

You may or may not have heard the other name for Foster City: “Jewel of the Bay” - and I know why. Because, despite its uncanny uniqueness, Foster City still manages to maintain a low-key status in the Bay Area. A quiet amazingness.

If there is a city to keep a teenager engaged, entertained, healthy, and safe, it's Foster City. I live an active lifestyle. I love to keep busy and be active with other people. Foster City intrinsically embraces this lifestyle. Biking with friends is something I love to do, and the fact that I can go anywhere in the city with my friends, while being safe, gives me a sense of freedom and excitement. All of the shops and restaurants are conveniently located at a bikeable distance, no matter where you are inside the city. Whether on bicycle or on foot, there will always be children on the sidewalks near and far.

Foster City is family friendly and it is structured to bring the community together. The abundance of parks helps contribute to the friendly environment and is a great place to meet up with family and friends. One of my fondest childhood memories is sitting down with my family and having a picnic at Boothbay Park. A large portion of Foster City is green fields and parks that are well maintained year-round. The city boasts some of the most scenic outdoor venues in all of the bay area for a wide variety of events, including outdoor concerts at the Leo J. Ryan amphitheater and July Fourth fireworks by the lagoon. The City did not forget dogs when developing its parks, and even designated a special park for dogs. Whether you are a human or a dog, there is a park for you.

For such a small town, Foster City is remarkably diverse. Every year, the city hosts a variety of different cultural events and celebrations for numerous occasions, such as Diwali Festival of Lights, Chinese New Year Celebration, and the Polynesian Festival. This is a great

way for the community to come together to celebrate the different faces of Foster City as they share their way of life. We have many ethnic restaurants located throughout Foster City that share flavors from different parts of the world: from Thai, Mediterranean, and Indian, to Japanese, Italian, and Korean. And lastly, one of the most valuable aspects of diversity in the city is found within the classroom, where the diverse backgrounds of students promote the exchange of unique perspectives and ideas. This leads to a better understanding of controversial topics.

Conveniently located between San Jose and San Francisco, Foster City gives students, like me, access to unique opportunities, such as shadowing some of the top companies in different industries. The headquarters of PlayStation, Visa, and Gilead are all located within Foster City. This brings some of the best minds and most talented people to work, live, and invest in the city. Having the headquarters of these major companies close-by motivates students like me to think about and plan our future, in which no ambition is too big or too far.

One of the major and recent developments in Foster City stands as a testament to its adaptability to global issues - the levee project. Foster City recognizes the effects of climate change and has decided to take action by fortifying the levee to protect its citizens from the threat of rising sea levels. Among all the cities in the Bay Area, Foster City is one of the first cities to physically take action against climate change. While this project is necessary, it is important for the city to attempt to preserve the pulchritude of its bayside as much as possible, which draws people from around the Bay Area.

While there are many things to be proud of, Foster City is no utopia. An important consideration for improvement is the outdated school facilities. Schools like Brewer Island Elementary School, Audubon Elementary School, and Bowditch Middle School require

renovations to introduce up-to-date amenities and enhance the classroom structure.

Furthermore, as Foster City focuses on the beautification of its levee, the development of a designated beach zone would be a significant step up to take utmost advantage of our unique bayside.

Foster City really lives up to its status as “Jewel of the Bay”. With its diversity in restaurants, festivities, and schools, its 24 stunning green parks, outstanding education system, and small community vibe, Foster City is a great place to live and grow up in. There is assuredly much change in the forecast - as with any city in the Bay Area - and it is the hope of all the citizens of Foster City that the city will preserve its unique charm and spirit.