

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AND
JOINT STUDY SESSION BETWEEN THE PLANNING COMMISSION
AND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Council Chambers – 620 Foster City Boulevard – Foster City

MINUTES

March 20, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. by Chair Haddad

2. PLANNING COMMISSION ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Jagtiani, Kenkre, Pedro, Stoveland and Chair Haddad

Staff Present: Sofia Mangalam, Community Development Director; Kevin McGill, Assistant Planner; Nori Jabba, Housing Coordinator; Della Acosta, Consultant Planner; Denise Bazzano, Assistant City Attorney

3. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1. None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. None

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING

1. None

6. NEW PUBLIC HEARING

1. A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO APPROVE USE PERMIT REQUEST TO ALLOW A HEALTH SCIENCE UNIVERSITY USE AS A UNIQUE USE WITHIN AN EXISTING OFFICE BUILDING LOCATED AT 989 E. HILLSDALE BOULEVARD IN THE TOWN CENTER NEIGHBORHOOD AND FINDING THE PROJECT EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) UNDER CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15301 (EXISTING FACILITIES) – APN: 094-522-170

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Jagtiani, seconded by Commissioner Pedro, to adopt Resolution No. P-4-25 Approving UP2024-0037 subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A, passed 5-0-0-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

1. None

8. NEW BUSINESS

1. None

9. STUDY SESSION

Community Development Director Mangalam recessed the meeting into a joint study session between the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE ROLL CALL

Present: Committee Members Baer, Bindal, Corpuz, Fong, and Ryzak.

Absent: Committee Member Duncan and Chair Tiwari

1. THE CITY OF FOSTER CITY IS IN THE PROCESS OF UPDATING THE TWO REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN, INCLUDING (1) PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT; AND (2) CONSERVATION ELEMENT. THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT ADDRESSES THE PRESERVATION OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN FOSTER CITY, WHILE THE CONSERVATION ELEMENT ADDRESSES THE PRESERVATION OF CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN FOSTER CITY.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY SESSION IS TO PROVIDE THE PLANNING COMMISSION, PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE AND THE PUBLIC AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS FOR UPDATING THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN.

Planning Commissioners had the following discussion:

Commissioner Kenkre asked if the Conservation Element will address the Geese Population Control Plan.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that they are in the process of reviewing the plans and how to incorporate the strategies into the General Plan.

Commissioner Pedro clarified that in order to meet the Executive Order, is it 30% of land and 30% of water, or is it 30% of land and water.

Consultant Planner Acosta confirmed that it is 30% of land and water.

Commissioner Pedro asked if the same land can be used to meet both Open Space and Conservation Element.

Consultant Planner Acosta confirmed.

Commissioner Pedro asked if the levee falls under Open Space Conservation, Recreation, or Safety.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that part of the update is to look at the multi-beneficial uses and co-benefits of everything.

Commissioner Pedro proposed identifying the percentage of open space and conservation Foster City currently has in the analysis.

Consultant Planner Acosta explained that conservation does not break down into percentages and rather investigate strategies to do better from the baseline. She identified that 'conserving' are things like air quality and water quality.

Commissioner Pedro cited the conservation element and asked if recycling efforts would be included.

Consultant Planner Acosta replied that it can be included.

Commissioner Pedro referenced Foster City's allotment for drinking water and inquired about the percentage of use.

Community Development Director Mangalam reported that Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID) has a supply guarantee of 5.9 MGD and, per the 2022-23 numbers, Foster City is currently using 3.6-3.7 MGD.

Commissioner Pedro requested a status update on the potential additional water supply that will come from the Redwood City/Belmont area that was referenced in the report.

Community Development Director Mangalam stated that there are currently two emergency connections from the California Water Service and will have to confer with Public Works for an answer.

Commissioner Pedro cited the report, where it indicated two (2) four-million-gallon water storage tanks and a possibility for a third and asked for an update on the third water tank.

Community Development Director Mangalam reported that EMID has four water storage tanks currently.

Commissioner Pedro requested the status on examining reclaimed water or purple pipe for irrigation purposes, which Redwood City had similarly done.

Community Development Director Mangalam referenced the 15-year CIP project that is related to recycled water connection.

Commissioner Pedro identified that the Lagoon Management Plan mentioned in the report is from 1992 and asked if it will be revised.

Community Development Director Mangalam informed that there is a 2022 Foster City Lagoon Management Plan.

Commissioner Stoveland asked if wildlife corridors are only for endangered species or for all species.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that the law does not specify; however, their team is working with LCI, the State agency responsible for overseeing the General Plan guidelines, to review the technical analysis on that law and to provide a clearer definition for the next study session.

Commissioner Jagtiani raised concerns regarding the delays homeowners face when converting to high-efficiency systems due to PG&E's slow response rate. He questioned if the city would have to step in to expedite that process.

Consultant Planner Acosta indicated that the newly adopted Climate Action Plan addresses these energy conservation topics. She furthered that the data and strategies they have will be in alignment to that plan.

Chair Haddad inquired if the golf course would be part of the study.

Consultant Planner Acosta reported that the golf course is being counted as a publicly accessible open space.

Committee Member Corpuz asked for clarification on the scope of what has been learned about the lagoon water quality and what measures will be implemented to ensure safer and cleaner water.

Consultant Planner Acosta noted that they have been provided with water quality testing of the lagoon that will allow them to evaluate if there's additional recommendations on top of the existing strategies in place.

Committee Member Corpuz inquired about the inclusion of the regionality of Foster City parks, the impact on attracting visitors, and the implications to economic development within the scope of the Parks and Open Space Element.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that they are looking into park access and will evaluate and review strategies regarding the balance of local and regional use.

Committee Member Baer recommended looking into the original element of the Master Plan and raised concerns about Foster City being taxed for facilities that are not being fulfilled. He referenced the 54-acre plan that consisted of a high school, recreational facilities, and indoor facilities and was to be developed with mostly open space but was abandoned after Proposition 13.

Committee Member Bindal requested a status on the Foster City's current progress toward meeting the statewide goals, like '30 by 2030.'

Consultant Planner Acosta noted that the 30 by 30 goal is a statewide initiative and has been making great progress. She mentioned that in order to meet other mandates, they are focusing on modernization and cited SB 1425 and AB 1889 which is related to open space, climate, resiliency, and wildlife connectivity.

Commissioner Pedro inquired about Foster City's allocation of the San Francisco Bay in regard to open space.

Consultant Planner Acosta clarified that Foster City's allocation is the shoreline and the access to the bay. There will be additional research on marine life in the bay adjacent to the shoreline.

Commissioner Jagtiani suggested a more creative approach to park planning that focuses on serving different needs for different members of the community. He expressed a barrier to infrastructure improvements is the cost and mentioned the possibility of working with the larger companies within Foster City to sponsor the developments.

Summary of staff questions:

What issues regarding conservation and sustainability are most important to the future of Foster City?

Commissioner Pedro stated that water resources are an important part of the conservation element and are important for future planning, building and parks maintenance. He furthered that with 60% reuse of the current water allotment, there is still room for growth.

Committee Member Ryzak referred Foster City's levee and how surrounding cities are not similarly protected. She raised concerns that this may lead to potential impacts and downfalls of reaching conservation goals.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that the levee data is incorporated into the analysis, including sea level rise, tidal flooding, and groundwater rise and will continue to look at data on those impacts.

Commissioner Jagtiani referenced the net neutrality clause stated on every project brought to Planning Commission. He reiterated his prior comments on State mandates of high-efficiency systems and the need to address how Foster City will comply.

Committee Member Baer identified Sea Cloud Phase 2 as part of the Development Plan for recreation; however, CEQA and other agencies prevented Foster City from developing those areas. He asked if this example fits into the current topic.

Consultant Planner Acosta stated that she is unfamiliar with Sea Cloud Phase 2 but will do further research.

What barriers to improving conservation and sustainability exist currently?

Commissioner Pedro stated that energy conservation can be included in this element. He suggested a microgrid, similar to that of Palo Alto, to allow Foster City to be self-sustainable and provided examples like solar power and wind power.

Commissioner Stoveland inquired if the energy conservation topics will be discussed with the Sustainability Committee as well.

Consultant Planner Acosta confirmed.

What do you imagine conservation and sustainability will look like in Foster City over the next 10 to 20 years?

Commissioner Pedro stated he looks forward to the future and that Foster City has the right things in place, such as great staff, strong elected officials, and an active and involved community. He provided the levee as an example of investing in the future, as far as conservation and sustainability. He furthered that Foster City will have major breakthroughs in renewable energy and water.

Committee Member Ryzak raised concerns on the requirement for growth and balancing it alongside conservation and sustainability.

What issues regarding parks and open space are most important to the future of Foster City?

Commissioner Jagtiani encouraged using the parks more efficiently and effectively, to meet the needs of all members of the community.

Commissioner Stoveland indicated that many parks are in the center of residential neighborhoods and to ensure the right use of the park depending on location.

Commissioner Kenkre stated that he would like to see usage of each park and referenced Bridgeview Park being utilized more for parking for the levee trail.

Committee Member Corpuz highlighted the importance of responsibly acting on key important issues of safety, sustainability, and functionality. He provided an example of Foster City beaches and their water quality as well as the water and recreational uses of the lagoon on a regional level.

Commissioner Pedro concurred that lagoon conservation is important. He added that retail is attached to the lagoon and could play a role in one of the issues regarding waterways and lagoons.

What barriers to improving parks and open space exist currently?

Commissioner Ryzak identified State Mandates on water usage and plant varieties to be a barrier to improving the parks. She stated that as the new Parks Master Plan is implemented, creating a smooth transition and communication with the community is of importance.

How do you imagine parks and open space will look in Foster City over the next 10 to 20 years?

Commissioner Kenkre raised concerns about the lack of wildlife in Leo J. Ryan Park, such as birds and butterflies, sans geese.

Committee Member Corpuz stated that he imagines more trees, shade, and open spaces. He indicated a challenge to be the current use and zoning, such as waterfront properties, but can be further enhanced by the economic development from the Parks and Open Space Element.

Commissioner Stoveland concurred and added that his neighboring community members have expressed a desire for more trees in Sunfish Park.

10. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

1. None

11. STATEMENTS AND REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

1. Commissioner Stoveland thanked staff for the reports.
2. Commissioner Jagtiani thanked staff for the reports and reminded everyone that Saturday is Holi.
3. Commissioner Kenkre stated he had nothing to report.
4. Commissioner Pedro thanked staff and the Parks and Receptions Committee for their attendance and stated that he's looking forward to the process.
5. Chair Haddad thanked staff for the report and for the Parks and Recreation Committee for attending their meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 8:12 p.m. to a Regular Meeting, April 3, 2025, Council Chambers, 620 Foster City Boulevard, Foster City, California.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City at a Regular Meeting thereof held on April 3, 2025 by the following vote:

AYES, COMMISSIONERS: Jagtiani, Kenkre, Pedro, Stoveland and Chair Haddad

NOES, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT, COMMISSIONERS:

Nicolas Haddad

Nicolas Haddad (Apr 7, 2025 20:31 PDT)

NICOLAS HADDAD, CHAIR

ATTEST:

Sofia Mangalam

SOFIA MANGALAM, SECRETARY