Policy C-6.4 **Water Conservation.** Integrate water conservation, reuse, and efficiency measures into new development, infrastructure upgrades, and public education initiatives.

Air Quality

Goal C-7 Foster City is a healthy and climate-resilient community through reduced air pollution and improved air quality.

- Policy C-7.1 **Land Use Alignment.** Align Foster City's land use, transportation, and development decisions with air quality thresholds and best practices established by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and California Air Resources Board (CARB).
- Policy C-7.2 **Air Quality Mitigation.** Incorporate air quality mitigation strategies into land use planning by requiring vegetative buffers, enhanced filtration systems, and site design strategies to reduce exposure near major transportation corridors and pollution sources.

- Policy C-7.3 **Complete Streets.** Encourage smart growth and complete streets principles that integrate air quality protection measures, such as shade trees and green infrastructure.
- Policy C-7.4 **VMT Reduction.** Prioritize transportation and mobility improvements that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and emissions, including expansion of pedestrian, bicycle, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure.
- Policy C-7.5 **Regional Air Quality Coordination.** Enhance regional coordination and compliance with BAAQMD programs and participate in local implementation of Spare the Air and other outreach initiatives.
- Goal C-8 Foster City's neighborhoods are healthy, resilient, and equitable, with clean air and access to green spaces for all residents.**
- Policy C-8.1 **Greening Air Improvements.** Expand urban greening strategies that improve air quality and reduce urban heat, including targeted tree canopy expansion and the use of vegetated buffers in high-exposure areas.
- Policy C-8.2 **Tree City.** Pursue Tree City USA designation and adopt a citywide tree ordinance that guides planting, removal, and long-term care of public trees, with a focus on air quality and shade equity.
- Policy C-8.3 **Air Quality Co-Benefits.** Design public parks and open spaces to maximize air quality benefits while supporting climate adaptation and equitable access to green space.
- Policy C-8.4 **Air Quality Engagement.** Promote public awareness and engagement on air quality topics through education programs, signage, and collaboration with regional partners.

Energy Resources

- Goal C-9 Foster City's public facilities and infrastructure operate sustainably with low-energy use and resilient systems that support a clean and climate-ready future.**
- Policy C-9.1 **Improved Energy Efficiency.** Improve energy efficiency in parks, public buildings, and community centers through lighting upgrades, smart controls, and design strategies that reduce both electricity consumption and light pollution.
- Policy C-9.2 **Renewable Energy Expansion.** Expand the use of on-site renewable energy systems, particularly photovoltaic (PV) installations and battery storage, on City-owned facilities where cost-effective.

- Policy C-9.3 **EV Charging.** Support the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in public parks, community centers, and City parking lots to enable a transition to clean transportation.
- Policy C-9.4 **Low-Carbon Construction.** Promote all-electric systems and low-carbon construction practices in the design and retrofit of new municipal facilities.
- Policy C-9.5 **Energy Outreach.** Use public spaces, such as parks, libraries, and community centers, as platforms for energy-related education, outreach, and engagement.
- Policy C-9.6 **Energy Efficiency in Green Infrastructure.** Integrate energy efficiency and renewable energy into green infrastructure projects to enhance co-benefits for climate resilience, water conservation, and long-term cost savings.

DRAFT REDLINE

Implementation Programs

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-a	Explore opportunities for habitat restoration and naturalization within the existing parks system through the following steps: ▪ Assess and map high-potential sites (e.g., degraded park edges, canal embankments, underutilized shoreline areas); ▪ Integrate habitat strategies into the next Parks Master Plan update or as part of implementation actions; ▪ Develop guidance for incorporating native habitat elements into future park renovations, new park development, and routine maintenance; and ▪ Coordinate with restoration partners, schools, and community groups for implementation and stewardship.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.1, C-1.2, C-1.3
C-b	Seek funding for a long-term maintenance plan for restored and naturalized habitat areas that includes seasonal invasive species removal, native plant reestablishment, irrigation reduction, and trash/debris removal. Consider pilot programs with community stewardship groups to assist with hands-on maintenance and monitoring.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.1, C-1.2
C-c	Design and introduce educational signage at key natural areas (e.g., Belmont Slough, shoreline parks) with clear, engaging content about native ecosystems, local wildlife, and restoration goals. Include multilingual content, maps, and QR codes linking to informational websites. Encourage stewardship behaviors through signage, like staying on trails and avoiding disturbance of wildlife.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Mid-term	C-1.3
C-d	Continue to explore suitable levee-adjacent zones to retrofit with ecotone features that support both flood protection and habitat enhancement. Engage with OneShoreline, regional restoration partners, and permitting agencies to align with long-term sea level rise adaptation planning and pursue funding for design and implementation.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-1.3

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-e	Explore opportunities to better understand and improve ecological connectivity across the city. This may include studying ecological connectivity and mapping of habitat patches, identifying barriers (e.g., roads, fences, lighting), and evaluating where enhancements could support multi-species movement, especially along Belmont Slough, lagoon edges, and gaps between open spaces. Where feasible, consider coordination with regional experts and agencies to assess general habitat needs and potential improvements over time.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	C-2.1, C-2.2, C-2.3, C-2.5
C-f	Encourage the inclusion of wildlife-supportive features into infrastructure and discretionary development projects where appropriate. These features may include safe road crossings, native vegetative buffers, wildlife-friendly fencing, down-shielded lighting, and mitigation measures for existing barriers.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	C-2.2, C-2.3, C-2.5
C-g	Assess local habitat mitigation opportunities (e.g., offsetting development impacts) and create a grant funding strategy targeting AB 1889, Wildlife Conservation Board, and Proposition 1 programs. Design packaged projects with detailed scopes, cost estimates, and co-benefits to enhance competitiveness for funding.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term	C-2.1, C-2.5
C-h	Coordinate with OneShoreline, San Mateo Resource Conservation District, nonprofit organizations, and research institutions on joint grant applications, technical studies, and pilot projects that advance shared conservation goals, consistent with this Conservation Element.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-4.3
C-i	Enhance the City's water quality monitoring program to include indicators influenced by climate change, such as water temperature, turbidity, algal growth, and bacteria levels. Encourage the installation of real-time sensors at key locations in the lagoon system and stormwater outfalls, and use this data to inform water quality advisories, infrastructure upgrades, and restoration planning.	Public Works		Mid-term	C-5.1
C-j	Consider capital improvement project phasing to minimize disruption and align with sea level rise adaptation efforts.	Public Works	Parks and Recreation	Long-term	C-5.2

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-k	Continue to implement targeted strategies to reduce non-point source pollution, such as installing pet waste stations in parks, increasing street sweeping near outfalls, and adding trash capture devices in key storm drains. Coordinate these efforts with the Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan to reduce the impacts of the goose population on water quality. Seek to pair these efforts with a multilingual public education campaign on pollution prevention, lagoon protection, and green infrastructure.	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Community Development	Ongoing	C-5.3
C-l	Support increased City participation in regional water quality initiatives, such as the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program. Identify City staff to represent Foster City in interagency meetings and explore co-funding or joint implementation of stormwater retrofits.	Public Works	Community Development	Mid-term	C-5.4
C-m	Encourage the Estero Municipal Improvement District to explore use of alternative water sources such as greywater or direct potable reuse to support the city's long-term water reliability and sustainability goals.	Public Works/Community Development		Long-term	C-6.2
C-n	Explore additional opportunities to establish partnerships with local and regional agencies and organizations to develop a public outreach campaign to increase awareness of existing water conservation programs and provide education on water conservation, targeting residents, schools, and businesses.	Public Works	Community Development	Long-term	C-6.4
C-o	Develop a set of planning and design guidelines for locating sensitive land uses (e.g., schools, senior housing) near high-traffic roadways. The guidelines should recommend best practices such as building orientation, MERV-13 or higher HVAC filtration, vegetated screening, and site layout strategies to reduce pollutant exposure. Integrate these standards into development review and environmental review processes where feasible.	Community Development	Public Works	Mid-term	C-7.1, C-7.2
C-p	As part of future maintenance projects, identify opportunities to install vegetative buffers, such as hedgerows, or bioswales between roads and sensitive land uses. Prioritize high-performing vegetation species suited to pollution absorption and local climate when installing new landscaping in these areas.	Public Works	Community Development	Ongoing	C-7.2, C-7.3

Number	Program	Lead Department	Supporting Department(s)	Timeframe ¹	Implementing Policy(ies)
C-q	Review and enhance the City's Complete Streets and public realm guidelines to include stormwater planters, permeable paving, and native landscaping as standard components of street design to support air quality, active transportation, and neighborhood cooling, particularly in areas with higher pollution exposure.	Public Works	Community Development	Long-term	C-5.1, C-5.3, C-7.3, C-7.4
C-r	Support ongoing coordination with BAAQMD to ensure <u>help keep</u> the City's plans and policies generally align with regional air quality standards and emission reduction targets. Participate in updates to the Clean Air Plan and pursue grant funding to implement local air quality improvement projects.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Annual	C-7.5
C-s	Conduct a tree inventory and prioritize new plantings near schools and major roads where vegetation can mitigate air quality and urban heat impacts.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Mid-term	C-8.1, C-8.3
C-t	Pursue the development of a tree ordinance that governs planting, maintenance, and removal of City-owned and potentially private trees, including a permit system, replacement ratios, and performance standards. Align ordinance goals with air quality, climate, and equity outcomes.	Parks and Recreation	Community Development	Short-term	C-8.2
C-u	As part of future updates to the Climate Action Plan, update audits of energy use in existing municipal buildings to evaluate efficacy of energy conservation measures. Implement upgrades such as LED lighting, motion sensors, timers, and smart ventilation and irrigation systems in buildings, restrooms, pathways, and sports facilities.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Mid-term	C-9.1, C-9.6
C-v	Advance photovoltaic installations at City-owned buildings and parking lots based on the recent feasibility study, beginning with priority sites like the Library/Community Center and planned Recreation Center. Explore solar canopies over large, paved areas and pair installations with battery storage for emergency backup and energy cost optimization.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Long-term	C-9.2, C-9.6
C-w	Identify opportunities to install EV charging stations at high-traffic public facilities such as community centers, parks, and libraries that are accessible to all residents.	Community Development	Parks and Recreation/Public Works	Long-term	C-9.3

¹ Timeframes are categorized as short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years). Programs that are on an ongoing or annual basis are identified as such.

Full List of Edits as Shown in Red-Lined Versions

Conservation Element

- Page 6
 - Added the Climate Action Plan, Lagoon Management Plan, Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan, Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) Urban Water Management Plan and Water Shortage Contingency Plan, and San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program under “Regional and Local Planning”
- Page 7
 - Removed the note under and updated Figure 3 Community Engagement Overview
- Page 12
 - Spelled out BCDC as “the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission” since that was the first use of the acronym
- Page 15
 - Clarified that the Foster City Library has existing roof-mounted solar panels
- Page 19
 - Changed “ensure” to “support” in Policy C-3.3
 - Changed “ensure” to “support” in Goal C-5
- Page 20
 - Changed “to ensure” to “so” in Policy C-6.3
- Page 26
 - Changed “ensure” to “help keep” in Implementation Program C-r
 - Added a footnote indicating the number of years for each timeframe. Short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years)

Parks and Open Space Element

- Page 4
 - Added the Parks Master Plan, Capital Improvement Program, Lagoon Management Plan, Integrated Adaptive Canada Goose Management Plan, and Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan to the list of regional and local plans
- Page 6
 - Removed the note under and updated Figure 2 Community Engagement Overview
 - Changed total acreage from 133 to 113
 - Removed “and open spaces”

- Added “Many of these spaces are notable for features such as well-maintained landscaping, lagoon and bayfront views, shaded picnic areas, and family-friendly playgrounds that encourage regular use.”
- Page 7
 - Removed “and ecological”
 - Added “holding approximately 1,300 acre-feet of water”
 - Replaced “Poor water quality and an abundant Canadian Geese population has created maintenance and operations challenges for the City and has discouraged recreational use of the Lagoon.” with “Water testing in the lagoon has detected avian DNA, and while the lagoon supports a large Canada Geese population, the results cannot be traced specifically to geese or to any single location. Nevertheless, the presence of Canada Geese contributes to ongoing challenges with cleanliness and maintenance. Outside of designated beach areas, water quality is generally similar to bay water.”
- Page 8
 - Replaced “ensure” with “support”
 - Changed column heading in Table 1 from “Amenities” to “Major Amenities”
 - Removed “BBQ” from Boothbay Park amenities
 - Removed “Parking Lot” from Leo J. Ryan Park amenities
- Page 9
 - Updated total neighborhood park acreage from 34.9 to 33.7
 - Added “Beach” to Gull Park amenities
 - Added “Beach” to Marlin Park amenities
 - Moved Pilgrim Triton under “Mini Parks”
 - Removed “Restroom” from Shad Park amenities
 - Removed a comma from the Sunfish Park amenities list
 - Changed the total number of mini parks from 6 to 8
 - Updated total mini park acreage from 5.7 to 7.5
 - Changed the acreage of Arturus Park from 0.75 to 0.8
 - Changed the acreage of Gateshead Park from 0.1 to 0.7
 - Changed the acreage of Leo Park from 0.015 to 0.1
 - Removed “BBQ” from Baywinds Park amenities
 - Updated the subtotal number of parks from 23 to 25
 - Updated the subtotal of acres from 112.9 to 113.6
- Page 13

- Revised the text under “Park Acreage” to remove language regarding LOS standards and added that an appropriate LOS standard will be set in the future
 - Changed the total acres for parks from 112.9 to 113.6
 - Changes the grand total of acres from 134.9 to 135.6
- Page 16
 - Removed the word “passive” from the first paragraph
 - Added “potentially,” removed “low impact,” and removed “such as wildlife viewing, nature exploration, and picnicking” at the end of the second paragraph
- Page 21
 - Added “Participation is reinforced by the settings themselves: waterfront views at Leo Ryan, shaded lawns at Boothbay, and playgrounds near picnic areas all create inviting environments for both organized programs and casual community use.”
 - Replaced “to ensure programs are responding to” with “with the goal of keeping programs responsive to”
- Page 23
 - Replaced “ensure” with “promote”
 - Removed the bullet point on staffing deficiency
- Page 31
 - Replaced “ensure” with “aim for” and replaced “are” with “to be” in Policy POS 1.1
 - Replaced “ensure” with “support” in Policy POS 1.2. Removed “s” from “parks,” changed “comfortable” to “comfort” and replaced “inviting” with “appeal” in Policy POS 1.2
 - Replaced “ensure” with “strive to make” and removed “is” in Policy POS 1.3
 - Replaced “ensure” with “promote” in Policy POS 2.2
- Page 33
 - Replaced “ensure” with “support” in Policy POS 7.3
- Page 34
 - Revised Implementation Program POS-f
 - Added a new Implementation Program POS-g
- Page 35
 - Replaced “ensure” with “maintain” in Implementation Program POS-w (previously POS-v)
- Page 36

- Added a footnote indicating the number of years for each timeframe. Short-term (1-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (10+ years)



General Plan Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element

Engagement Results Summary

prepared by

City of Foster City

Community Development Department

610 Foster City Boulevard

Foster City, California 94404

Contact: Vanessa Brannon, Senior Management Analyst

prepared with the assistance of

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

66 Franklin Street, Suite 200

Oakland, California 94607

September 2025

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Appendices

Appendix A	Community Priorities Survey Results
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1 Introduction

The City of Foster City has undertaken a series of engagement activities to inform the updates to its Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element. These efforts were designed to capture a wide range of community voices, from residents who regularly use the City's parks to regional organizations focused on conservation and resilience. Engagement activities included a community priorities survey, two pop-up events, a joint workshop, two focus groups, formal consultation with local tribes under Senate Bill (SB) 18, and a public comment period. The concurrently developed Parks Master Plan also included its own engagement process, some of which overlapped with these activities. While the General Plan updates drew from that shared input where relevant, activities scoped specifically for the Parks Master Plan are not included in this summary, as they are documented in a separate summary of engagement. Together, these activities provided a comprehensive understanding of the community's priorities, concerns, and aspirations for the future of Foster City's parks, natural resources, and open spaces.

2 Engagement Activity Results

2.1 Community Priorities Survey

The Community Priorities Survey was designed to build upon the input provided through surveys collected for the Parks Master Plan effort and establish baseline information about resident values, preferences, and concerns regarding Foster City's park system and natural resources. It was distributed both digitally and at in-person events, ensuring that residents across different demographics could participate. Ninety-two responses to the survey were received. Survey questions and responses collected are found in Attachment A.

Survey results revealed strong support for improving trail amenities, such as additional shade, seating, and restrooms. Respondents also identified the need for better wayfinding signage and lighting to improve safety along paths and in park spaces. Rewilding efforts, such as restoring native habitats, expanding pollinator-friendly landscapes, and increasing tree canopy, were broadly supported, though some residents expressed concerns about pests, invasive species, and the long-term maintenance requirements of naturalized landscapes.

Environmental concerns featured prominently in responses. Residents expressed a high level of concern about sea level rise, flooding from both storms and groundwater rise, and the potential impacts of climate change on local biodiversity. Air quality and extreme heat were also identified as important issues. When asked about desired improvements, respondents prioritized expanded opportunities for walking and biking, more naturalized open spaces, and restoration of lagoon and shoreline habitats. The lagoon was viewed as both a recreational and community gathering space, valued for its boating and birdwatching opportunities as well as its role as an aesthetic and social focal point. These insights provided clear direction that both comfort amenities and ecological resilience should be central to policy development.

2.2 Pop-Up Events

Two pop-up events were held at the Off the Grid food truck event and Foster City Farmer's Market to engage residents who might not otherwise attend formal meetings. The purpose of the pop-ups was to build awareness of the Element updates, introduce draft ideas, and invite casual, hands-on participation in shaping policy directions.

Each event featured three activities designed to spark dialogue and collect meaningful input. The "What Did We Miss?" wall allowed participants to add sticky notes highlighting issues or opportunities they felt had been overlooked, resulting in comments that reinforced the need for shoreline restoration, expanded shade in parks, and continued attention to lagoon water quality. A "Vision Wall" invited residents to describe their aspirations for Foster City's future parks and open spaces. The responses created a collage of community visions centered on resilient natural areas, inclusive and family-friendly parks, and a stronger sense of connection to the lagoon and bayfront. Finally, a "Spin-the-Wheel" activity engaged participants of all ages in conversations about topics such as water conservation, local wildlife, and climate resilience, while also drawing attention to the range of strategies the City is considering.

More than 800 community members were reached through the pop-up events held for both the General Plan Updates and Parks Master Plan. The casual and interactive setting encouraged participation from families and residents who might not have engaged in a more traditional workshop, broadening the diversity of voices that informed the planning process.

Feedback at the pop-ups consistently highlighted Leo J. Ryan Park as the community's most valued and popular park, particularly for its waterfront access and role as a hub for events. When asked what they would like to see more of, participants identified splash pads, expanded beach access, and additional trees and shaded areas as top priorities. Residents also voiced appreciation for the City's existing parks, noting the cleanliness, sports facilities, and community events like the Fourth of July celebration as strengths. In terms of future vision, community members emphasized the need for new amenities, maintenance improvements, and more programming opportunities. Many expressed a desire for spaces that better support family-friendly recreation and opportunities for cultural and outdoor events. Across multiple pop-ups, participants also identified the need for improved restroom availability, especially in high-use parks and during large events.

Finally, while there was strong support for natural resource stewardship and rewilding concepts, some residents raised concerns about the potential for rewilding to attract additional Canada geese, which already create maintenance and usability challenges in waterfront parks. Participants asked how the City might mitigate these impacts while still pursuing habitat restoration goals. This feedback underscores both enthusiasm for ecological improvements and the importance of balancing them with practical management strategies.

2.3 Joint Workshop

The joint workshop served as a central forum for presenting findings from the Parks Master Plan process and sharing draft concepts for the General Plan Element updates. The workshop was designed both to educate participants about the purpose of the updates and to collect detailed feedback on draft policies and design ideas.

The session began with an overview of existing conditions, followed by presentations of draft park design concepts and policy themes. Participants were then invited to engage directly with large-format boards displaying proposed improvements. Feedback from the workshop highlighted a desire for improved shade and seating, upgraded play areas, and more accessible trail connections. Residents also raised concerns about lagoon cleanliness and the impacts of geese on the usability of parks, reinforcing issues previously noted in the Community Priorities Survey, included as Attachment A to this report.

Regarding conservation topics, participants strongly supported habitat restoration, shoreline resilience, and educational opportunities related to environmental stewardship. Many emphasized the importance of incorporating nature-based solutions, such as living shorelines, into future flood protection projects. The workshop drew forty-six attendees, and the discussions underscored a recurring theme across engagement activities: residents want a balance between recreational opportunities and the protection of natural systems.

2.4 Focus Groups

2.4.1 Community Organizations Focus Group

The community organizations focus group was held on August 11, 2025, and brought together representatives from local groups that serve a variety of community needs. representatives from local groups serving a variety of recreational and community needs. Attendees included representatives from the Foster City Little League, Peninsula Youth Soccer Club, Peninsula Youth Bocce, the Rotary Club, and residents active in the City's Sustainability Committee and bicycling community.

The purpose of the focus group was to explore how updated policies could better address equity, access, and programming considerations within the parks and open space system. Discussion was structured around a series of open-ended questions designed to draw on local knowledge and lived experience. Participants were asked whether the draft policies adequately addressed park accessibility disparities; what improvements and amenities should be prioritized; how well the Elements support inclusive, multigenerational programming; what types of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities are most needed; whether the policies were strong enough to protect scenic, cultural, and tribal resources; and what role community groups might play in co-stewarding parks and open spaces.

Feedback emphasized the importance of equitable access to safe, well-maintained, and welcoming parks. Lighting was raised repeatedly as a concern for both sports groups and casual users, particularly at Sea Cloud and Catamaran Parks. Shade and seating were also identified as needs, especially for seniors and families. Specific requests included fences around bocce courts, improved goose management, more recycling receptacles, and expanded access to electricity in parks to support community events. Programming was discussed as being just as important as physical improvements, with calls for expanded indoor facilities for basketball, volleyball, and table tennis, and a general community space similar to the San Bruno recreation center. Attendees also expressed interest in playing a more active role in volunteer cleanups, stewardship, and programming, underscoring a strong commitment to civic pride and partnership.

2.4.2 Regional and Technical Non-Governmental Organizations Focus Group

The second focus group was held on August 13, 2025, and convened representatives from regional conservation organizations and technical experts, including the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter and Sustainable San Mateo County.

The discussion centered on opportunities for policy alignment and technical input on issues such as habitat connectivity, invasive species management, and coastal resilience. Questions posed to the group covered a range of themes: whether certain ecological areas or species within Foster City warrant greater policy attention; opportunities to enhance biodiversity and integrate habitat into park design; models for rewilding and approaches to implementing SB 1425 and AB 1889 requirements; strategies for managing invasive species, particularly geese; whether draft policies adequately address stormwater quality, shoreline resilience, and sea level rise; and how Foster City can better align its efforts with regional conservation and data-sharing platforms.

Participants urged the City to take an ambitious approach to rewilding, restoration, and biodiversity protection, referencing state legislation such as SB 1425 and AB 1889. They pointed to nature-based shoreline protection as the most durable and ecologically beneficial strategy for a low-lying, waterfront community like Foster City. Invasive species management was highlighted as an ongoing challenge, with a call for collaborative programs that balance habitat protection with community expectations. The group emphasized that Foster City should strengthen partnerships with regional conservation entities and participate in shared data platforms to improve monitoring, implementation, and accountability.

2.5 Senate Bill (SB) 18 Tribal Consultation Results

In compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 18, the City of Foster City has consulted with California Native American tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated with the planning area. The purpose of this consultation is to provide tribes an opportunity to engage in government-to-government dialogue with the City, to identify potential impacts on cultural resources, and to ensure that tribal perspectives are considered in the development of the Parks and Open Space and Conservation Elements. This process recognizes the importance of tribal cultural resources and traditional knowledge in land use planning.

The SB 18 tribal consultation period was held from June 9 through August 13, 2025. During this period, the City of Foster City contacted nine tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the planning area. No requests for formal consultation were received. As a result, no additional revisions to the Parks and Open Space or Conservation Elements were required based on tribal input.

2.6 Public Comment Period

The draft Parks and Open Space and Conservation Elements were made available for public review from August 8, 2025 through September 2, 2025. During this period, community members, local organizations, and other stakeholders had the opportunity to provide written comments and participate in public meetings held with the Planning Commission and City Council to share their perspectives on the proposed policies and strategies.

During the public comment period, community members provided a range of feedback on the draft Parks and Open Space and Conservation Elements. Many comments focused on the condition and usability of existing park facilities. For example, residents noted issues with the design and accessibility of play equipment, raising concerns that swings and other structures were not appropriate for all ages. Suggestions were made to modify equipment to better accommodate children, parents, and caregivers, with an emphasis on safety and inclusivity.

Another recurring theme was the need to address lagoon- and shoreline-related challenges, particularly goose management and water quality. Commenters expressed that geese droppings significantly affect the cleanliness and comfort of waterfront parks, reinforcing the importance of continued habitat management strategies identified in the Elements. In addition, commenters called for expanded shade, seating, and restrooms to make parks more comfortable for daily use, especially for seniors and families.

Overall, the public comments were supportive of the direction outlined in the draft Elements, while offering specific, on-the-ground feedback about how proposed policies can translate into tangible improvements for everyday park experiences. These comments helped affirm key themes already identified through earlier engagement, such as comfort amenities, ecological health, and equitable access, while providing practical suggestions to guide implementation.

The comments and comment responses have been summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Public Comments

Commenter Name	Date Received	Comment Summary	Comment Response	Page Number
Public Comments				
Nilofer Motiwala	August 14, 2025	The commenter states that they would like to see all bathrooms stocked with female sanitary products.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
		The commenter asks that cleanup kits, especially the goose-poop kit, be available on-site (not checked out) to encourage use during practices and activities.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
		The commenter requests more water-refill stations and modern bottle-fill fountains across parks.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Evan Adams	August 18, 2025	The commenter states that the Lagoon is described as both a major recreational and ecological water body, which seems inconsistent, and suggests clarifying whether it is primarily recreational or ecological.	The requested edits have been incorporated.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7
		The commenter suggests noting that the lagoon is approximately 213 acres in size to help in planning, and recommends referencing surface area as well as ecological function.	The requested information regarding the volume of water held by the lagoon has been added.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7

	The commenter requests that the City correct the term “Canadian geese” to “Canada geese,” and clarify that avian DNA, rather than Canada goose DNA alone, has been identified as impacting water quality.	“Canadian geese” has been corrected to “Canada geese” and the statement regarding poor lagoon water quality has been corrected to more accurately represent the cause of poor water quality.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 7
	The commenter suggests specifying playgrounds by age range, citing San Mateo and Burlingame as examples, and recommends including age-specific playground types as available in the Parks Master Plan.	The requested information is not available at this time but comment has been passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
	The commenter states that Foster City has annexed Bay Trail land and provides a link to the City’s land use and zoning map. The commenter notes that discussion of privately owned property (APN 096-012-180) on Beach Park Blvd. appears to be a zoning issue, which is outside the scope of the Parks Master Plan.	This comment has been noted. Zoning is not within the scope of this project.	
	The commenter states that there is an existing volleyball court at Boothbay Park and requests that additional volleyball courts needed in the future should be identified as such.	The Element states that the City would need to add one additional volleyball court, accounting for the existing court available at Boothbay Park.	

		The commenter states that adding further shade trees will contribute to mitigating the Canada goose population which could have cascading positive impacts on water quality. The commenter notes the low prevalence of geese at parks with greater volumes of trees.	The comment has been noted. Please refer to the Parks Master Plan for additional information on park design. Additionally, Implementation Program POS-c supports additional tree plantings in parks.	
		The commenter asks whether the golf course could be legally converted to a park.	The comment has been noted for City consideration.	
		The commenter suggests that references to staffing standards should be footnoted or rephrased as best practice benchmarks rather than City facilities, as using them in the plan may be misleading.	Please refer to the Parks Master Plan for more detail on park staffing and maintenance.	
		The commenter asks whether FEMA and NOAA map data used in the document are the most up-to-date, and suggests ensuring correct and current sources.	The maps provided in the Parks and Open Space Assessment and Parks and Open Space Element utilize data that is currently available. Localized data reflecting the upgraded levee is not available at this time.	
		The commenter asks that the City reference the data set used to ensure it is current and state the range. The commenter suggests that the flood inundation map is inaccurate for San Mateo County.	The maps provided in the Parks and Open Space Assessment and Parks and Open Space Element utilize data that is currently available. Localized data reflecting the upgraded levee is not available at this time.	

Andreia Colombo	August 25, 2025	The commenter requests the City to support the community of beach tennis players by allowing players to utilize the sand courts at set times during each week.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Tatiana Gotze	August 25, 2025	The commenter states that the swing structures at Turnstone Park are not designed at appropriate heights. They note the adult swings are too high due to short chains, and the green swing chair for an adult and child is also too high, preventing safe use. The commenter suggests adding longer chains to resolve these issues, recommends adding an infant swing (acknowledging it may require removing another swing), and observes that the current setup is underutilized and potentially unsafe, citing an example of a parent pushing a baby in the green swing instead of sitting with the child.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Raissa Villea	August 26, 2025	The commenter requests to reserve one of the beach courts for beach tennis on certain days of the week.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Isadora Castro Lemos	August 26, 2025	The commenter proposes that the City support beach tennis activities by allowing existing sand courts to be used for beach tennis during certain time slots.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	

Tais Perpetuo	August 26, 2025	The commenter requests the City to support the community of beach tennis players by allowing players to utilize the sand courts at set times during each week.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Sandra Oliveira	August 26, 2025	The commenter requests City support in making Boothbay Park's courts more accessible and inclusive for the community.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Cintia Fernandes	August 26, 2025	The commenter requests the City to support the community of beach tennis players by allowing players to utilize the sand courts at set times during each week.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Dave Rozzi	August 28, 2025	The commenter asks if a community pool is being considered.	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	
Audrey Silverman	August 30, 2025	The commenter states that the swing structures at Turnstone Park are not designed at appropriate heights. They note the adult swings are too high due to short chains, and the green swing chair for an adult and child is also too high, preventing safe use. The commenter suggests adding longer chains to resolve these issues, recommends adding an infant swing (acknowledging it may require removing another swing), and observes that the current setup is underutilized and potentially unsafe, citing an example of a	The request has been noted and passed on to the Parks and Recreation Department for further review.	

		parent pushing a baby in the green swing instead of sitting with the child.		
Evan Adams	September 5, 2025	The commenter submitted an external comment received by the City Council which included a 3D model of recommended improvements to Edgewater Park. The original model and submission were made by Yiming Luo. Luo submits several questions regarding the Parks Master Plan.	The comment has been noted and has been passed to the Parks and Recreation Department and Parks Master Plan consultant team for further review.	

Focus Group Comments			
Foster City Little League, Bocce Ball community, Cycling community, Peninsula Youth Soccer, CSAC, Rotary, Boating community	August 11, 2025	• Need to consider boat access to land around Foster City - access to parks, shopping, restaurants. Foster City has a lot of boaters who like to park their boats to access community amenities. • Parks are generally accessible to those who want to use them. • We need better lighting in most of the parks to make them safer at night. • Need better lighting at Catamaran so that youth can play soccer in the evening during the winter. • Improved shade structures are needed at Booth Bay Park, Catamaran Park. • Gate at Catamaran Park can be problematic - needs replacing or a section that opens or both. It is good for helping to deter the geese but if a ball goes over the fence it's tough to retrieve it. Also, geese have gotten "stuck" on the park side of the fence ; having a section that opens would be helpful. • Bocce Ball courts need more fencing and benches as well as shading.	

	• Outdoor electricity can be a problem for outdoor events. Need outdoor service and ability to plug in multiple appliances (such as coffeemakers). • There is a lack of indoor recreation facilities in FC. The ones that exist require too much coordination. Would like space for indoor basketball, volleyball, events. • Goose poop is a problem getting to the track (Catamaran); a pathway could help to avoid stepping on goose poop. • Groups will be happy to help with educational events (Peninsula Youth Soccer). • Peninsula Youth Soccer provides incentives to their coaches to get to the fields early to clean up goose poop. • Could the City build indoor space (other than the Rec Center) at one of the parks? • If steps down to the water are still being considered for the amphitheater location, please be sure to consider safety, liability, especially during amphitheater events.		
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Susan Lessin, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter and Mollie Carter, Sustainable San Mateo County. August 13, 2025	• The reports were well done. Maps were helpful. The following issues and areas of interest were raised by attendees: • Tree canopy - Foster City has one of the lowest tree canopy percentages in the region; adding details on natural plants and drought resistant plants would be helpful for this section. San Mateo has a Green Streets program that might be worth reviewing. • Coastal Flooding - Foster City has the highest risk of coastal flooding in San Mateo County. • Air Quality - FC is on the high end of the spectrum with a score of 2.5 for particulate matter. • EV Charging - need more focus on multi-family and public charging access; the County as a whole is lacking in access. Sustainable SMC wants to support FC's efforts to add more charging opportunities. Could the City offer incentives for installation of multifamily charging stations?		
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	• Didn't see electrification of municipal buildings in the draft element. Della explained that much of this is covered in the CAP. • OneShoreline is the most important entity with respect to addressing sea level rise; there may be concepts in their Ideas Bank that could be applied. Also, OneShoreline could be helpful with a range of other issues associated with sea level rise in addition to levees. • Geese management - didn't see the plan referenced. • Last mile, electrification, EVs, EV chargers were all mentioned in the CAP. It might be helpful to include a bit more on these issues in the Element. • Vertical levees vs. horizontal levees: vertical levees lead to rising groundwater, subsidence. • Bird boxes - has FC considered them? • Water Quality - The Sierra Club is hoping that data on water quality will be included in quarterly reports on geese management. E-coli is an issue that needs		
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	to be addressed because it limits access to the water. • Goose feces - The Sierra Club would like to see a more aggressive plan for picking up goose feces and is concerned that spraying feces with water will have a negative effect on water quality. • Sea level rise - The Sierra Club is supportive of a regional approach (mentioned by Councilmembers Kiesel and Sullivan). • Regional approach to issues - there is a need for coordinating with other jurisdictions, such as Belmont, Redwood City, and San Mateo regarding geese; there might be additional opportunities for cross-collaboration through county committees and groups such as CCAG and for transportation. Attendees acknowledged that FC has limitations due to not being on a Caltrain line. Is there additional funding through CCAG for shuttles? Is there any additional talk of a ferry line from Foster City? Last mile		
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	issue comes into play. The Sierra Club is against hovercrafts due to the pollution they cause. • Rewilding - balancing act for built out environments. Coyotes create problems for walkers as well as the geese. The coyotes are very used to people and don't run off. There is good signage about coyotes in Foster City; used to have signs regarding feral cats. • Bicycle paths - Most paths are on streets; designated pathways for bicycles would be helpful - see San Mateo's Green Streets program and Menlo Park. <u>Other questions</u> • Recreation Center - is it going to be solar-powered? The Sierra Club recommends no gas and solar powering of the building. They asked if we could explore getting a grant from Peninsula Clean Energy to get on a micro-grid so Foster City's Rec Center is not dependent on PG&E in the event of an outage since the facility will likely be used for an		
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	emergency center/shelter in an emergency. Noted that Burlingame's new community center used the same architect as the Rec Center. The Burlingame center is a very good model. • How often is water quality tested? <u>Other issues raised</u> • The pictures included for the new community center include people engaging with and accessing the water. Ties into water quality testing and plans. • The Sierra Club's CAP committee sent a letter to FC regarding the CAP.		
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3 Conclusion

Taken together, the survey, pop-up events, workshop, and focus groups created a robust picture of Foster City's community priorities. Residents consistently emphasized the dual importance of enhancing everyday park experiences through shade, seating, lighting, and play spaces, while also addressing larger environmental challenges related to habitat restoration, shoreline resilience, and climate change. Regional experts and local organizations reinforced these themes and added perspectives on equity, collaboration, and technical approaches to conservation.

This input has been instrumental in shaping the draft Parks and Open Space and Conservation Elements, ensuring that they reflect both community aspirations and regional best practices. The forthcoming tribal consultation and public comment period will provide additional layers of review and dialogue, continuing the collaborative process that is central to this update.

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Appendix A

Community Priorities Survey Results

Responses Overview Closed

Responses

92



Average Time

09:37



Duration

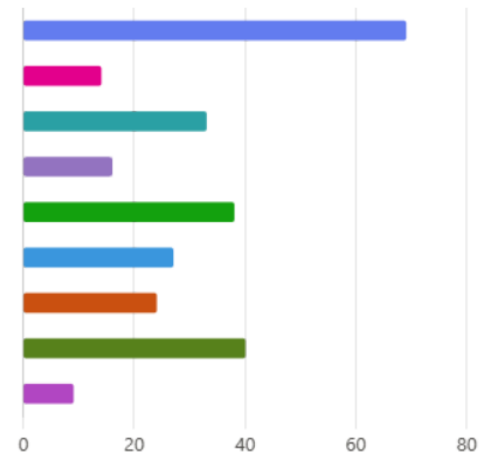
46 Days



1. What type of amenities do you think would enhance your experience of using trails in Foster City? Select all that apply.

- Amenities that provide comfort (e.g. restrooms, shade, seating, etc.)
- Public transit that connects directly to trails
- Additional trail and bike lane connections to other trails
- Additional parking near access points
- Safety features (e.g. emergency call boxes, additional lighting, wayfinding signage etc.)
- Greater accessibility for people of all ages and abilities (rest areas, wheelchair accessibility, etc.)
- Informational and educational signage
- Wildlife lookouts or other viewing platforms
- Other

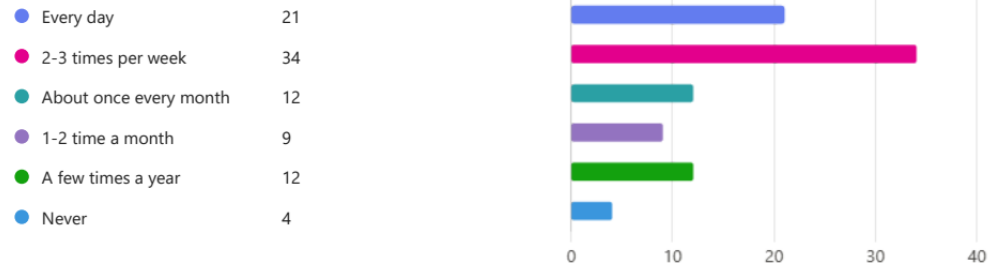
69
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9



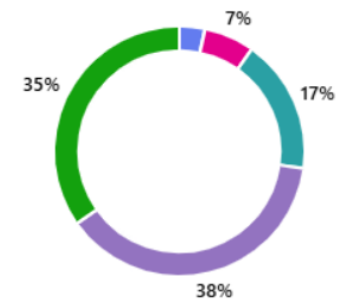
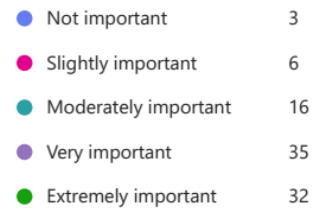
City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



2. How often do you or your family use the Levee Pedway (Bay Trail) in Foster City? The Levee Pedway is the path along Foster City's outer shoreline and along the Seal Slough.

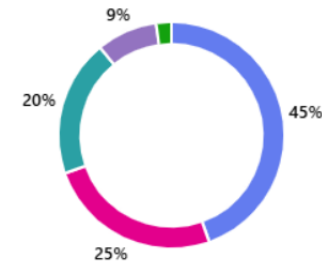


3. How much of a priority is conserving Foster City's natural resources for you personally?



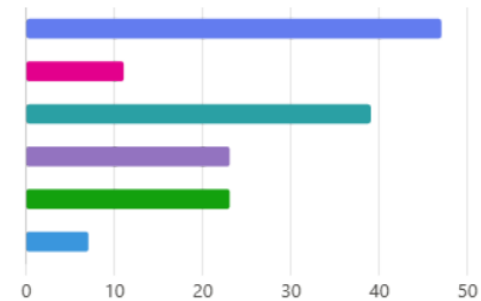
4. How supportive are you of rewilding efforts in Foster City—such as restoring native habitats, increasing native plantings, or reintroducing pollinator-friendly landscapes in parks and open spaces?

Very supportive	41
Somewhat supportive	23
Neutral	18
Somewhat opposed	8
Strongly opposed	2



5. Do you have any concerns about rewilding in Foster City? (Select all that apply)

Potential increase in pests or invasive species (e.g. mosquitoes, rodents, geese, etc.)	47
Safety or visibility concerns	11
Maintenance or upkeep of natural areas	39
Changes to recreational spaces I currently use	23
No concerns	23
Other	7

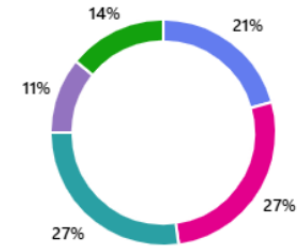


City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



6. Would you be interested in participating in community activities related to rewilding (e.g., habitat restoration days, planting events, nature walks)?

Very interested	19
Somewhat interested	25
Neutral	25
Somewhat uninterested	10
Very uninterested	13



7. How concerned are you about the following issues in Foster City?

Not Concerned Slightly Concerned Moderately Concerned Very Concerned Extremely Concerned

Sea level rise and coastal flooding

Flooding from heavy storms or rainfall events

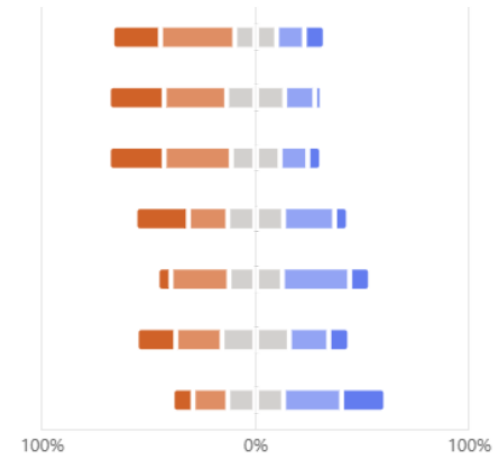
Groundwater rise and associated flooding

Heat waves and extreme heat days

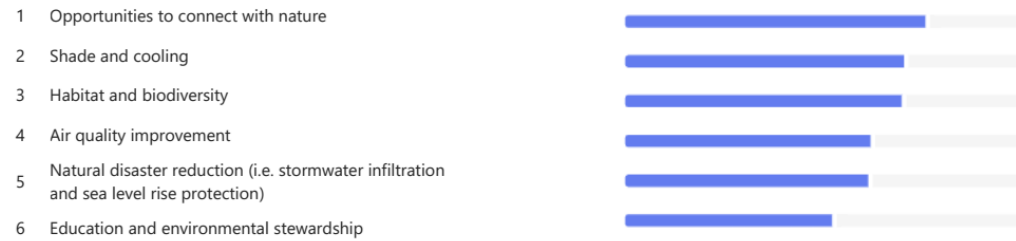
Poor air quality (e.g., wildfire smoke, vehicle emissions)

Loss of habitats or biodiversity due to climate change

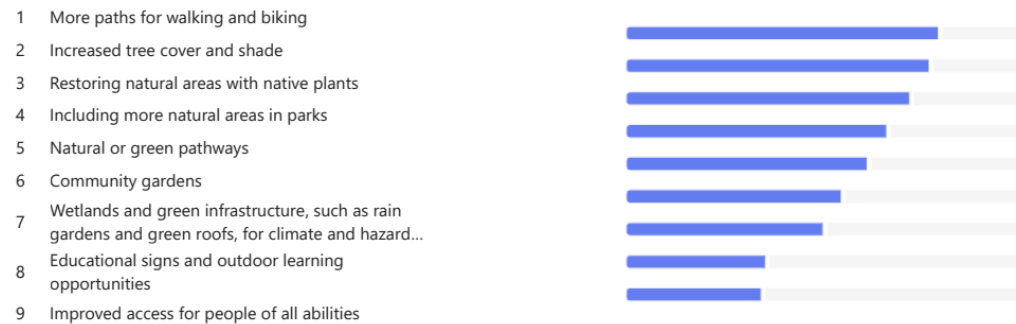
Water scarcity and drought impacts



8. Which of the following outdoor opportunities are most important to you? Rank each of the following in order of importance from most to least.



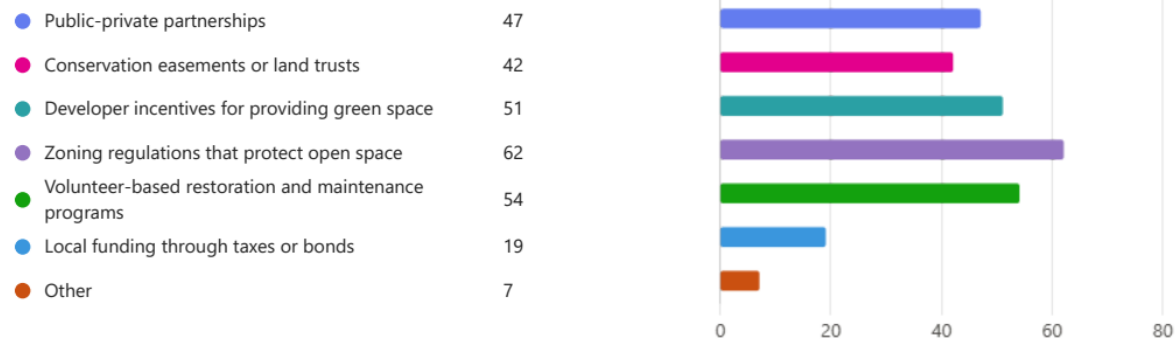
9. What types of open space improvements would you most like to see in your community? Rank from those you would most like to see to those you would least like to see.



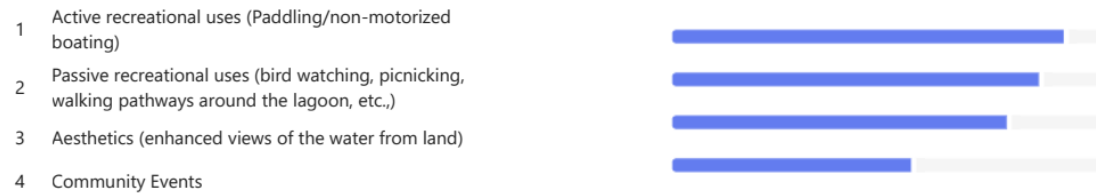
City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



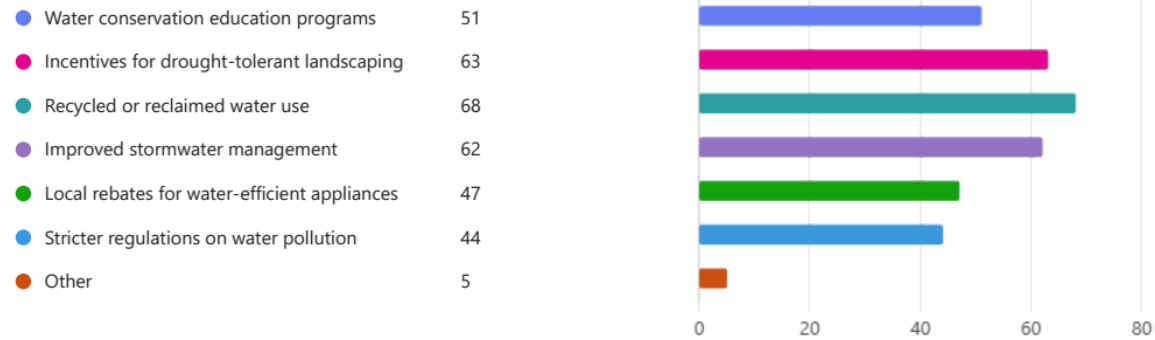
10. Which strategies would you support to improve or protect open space? Select all that apply.



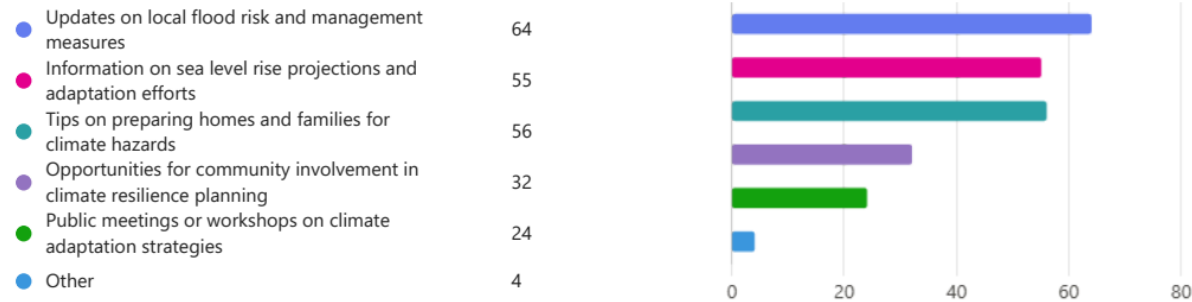
11. What purposes should the Foster City Lagoon fulfill? Rank the following options in order of importance from most to least.



12. What strategies would you support to protect or improve local drinking and potable water resources? Select all that apply.



13. What types of communication on climate change would you like to see from the City? Select all that apply.



14. Do you have additional recommendations for creating new parks and open space or enhancing existing ones in Foster City?

92
Responses

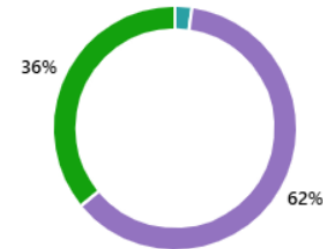
Latest Responses
 "No"
 "Enhance what we already have"
 "No"
 ...

City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



15. What is your age?

Under 18 years	0
19 to 25 years	0
26 to 30 years	2
31 to 59 years	55
Over 60 years	32



16. How do you currently describe your gender?

81
Responses

Latest Responses

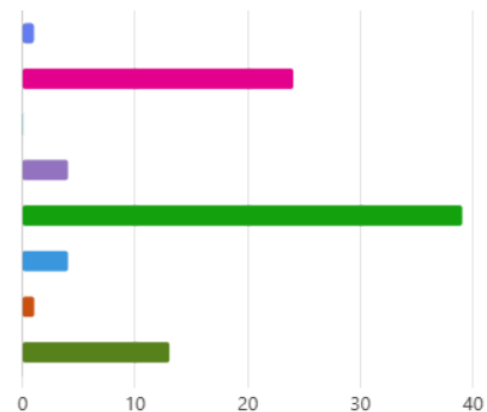
"Female"
"Female"
"Female"
...

45 respondents (56%) answered Female for this question.

GOOSE ENEMY
Woman M
hetero cis
Female
Male
Non-binary
heterosexual male
White male

17. What is your race? (self-describe)

American Native or Alaskan Native	1
Asian or Pacific Islander	24
Black or African American	0
Hispanic or Latino	4
White or Caucasian	39
Multiracial or Biracial	4
A race/ethnicity not listed here	1
Prefer not to answer	13



Joint Planning Commission and Parks & Recreation Committee Comments				
Vice Chair Stoveland	August 14, 2025	Raised concerns about ensuring the Parks and Open Space Element does not conflict too strongly with the Housing Element. He referenced POS-F under the Implementation Program, which states that as Foster City grows, the City will strive to maintain its existing park acreage level of service (LOS) of 3.2 acres per thousand residents. He provided that the surrounding cities have an LOS of 2.8 acres, and in order to experience the expected growth between now and 2040, an additional 12.9 acres of park space would need to be included in order to maintain the 3.2 LOS. He suggested either remaining at the current acreage or slightly below to ensure that the city has room for the Housing Element obligations.	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
		Asked if the acreage requirement should be defined now. He referenced that the City is moving towards more objective standards and having this dissonance could create unnecessary challenges for potential developers.	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34

City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



	Asked about the calculation behind 12.9 acres if the population is expected to go up by 2040. He suggested setting the goal at the current acres per thousand residents. He recommended against setting it at 2.8 and cautioned that 3.2 might not be sustainable.	Language around park LOS has been updated in the Element to maintain existing acreage and consider the appropriate metric at a future time.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
	Stated that his preferred approach is to define the numbers to reach the RHNA goals while still meeting the needs of the community.	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13
	Referenced page 34, which stated that there is a lack of a formal management plan related to the maintenance of the parks and referenced page 43, which speaks of high-quality maintenance, a funding strategy, and plan engagement proactively. He asked how the realization came about that there is no formal maintenance plan for the parks.	Question was answered in meeting. Additionally, the Parks and Open Space Element points to the Parks Master Plan as the vehicle for further addressing maintenance strategies and acknowledges ongoing efforts to improve maintenance planning.	
Commissioner Jagtiani August 14, 2025	Asked if the levee is counted towards the 3.2 LOS	The Parks and Open Space Element LOS calculation is based on City-owned parks and does not currently include the levee system.	

		Suggested including how much acreage that private parks, such as HOAs, amounts to	This comment was noted and referred to the Parks and Recreation Department and Parks Master Plan consultant team. Private facilities are not included in the LOS calculation for the General Plan, but their role in overall recreation opportunities is acknowledged.	
Chair Pedro	August 14, 2025	Clarified whether the option to include the active levee space would be the City's to make. He furthered that it would be a benefit to include those spaces in the ratio.	Determination of whether to count levee space toward LOS will require further policy direction from the City Council and coordination with regional agencies.	
		Asked if the lagoon acres were included in the park space acreage. He noted that the report states that there are 133 acres of parks and 218 acres of lagoon.	The Parks and Open Space Element clarifies that lagoon acreage is not included in the park LOS but is addressed separately as a unique recreational and ecological resource.	
		Suggested that there be looser language used in the elements. He also asked if the dredging refers to the dumping of what has been dredged.	Language was adjusted for flexibility to avoid prescriptive standards. References to dredging were clarified to ensure accuracy of terminology regarding sediment removal and management.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13
Committee Chair Tiwari	August 14, 2025	Asked if they are looking to adopt a formal and measurable standard.	The Parks and Open Space Element clarifies that measurable standards may be established through future planning processes.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 34 (see

			Program POS- g)
	Asked what the process would be for defining the objective numbers for acreage.	Future opportunities, such as Parks Master Plan updates, budget decisions, and Council direction, will be the vehicles for defining objective standards.	
	Asked if there is a balance between supporting rewilding while addressing concerns about pests, usability, and upkeep.	Policies and programs included in the Parks and Open Space Element highlight both the ecological benefits of rewilding and the need to manage maintenance, pests, and usability. Implementation programs support adaptive management strategies to strike this balance.	
Committee Member Ryzak August 14, 2025	Stated that the attractiveness of the parks should be discussed alongside the technical components of the element.	Narrative language was added to emphasize that parks provide both technical functions (e.g., flood protection, habitat value) and community benefits such as beauty, identity, and quality of life.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 6 and 21

City Council Comments			
Councilmember Venkat September 2, 2025	Referred to the issue raised by Planning Commissioner Stoveland regarding the LOS requirement of 3.2 acres per thousand residents, or 12.9 additional acres are needed by 2040. Will this requirement interfere with housing development?	The Parks and Open Space Element was adjusted to maintain existing parkland and evaluate potential LOS in the future. Language was adjusted to avoid potential conflict with Housing Element objectives, emphasizing balance and flexibility.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 13 and Page 34
	Had questions regarding artificial turf.	Evaluation of turf options will be considered in future facility planning and Parks Master Plan discussions, not within the scope of the General Plan Elements.	
	Liked the inclusion of the climate resilience goals and nature-based strategies and other community health benefits as the population continues to age.	Appreciation noted. The Elements retain and strengthen climate resilience goals, nature-based strategies, and health co-benefits.	
	Would like to prioritize a citywide tree inventory and mentioned that San Mateo has one, or potentially hiring an arborist. Supports these efforts.	The request is acknowledged. Tree canopy expansion and monitoring are supported through Element policies, and a citywide inventory is identified as a potential implementation tool.	
Councilmember Sullivan September 2, 2025	Raised concerns about Sea Cloud II regarding dredging material placement if Sea Cloud II is used for other parks and open space uses as Sea Cloud II has been used in the past for placement of dredging material.	The City will evaluate the site as an option if future dredge sites are needed and Council will determine path forward. This effort is outside the scope of the Elements but will inform future planning.	

City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



		Raised the issue of sediment management as a way to reduce dredging requirements. Suggested filtering Bay water to reduce sediment.	While the Elements do not prescribe specific filtration technologies, sediment and dredging concerns are captured under policies addressing lagoon health and long-term water quality.	
		Expressed that the major concern is the environment and the waterways. Does not want to overlook the major environmental issues – dredging, lagoons, water quality.	The Elements include policies to protect waterways, address dredging, and improve lagoon water quality. Broader concerns are acknowledged and will guide future implementation and coordination with regional agencies.	
Councilmember Niederhofer	September 2, 2025	Noted missing elements from some of the entries in the parks inventory (Table 1) and requested Parks & Rec review the table before finalizing the report.	WRT reviewed and refined Table 1 for accuracy. Table 1 in the Parks and Open Space Element has been updated to better reflect the major facilities at each park.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 8-9
		Recommended revising strong wording in policies (e.g., “ensure”) to lighter alternatives like “promote”, “create”, or “aspire to.”	Strong prescriptive wording was revised to alternatives such as “promote” or “support,” consistent with the Council’s direction.	Parks and Open Space Element, Pages 31-36
Vice Mayor Kiesel	September 2, 2025	Noted that the level of detail was sufficient and would be awaiting the final Elements.	Comment acknowledged. Staff will finalize the Elements with the level of detail deemed sufficient by Council.	

Mayor Jimenez September 2, 2025	Found implementation programs starting on Page 46 a bit vague. Requested an explanation on how the programs came into play. Rincon explained that the elements are 20–30-year documents and that the goal is to make them specific enough to create a work plan and open enough to account for changes that happen over the next decade or so. Director Mangalam also explained that the tasks will be reported to the State every year and that the programs were discussed in detail with the departments. Mayor Jimenez requested clarification on definitions of long-term, mid-term, and short-term to be added to the Elements. Mayor Jimenez would like to see some of the long-term goals done sooner.	Director Mangalam explained that there is flexibility within the timeframes. A footnote was added to the implementation tables in both Elements defining short-term as 1-5 years, mid-term as 6-10 years, and long-term as 10+ years.	Parks and Open Space Element, Page 36
	Inquired as to whether other cities' experiences were considered in the drafting of the Elements.	Experiences from nearby cities and regional entities such as OneShoreline and San Mateo County have been incorporated into policy development.	
	Stressed that the document should turn into an active strategic plan, with clear goals and clear policies, not a shelf document.	The Elements highlight their role as active strategic documents, with clear policies, timelines for implementation, and ongoing reporting requirements.	

City of Foster City
Parks and Open Space Element and Conservation Element



	Highlighted need for more tree cover working within the budget that we have.	The Elements emphasize tree canopy expansion and shade improvements, recognizing fiscal realities and aligning goals with budget priorities.	
	Asked if we would be looking at sites such as the golf course and Sea Cloud II. Director Mangalam emphasized that future studies would be brought to City Council through a study session.	The Elements do not designate future land use for these sites, but staff confirmed that such decisions will be evaluated in dedicated studies brought to Council.	
	Asked about coordination with San Mateo and Redwood Shores.	Regional coordination is incorporated into policies, ensuring alignment with adjacent jurisdictions and regional agencies.	