

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

### FOSTER CITY PARKS MASTER PLAN





Introduction ..... 3

Key Findings from Community Engagement..... 4

    Trails & Connectivity ..... 4

    Beaches & Water Quality..... 4

    Park Amenities ..... 5

    Park Comfort..... 5

    Community Events & Programs ..... 5

    Indoor Recreation & Swimming..... 6

Pop Up Events ..... 6

Task Force Meetings ..... 9

Focus Group Meetings ..... 11

Statistically Valid Survey ..... 13

Specific Park Feedback Survey ..... 18

Public Workshops..... 19

Appendices .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**



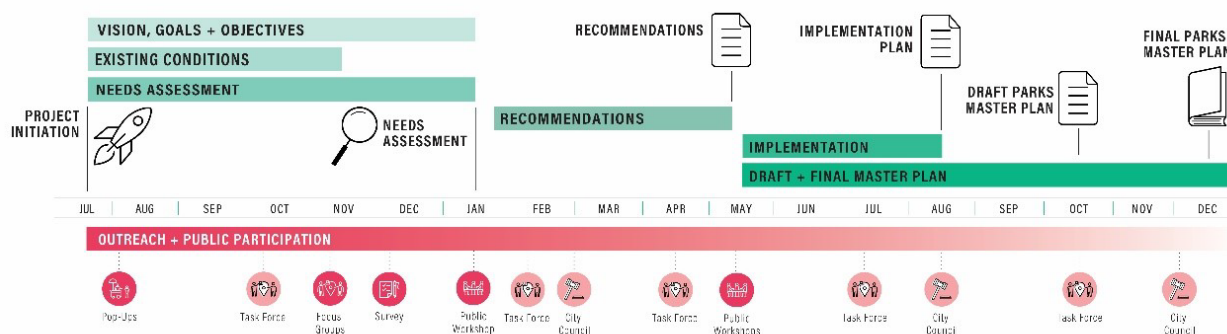
## INTRODUCTION

Ensuring the community has a voice in the planning process is critical to forging a long-term vision and goals for Foster City's Parks Master Plan. Since the first pop-up event in August 2024, several outreach components have yielded valuable feedback from park users. Community engagement will be a fixture through the entire planning process, from initiation to adoption of the Master Plan.

### Outreach and Engagement Components

There are several outreach and engagement components for the community engagement process. The goal of these components is to include a diverse group of park users, raise awareness of the planning effort, and share findings and gather input on priorities for future parks. Engagement efforts are listed below:

- Pop-Up Events
- Task Force Meetings
- Focus Group Meetings
- Surveys
- Public Workshops
- City Council and Parks Commission Meetings
- Website



### Next Steps

There are still more opportunities to engage with the community on the Foster City Parks Master Plan process, including a second public workshop. The findings from the engagement to-date provide a pathway in shaping the Master Plan's recommendations.

## Key Findings from Community Engagement

To date, the community engagement process has yielded valuable feedback from Foster City residents and park users. According to the Statistically Valid Survey, **85% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the City's parks and recreation system**, which is significantly higher than the national average (62%). However, hundreds of engaged residents have shed light on the aspects of the parks and recreation system that should be improved, added, or prioritized. Below are the key themes that Foster City residents and park users identified as important to them.

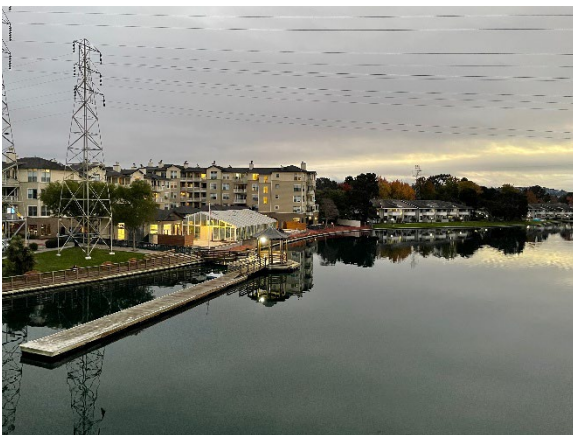
### Trails & Connectivity



Multi-use trails are the highest priority need according to the Statistically-Valid Survey, indicating a desire for additional trail connections throughout the city. Additionally, residents expressed a need for trail lighting, signage, and safety improvements. Needs include:

- Expanded trail system, connecting the city's parks, community destinations, and Levee Pedway Trail
- Additional walking loops in parks
- Improved signage and lighting
- Enhanced safety through clear guidelines and markings

### Beaches & Water Quality



Foster City's access to the Lagoon and San Francisco Bay is unique. However, residents indicated several improvements needed to make both water bodies true recreational assets. Key needs include:

- Improved water quality
- Waterfront amenities, such as dining and public art.
- Increased boat access along the lagoon, through docks and marinas



## Park Amenities



There is a desire for additional park amenities, particularly passive facilities used to walk, picnic, or relax. In general, the need for active park amenities, such as playgrounds and sports courts and fields, is being met compared to passive park amenities. Key needs include:

- Passive Park amenities, including beaches, walking trails, community gardens, picnic shelters, and multi-purpose lawn
- New or improved pickleball courts.
- Targeted improvements to existing fields/courts and children's play areas.

## Park Comfort



The community expressed a desire for increased park comfort, through additional shade, restrooms, seating, lighting and more. Key needs include:

- Additional shade trees/structures in exposed areas
- Improved or expanded restrooms in high-use parks such as Leo J. Ryan, near the pickleball/tennis courts, and Catamaran.
- Additional seating and lighting

## Community Events & Programs



There is a strong need for additional programs and events in Foster City, particularly ones that promote fitness and outdoor recreation. Additional senior programming was also indicated as a high priority need. Key needs include:

- Additional community events, including outdoor markets, performing arts, holiday/cultural celebrations, etc.
- Additional programming, particularly programs for fitness, outdoor recreation, seniors, cultural enrichment, and visual arts

## Indoor Recreation & Swimming



Throughout the community engagement process, particularly in the Statistically Valid Survey, there was a demonstrated need for additional indoor recreation facilities<sup>1</sup> and a swimming pool. Key needs include:

- Indoor recreation facilities, including fitness equipment and a gymnasium
- Swimming Pool
- Improved Beaches

## Pop Up Events

A series of “pop-ups” were conducted at various locations in Foster City to solicit feedback and spread awareness of the Foster City Parks Master Plan process. The pop-ups involved a booth and simple engagement activities with City staff and consultants at key community events. At the pop-ups, the planning team set up poster boards and invited community members to answer key questions about what park users would like to see in their parks, such as amenities, facility improvements, and activation and programming. There were 7 pop up events and over 800 people were engaged.

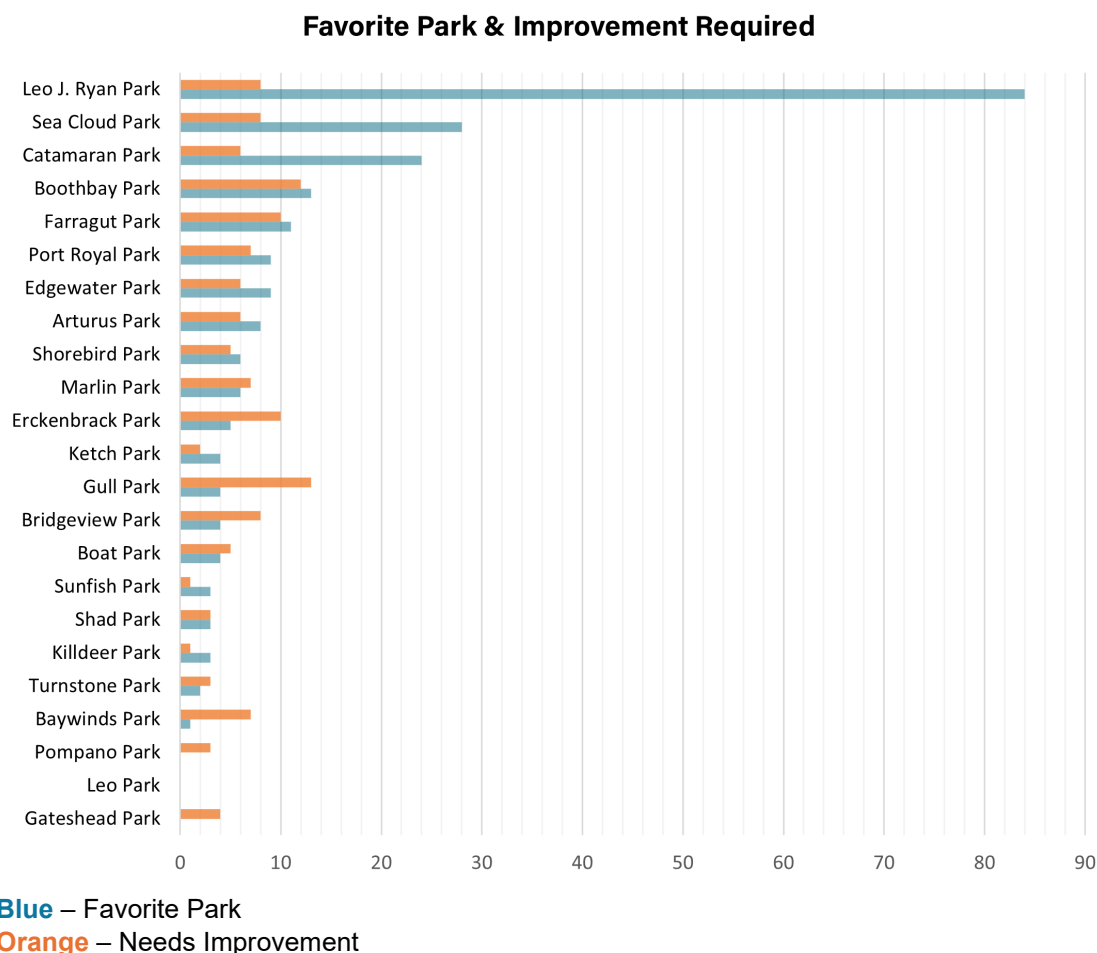
The pop-up events were held on the following dates:

Event	Date	Location
Summer Days	August 16th	Leo J Ryan
Opening Day of Soccer	September 7	Sea Cloud
Fall Movie Night	September 13	Leo J Ryan
Off the Grid	September 25	Leo J Ryan
Civics Academy	October 2	The Vibe Teen Center
Senior Pop Up	October 14	The Vibe Teen Center
Halloween Festival	October 24	Leo J Ryan

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that at the time of engagement the Foster City’s Community Center was under construction, which could impact this need.

The following questions were posed to pop-up participants:

- **What is your favorite park?**
- **What would you like to see more of in Foster City?**  
*Options included:*
  - Community events,
  - Play for all ages
  - Trees/shades
  - A connected trail system
  - Diverse native planting
  - Performing arts
  - Splash pad
  - Multi-purpose lawn
  - Seating
  - Outdoor exercise area
  - Community gardens
  - Bike facilities
  - Beach access
  - Amenity Lighting
  - Sports/courts
  - Comfort & safety
  - Diverse recreation programming
  - Water activities
  - Accessibility for all
  - Dog parks
  - Public art
  - Outdoor Classroom
  - Native/Outdoor education
  - Picnic & BBQ areas
- **What do you like about parks and recreation facilities and programs in Foster City?**
- **What is your vision for parks and recreation facilities and programs in Foster City? What should be improved?**





## Key Takeaways

- Leo J Ryan Park was the most popular park, with most pop-up participants choosing Leo J Ryan over the course of all the pop-up events.
- Of the ideas shown on the pop-up boards, the top three amenities participants would like to see are splash pads, beach access, and more trees and shade.
- Several participants left comments about how much they enjoy Foster City parks and recreation, particularly the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events, park cleanliness, and sports facilities.
- When asked about a vision for the future of Foster City parks, many pop-up participants referenced new amenities, followed by maintenance, then programming.



*Pop-up events on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at Summer Days, and Opening Day of Soccer on September 7, 2024*



## Task Force Meetings

The City established a task force to help guide the Parks Master Plan process. The Task Force is made up of Foster City residents who applied and were selected to represent a broad cross-section of community interests and knowledge. The goal of the Task Force is to strategize to inform an inclusive engagement process, identify facility and programmatic opportunities, and develop a vision for what Foster City parks and recreation should look like in the future. As summarized below, the first Task Force meeting was held on October 29, 2025 at the Foster City Community Center, where members discussed the current state of Foster City's parks and recreation, opportunities for updating and expanding parks, and a vision Foster City's parks and recreation system. Four additional meetings will be held throughout the planning process.

## Task Force Participants

<b>Task Force Member</b>	<b>Affiliations</b>
LaTisa Brooks	HIP Housing, Rotary, School District
Jeff Brown	Rotary, Village, Tennis Club
TJ Consunji	FCTB, FCYSA
Eric Corpuz	Parks and Recreation Committee
Tracy Delmonico	AYSO, park user
Tamra Donovan	Bay Trail user
Pam Frisella	Village, AYSO
Kenneth Huo	Sustainability Advisory Committee
Ravi Jagtiani	Planning Commission
Isha Misra	Foster City Youth Advisory Committee
Steve Okamoto	Sister City, Rotary
Meilin Rife	Foster City Youth Advisory Committee
Yvonne Ryzak	Parks and Recreation Committee
David Saito	Sister City, AYSO, FCLL
Kaci St. John	SMFC School District Special Education
Michael Turner	Lagoon user, Chamber member
Jason Tran	FC Pickleball Club
Emmie Yang	Lagoon User (Bay Area Dragonboat)

## Current State of Foster City Parks

The task force identified several challenges and opportunities for improvement, including limited boat access, insufficient ADA facilities, and a lack of water bottle refill stations, which affect accessibility and inclusivity. Overcrowded areas and program reservation systems may hinder access. There is also a need for more shade, restrooms, trees, lighting, and dog-friendly spaces to enhance amenities and facilities. Poor tree health, inadequate lighting, and seasonal usability issues highlight maintenance concerns. Additionally, there is a strong desire for more programming and events, such as concerts, seasonal gatherings, and winter activities.

## Opportunities for Updating and Expanding Parks

The task force identified several areas for enhancing parks, including expanding sports and recreation options with more pickleball, cricket, multi-use sports courts, and bicycle pump tracks. Enhancing water

access with splash pads, floating events, and nature signage was also recommended. To improve accessibility and comfort, the group suggested adding more seating, shade, off-leash dog areas, and senior-friendly spaces. Upgrades to infrastructure and connectivity, such as better trail systems, lighting, and stronger park identity, were also emphasized. Additionally, exploring corporate sponsorships and partnerships for shared public spaces was seen as a valuable opportunity.

## Vision for Future Parks and Recreation

The task force emphasized that parks should be inclusive, welcoming, and safe for all age groups while fostering community gathering spaces that promote social interaction, events, and memorable experiences. They envision Foster City as a regional recreation hub with modernized parks. There is a demand for enhanced amenities, including better restrooms, public art, and waterfront access. Additionally, the group highlighted the importance of encouraging outdoor engagement and maximizing lagoon use to connect people with nature.

## Key Takeaways from Task Force

- **Accessibility and Inclusivity**
  - Improve ADA accessibility at docks and throughout parks.
  - Increase teen-focused spaces and activities.
  - Ensure parks are welcoming for all ages, including seniors.
- **Water Access and Quality**
  - Improve lagoon water quality for expanded use.
  - Increase boat access, docks, and waterfront amenities.
  - Introduce splash pads and other water-based activities.
- **Recreation and Sports Facilities**
  - Strong demand for more pickleball courts and diverse sports fields (cricket, pump track, multi-use courts).
  - Expand facilities for non-traditional sports beyond baseball and soccer.
- **Park Amenities and Infrastructure**
  - Increase shade, restrooms, seating, and lighting for comfort.
  - Improve trail connectivity and pedestrian/bike pathways.
  - Address dog-friendly spaces and conflicts between users.
- **Community Events and Programming**
  - Expand concerts, fitness classes, seasonal festivals, and waterfront events.
  - Use parks as a gathering place for social interaction.
  - Improve event communication through newsletters, social media, and direct outreach.
- **Nature & Environmental Enhancements**
  - Protect wildlife habitats while improving public access.
  - Encourage outdoor engagement through interpretive signage and eco-friendly initiatives.
  - Implement drought-resistant landscaping and tree replanting.
- **Partnerships and Funding**
  - Engage large employers, local businesses, and sponsors to support park improvements.
  - Consider public-private partnerships for maintenance and programming.

## Focus Group Meetings

A series of focus group meetings was conducted in November 2024 at the Vibe Teen Center to gather expertise and insight on specific issues, challenges, or opportunities. The focus groups included Foster City residents, community organizers, and City Staff who could speak knowledgeably about different elements of Foster City's Park and recreation system (e.g., organized sports, special user groups) or from specific perspectives (e.g., Youth Advisory Commission, City departments.)

### Organized Fitness & Sports

Sports and recreation facilities build stronger communities ties. They serve as gathering spaces, and high-quality sports fields attract visitors and residents alike. However, there are some limitations which include not enough pickleball and tennis courts, limited restroom capacity at existing restroom facilities, and limited lighting. Enhancing these elements would increase the use of sports facilities. An upgraded sports facility system with improved lighting, regional tournament capacity, multiuse facilities, and greater synergy with local businesses are opportunities the city should investigate.

### Youth Advisory Committee

This group would like to see additional programming that engages with different facilities within the parks and recreation system. There are opportunities to add recreation facilities such as a track and play structures but also compliment them with community events and programs that engage the community. These could include fitness classes or arts classes. Another priority was promoting eco-conscious practices into programming and infrastructure in park facilities. Finally, this group also wants access to the lagoon and educational programs around water safety and recreational use.

### Programs & Events

This group hopes to see more community events and more year-round, inclusive activities reflecting the city's diversity. Enhancing pPark infrastructure, including multipurpose fields and better connectivity, is needed to support evolving recreational interests and accessibility. Improved communication and an online reservation system would streamline event planning. While monetizing some park amenities and promoting recreation tourism are supported, maintaining local enjoyment and resource balance is crucial. Leo J Ryan Park is seen as a potential community hub that can attract visitors while prioritizing local needs. Strategic improvements in infrastructure, programming, and communication will enhance community engagement and inclusivity.

### Inclusion & Specialized Users

This group wants more seating, shade, water fountains, and restrooms in parks to better support events and gatherings. They also want year-round cultural and senior-friendly events, with partnerships to promote diversity and inclusion. Improved access and transportation, like shuttles and more bike parking, are needed at popular parks. Residents want better use of waterfront areas with on-water events and environmental improvements, such as geese control and water quality. Addressing safety issues like speeding, wildlife management, and better lighting would improve park usability and enjoyment.

### City Departments



City Department staff aim to improve lagoon water quality impacted by geese, enhance parks, and expand recreational activities while balancing budget limits and staffing challenges. Better parking and traffic solutions, like shared parking and QR codes, are needed for large events. Improving accessibility, ADA compliance, and sustainable landscaping will support long-term usability. Strategic investments will help Foster City maximize recreational potential, modernize amenities, and meet residents' needs while managing visitor demand.

## Key Takeaways from All Focus Groups

- **Park Facilities & Infrastructure**
  - Expand and upgrade parks with more diverse recreational options (e.g., tracks, play structures, gardens).
  - Improve lighting, restrooms, and seating to enhance usability and safety.
  - Upgrade sports facilities, particularly for pickleball, cricket, and multi-use courts.
  - Improve trail connectivity and pedestrian/bike accessibility.
- **Water Access & Quality**
  - Improve lagoon water quality to enable more recreational use.
  - Increase waterfront activation (e.g., floating events, mini beaches, boat docks).
  - Address environmental concerns, including geese control and water contamination.
- **Community Engagement & Programming**
  - Expand programming for adults, seniors, non-competitive youth, and diverse communities.
  - Host more year-round events, including concerts, cultural festivals, fitness activities, and waterfront events.
  - Distribute events beyond Leo J. Ryan Park to engage more neighborhoods.
  - Improve communication through better reservation systems, maps, and social media outreach.
- **Accessibility & Inclusivity**
  - Ensure ADA-compliant facilities and parking for all residents.
  - Improve transportation and parking solutions, including shuttles and shared parking agreements.
  - Provide more shaded areas, water refill stations, and seating for comfort.
  - Create inclusive play spaces and senior-friendly gathering areas.
- **Environmental & Sustainability Considerations**
  - Integrate eco-friendly practices, such as drought-tolerant landscaping.
  - Improve waste management and cleanliness (e.g., geese control, litter reduction).
  - Ensure parks support wildlife conservation while remaining accessible.
- **Economic & Tourism Development**
  - Explore monetization opportunities (e.g., tournament fees, vendor partnerships).
  - Balance local community use with tourism growth to avoid overcrowding.
  - Foster City is a regional recreation hub with high-quality parks and events.
- **Safety & Security Enhancements**
  - Address safety concerns in water areas (e.g., jellyfish, water contamination).
  - Improve nighttime lighting in parks for better security.
  - Implement wildlife management solutions for geese and coyotes.



*WRT Site visit walk-through with Foster City staff on July 22, 2024*

## Statistically Valid Survey

A statistically valid survey was administered by ETC Institute, as a member of the planning team. The survey was distributed through mail and online to a random sample of households throughout Foster City. Foster City residents were surveyed on various park-related topics: facilities and program use, the benefits, importance, and improvements to parks and recreation in Foster City, and facility/amenity needs and priorities. The survey results were compared with the national average for each category. The overall results of the over 300 residents have a precision of at least +/- 5/5% and a 95% confidence level.

### Facilities

- 96% of respondents indicated that they have visited a facility in the past year, with 62% visiting parks more than once a week.
- The most common reason for visiting Foster City parks, by a wide margin, was walking (86%). Other reasons: hanging out (35%), walking dogs (32%), playing pickup sports (32%), riding a bike (32%), running/jogging (28%), picnicking or gathering with family and friends (27%).
- 9 out of 10 survey respondents rated the physical condition of parks and facilities as good or excellent.
- The improvements/additions respondents would like to see most in parks are restrooms (26%), trees/shades (26%), picnic tables and benches (24%), trail lighting (23%) and security lighting (22%).

## Programs

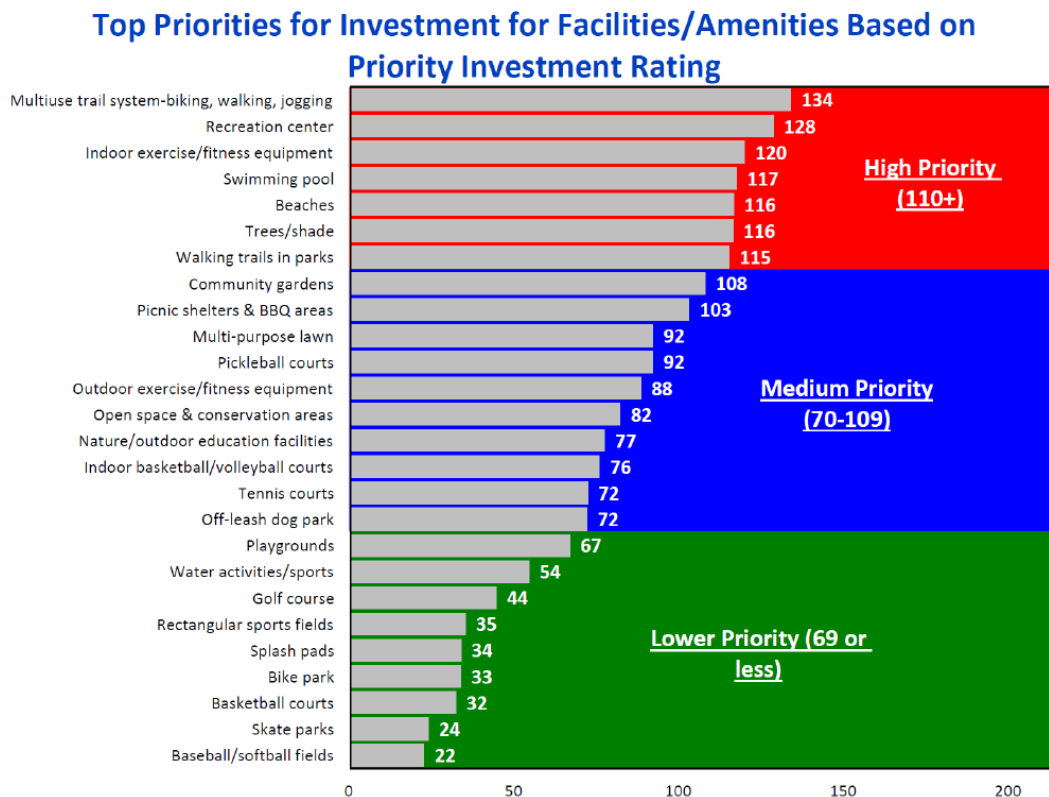
- 45% of respondents indicated that they participated in a City program/activity in the past year, and 9 out of 10 rated those programs excellent or good.
- Residents participated in City of Foster City programs at twice the rate of the next nearest program provider, San Mateo County.
- When asked about barriers to participating in programming, the answer with the highest percentage (37%) was “they did not know what was being offered.”

## Benefits of Foster City Parks

- When asked about benefits of Foster City’s parks, the top three reasons were parks make the city a desirable place to live (94%), improve individual health and fitness (86%), and preserve open space and protect the environment (84%).
- 13% were supportive of additional fees, while 45% were somewhat supportive of additional fees.
- When asked about their satisfaction with the city’s parks and recreation offerings, 27% rated very satisfied, 58% rated satisfied, 12% rated neutral, and 3% were dissatisfied.

## Priority Index Rating chart for Facilities and Programs

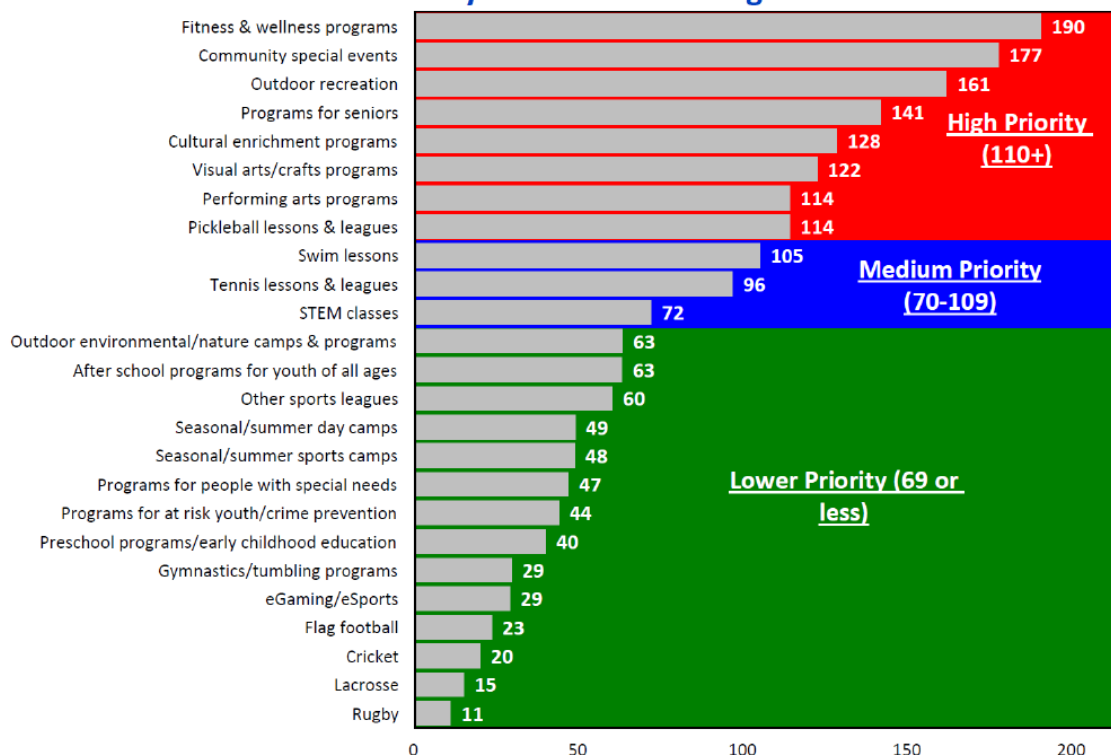
To define what facilities and programs were a priority for Foster City residents, ETC used its Priority Investment Rating (PIR) tool. The PIR equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facilities.





Based on this analysis, multiuse trails, a recreation center, indoor exercise/fitness equipment, a swimming pool, beaches, trees and shade, and walking trails in parks are top resident priorities. Medium priority facilities/amenities include community gardens, picnic shelters and BBQ areas, multipurpose lawns, pickleball courts, and open space and conservation areas. The lower priority items include facilities that serve less traditional sports, such as a golf course, a bike park, baseball fields, and a skate park.

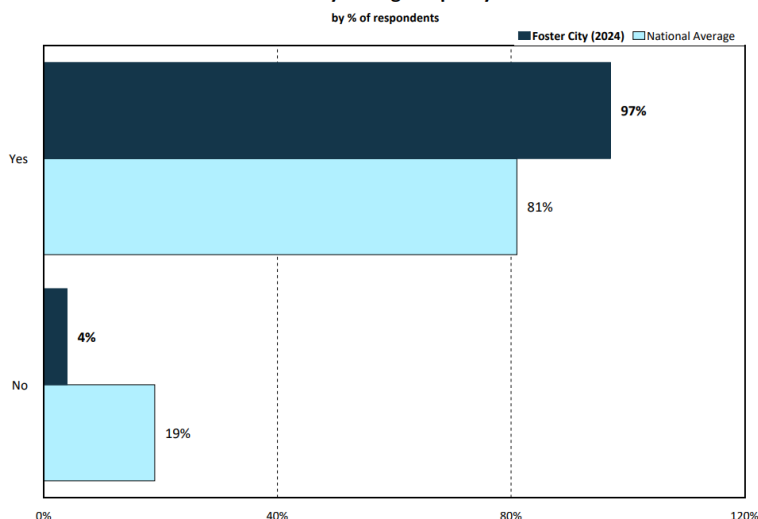
### Top Priorities for Investment for Programs/Activities Based on Priority Investment Rating



Top resident priorities for programs and events include fitness/wellness programs, community special events, outdoor recreation, programs for seniors, cultural enrichment programs, visual arts & crafts programs, performing arts programs, and pickleball lessons & leagues. There were three medium priority programs, which were swim lessons, tennis lessons, and STEM classes. The lower priority programs ranged from less traditional sport programs such as rugby, lacrosse, and cricket to nature camps, after school programs and seasonal day camps.

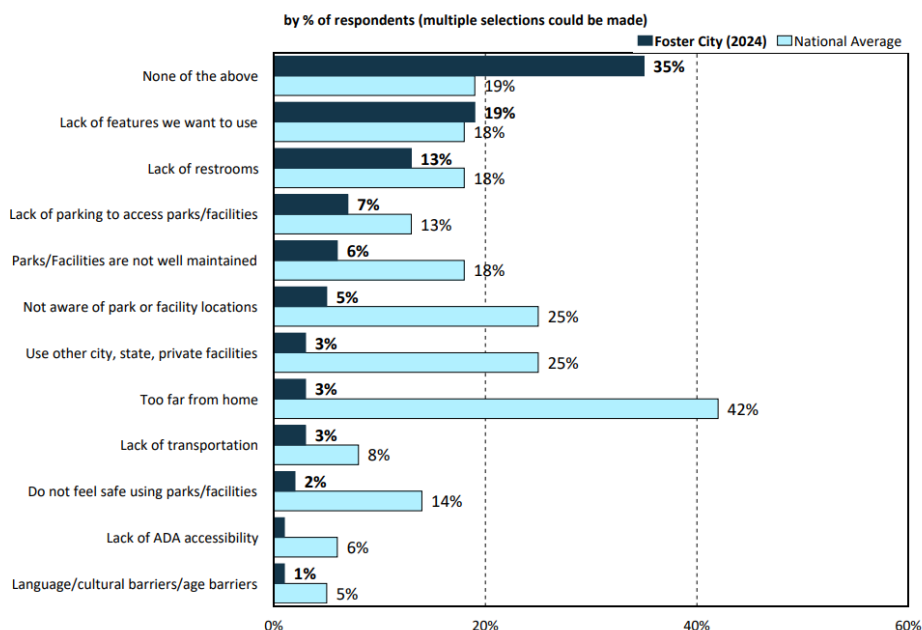
## Benchmarks – Foster City vs. US Average:

Have you/your household visited any parks or recreation facilities/amenities in your community during the past year?



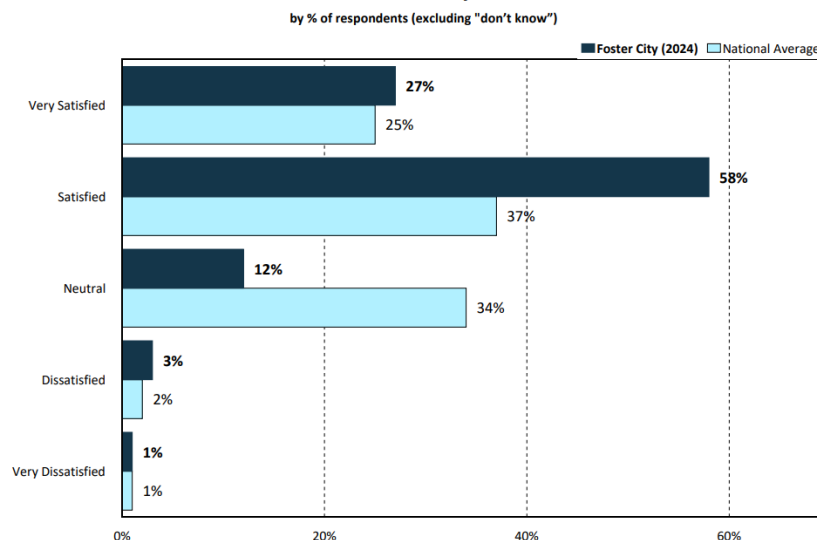
97% of Foster City residents have visited parks or recreation facilities/amenities in their community in the past year, compared to the national average of 81%

Please check all of the reasons that prevent you from visiting parks and recreation facilities/amenities or what prevents you from visiting them more often.



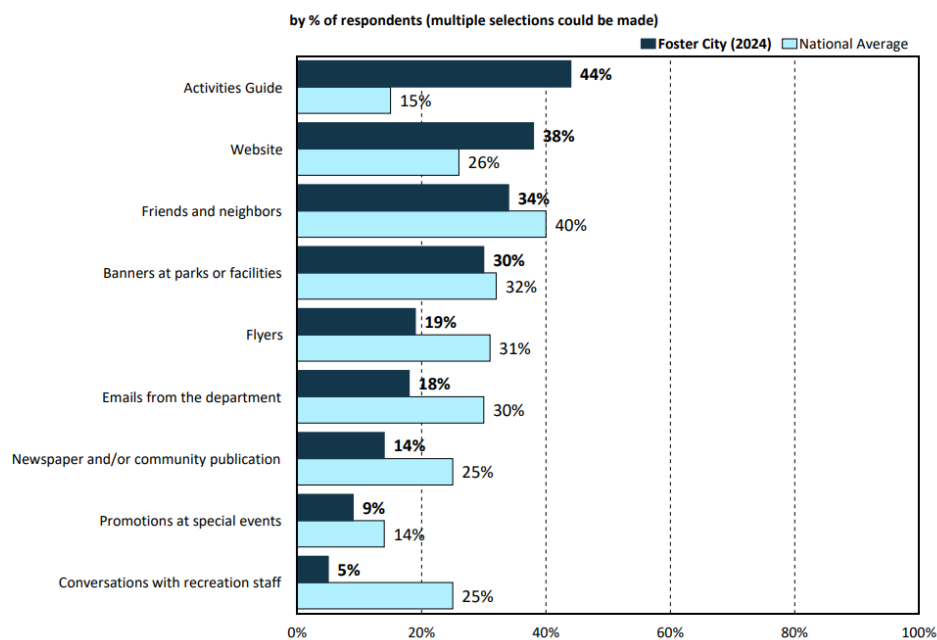
3% of Foster City residents found that parks and recreation facilities and amenities were too far from home, compared to the national average of 42%. Survey respondents in Foster City selected “none of the above” as the top reason that prevented them from visiting parks and recreation facilities.

**Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the value your household receives from the parks and recreation programs, activities, and events offered in your community.**



Foster City residents are much more satisfied with their parks and recreation programs, activities, and events (58%) than the national average (37%)

**Please check all the ways you currently use to learn about parks and recreation programs, activities, and events in your community.**

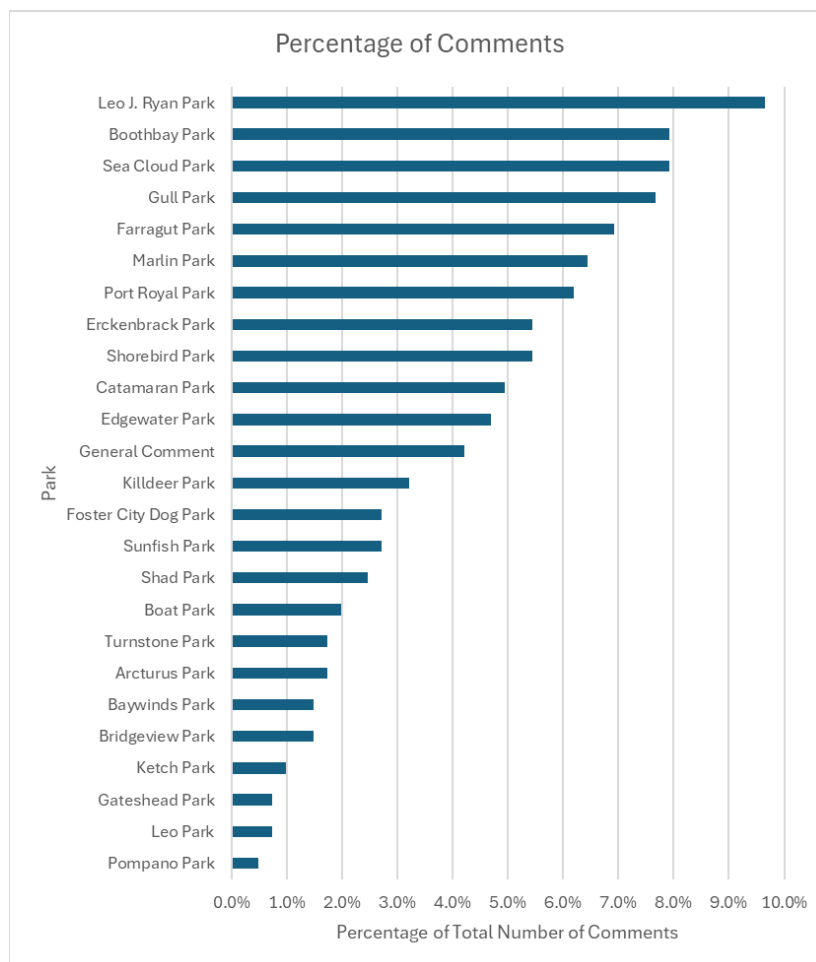


Foster City residents selected the activities guide as the top way they learn about parks and recreation programs, activities, and events in their community, whereas nationally residents find out about programs via friends and neighbors.



## Specific Park Feedback Survey

Another survey was created, conducted at each of Foster City's parks, to solicit feedback from Foster City residents on specific parks. The survey was administered through the City of Foster City's website in October 2024 and remained open until January 2025. Over 200 comments were received.



## Key Takeaways from Survey Input on Foster City Parks

Leo J Ryan received the most feedback from the survey, and all of the comments were positive. Participants left comments for most Foster City parks but also left general feedback about all parks in the system, most of which were positive. Below are the common answers most respondents listed as some of the qualities they like most about Foster City parks:

- **Well-Maintained Parks:** Many parks are appreciated for their cleanliness, landscaping, and upkeep.
- **Scenic Beauty:** Visitors highlight the greenery, waterfront views, and open spaces.
- **Diverse Amenities:** Parks offer playgrounds, sports courts, picnic areas, dog-friendly spaces, and walking paths.

- **Community-Friendly Spaces:** The parks are popular gathering places for families, sports, and leisure activities.
- **Dog-Friendly Features:** Many parks include off-leash areas, waste stations, and dog-friendly pathways.

While almost all the comments were positive, some respondents identified challenges some parks:

- **Geese droppings:** Some parks have issues with geese, making certain areas difficult to use.
- **Amenity Improvements:** Some parks have potential for additional development and enhancements, such as lighting, additional restrooms, and seating.

Key takeaways from each park can be found in the Park Improvement Comments page of the Appendix.

## Public Workshop

A public workshop was held on January 22, 2025 to engage with the community on analysis findings, to gain a deeper understanding of the City's parks and recreation needs, and to share information about the planning process, including project updates, scope, and timeline. Additional comments were solicited via an online survey and through the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting in February 2025.

The workshop was broken into seven different stations that focused on different elements of Foster City's Parks and Recreation System:

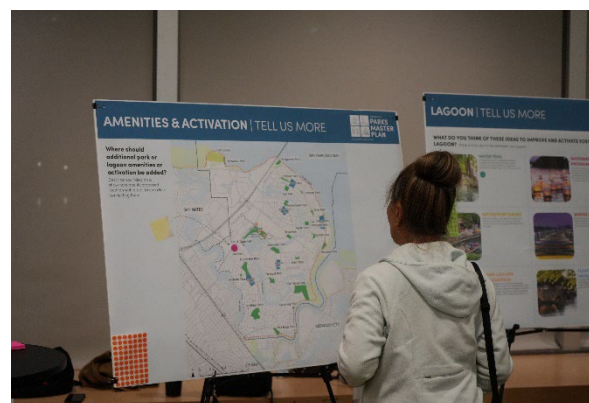
1. Vision
2. Existing Parks
3. Park Amenities & Activation
4. Lagoon
5. Programs & Events
6. Trails

### Key Takeaways:

- **Improving Sports Facilities:** Whether it was pickleball or tennis, workshop participants mentioned improving sports facilities throughout most of the boards. Pickleball court additions and improvements were mentioned in more than half of the boards.
- **Improving Water Quality:** Workshop participants want to see water quality improved to use the lagoon more. If cleaned, they see an opportunity to increase waterfront programming and activation. Waterfront dining and beachside activities could bring in more visitors if the water quality improves.
- **Diversifying Programs and Events:** In addition to improving infrastructure, workshop participants supported programming, activations, and events that brought residents and park visitors into underutilized parks. Examples include Tai chi, outdoor concerts, an outdoor gallery, fitness classes, and outdoor/night markets.
- **Trail Connectivity:** The trail is a major feature of Foster City's park space. Many workshop participants highlighted the desire for better trail connections, including safe crossings at Hillsdale

and Highway 92 and completing the levee pedway. Also, workshop participants wanted improved trail elements like lighting and signage.

- **Amenity Improvements:** Workshop participants mentioned making minor, but practical improvements to existing amenities such as additional restrooms, better lighting, shaded seating, and improved play areas for kids.



Workshop on January 22, 2025