

2021 Draft Foster Comprehensive Plan

Updates Responding to
State Comments on 2019 Draft Plan

Overview Tonight:

- Comprehensive Plan Status
- State Review Comments
- Update Data
- Goals, Objectives, Policies, Actions
 - Organization & Format
 - Consistency - State Goals & Policies
- Mapping

Municipal Comprehensive Plans:

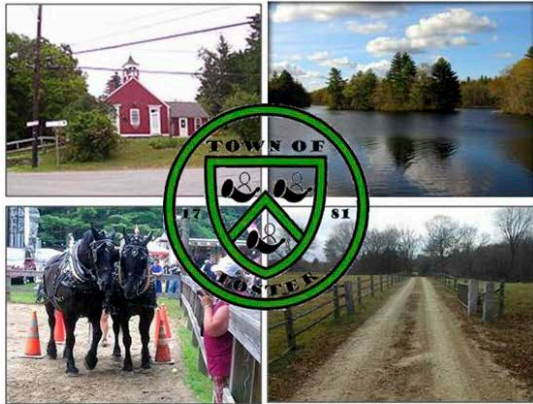
- Promote Orderly Growth & Development
- Ensure Local Land Use Regulation Is Consistent With Comp. Plan –
 - Zoning
 - Land Development (Subdivision)
- Coordinate Planning –
 - Town and State
 - Neighboring Towns

Foster's Comprehensive Plan Status:

- Foster's 1991 Plan (1989 RI Law)
- Foster Plan Updates in 2003, Amended 2004, 2006
- Changes to RI Law 2011, 2012
- Foster Draft Update 2015-2019
- March 2019 Draft Submitted to RI Division of Statewide Planning
- July 2019 State Comment Letter

2019 Draft

Draft - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOSTER, RHODE ISLAND – 2019-2039



March 2019

Chapters:

- Introduction
- Natural Resources, Conservation, and Recreation
- Historical and Cultural Resources
- Community Services and Facilities
- Natural Hazards
- Transportation Network
- Growing Economy
- Housing Opportunity
- Land Use
- Implementation Program

Statewide Planning Comments:

- Old Data (2014 – 2015) Needs Update
- Goals, Objectives, Policies, & Actions
 - Organization & Format
 - Approvability – Consistency with State Goals and Policies
- Some Natural Resource Maps Missing
- Analysis of Recreation Needs
- Identification of Historic Sites on Map
- Nike Site Discussion
- Floodplain Map & Development Policy
- Low & Moderate Income (LMI) Housing
- Future Land Use Map, Zoning Map (& Any Inconsistencies Identified)
- Implementation Program



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

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July 15, 2019

Jennifer Siciliano
Town Planner
181 Howard Hill Road
Foster, RI 02825

Subject: Draft Comprehensive Plan Review

Dear Ms. Siciliano,

Our office greatly appreciates the opportunity to work with our municipal partners in the drafting of community comprehensive plans. Our office has completed its review of the draft *Foster Comprehensive Plan*; the following constitutes our evaluation of the draft material that you provided. This is a preliminary evaluation and does not constitute official findings.

What follows is divided into two sections. Section I sets forth concerns with the draft material that relate to approvability issues; Section II presents other suggestions that, although not directly related to approvability standards, could improve the plan's overall accuracy, readability, and usability if addressed.

The following pages detail a great deal of information for your consideration. Our staff would be happy to meet with you and/or your consultant team to answer any questions you may have, as well as to offer our technical assistance.

I. STATE APPROVAL CONCERNS

The following approval concerns were identified during the review.

Comments Relevant to Multiple Chapters

Comment 1: Comprehensive plans are required to use data that is sufficiently recent to be valid. Some of the data referenced in the draft Plan does not appear to meet this standard. For example, the draft cites American Community Survey (ACS) demographic data from 2014-15, economic

- State Comments:
Update Data

Town of Foster, RI Comprehensive Plan

Table 1: Age Groups, 2000 to 2019¹

	2000	2010	2015-2019
Under 18 years	1,105	986	1,012
18 to 34 years	621	649	766
35 to 49 years	1,294	1,172	846
50 to 64 years	807	1,208	1,190
65 to 84 years	391	516	815
85 years and over	56	75	84
Total	4,274	4,606	4,713

Looking at the official counts (2000 and 2010) of these age groups, this table may present the reason for the community's median aging. The population aged 50 years and over increased by 545 residents, with nearly one out of every four of these residents being between 50 and 64 years, while the population aged 49 years and under fell by 213. The 18 to 34 years' age group was an outlier in this general trend however, growing slightly since at least the new millennium. American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for the period 2015-2019 indicated little change in overall population, a loss in population aged 35 to 49 years, and a gain in the population aged 65 to 84 years. Although the 2020 Census has been completed, information specific to Foster is not expected to be available until later in 2021 and in 2022.

Race, Sex and Ethnicity

Foster was one of only six communities in the state with a majority male population as of the 2010 Census (50.43 percent), though the difference between the female and male populations was insignificant at less than one percent. Previously, in 2000, the female population held a slight majority of 50.09 percent. After 2010, as the ACS for the 2015-2019 period estimated the female population as 50.84 percent of the total.

The combined non-white population identifying as a single race showed limited growth, in contrast to the female population, increasing from 1.38 percent of the total population in 2000 to 2.22 percent in 2010 (Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander was the only single race to decrease in number over the decade). The Hispanic/Latino population also experienced minor growth and retained its status as the largest single minority among any race or ethnicity at 1.26 percent. Out of these demographics, the male, female, American Indian and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander populations closely reflected the demographic profile of Rhode Island. The Black or African American, Asian, some other single race and Hispanic or Latino populations were comparably smaller components of total population in Foster than in the state however.

Household Characteristics

Households are a basic and important component of any city or town, serving as a foundation which society is structured and built on. Defined as the number of housing units with one or more occupants,

¹ Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, and 2015-2019 ACS

- 2019 Draft Used 2010 – 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) Data
- 2021 Draft Uses 2015 – 2019 ACS Data
- 2020 U.S. Census Data Not Available Yet
- Other Data Updated:
 - Employment (RIDOL)
 - School Population (Town)
 - Building Permits (Town / Census)
 - Tax Revenue (Town / RIDOR)

State Comments:

- Update Old Data
 - Tables
 - Text

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¹ Source: 2000 Census, 2010 Census, and 2015-2019 ACS

State Comments:

- Update Old Data
 - Figures
 - Text

the number of households is always equivalent to the number of occupied housing units in a place. Foster had 1,707 households at the time of the 2010 Census, of which 1,302 (76.27 percent) were families and 405 (23.73 percent) were nonfamilies. The average household size was 2.68 persons and 99.50 percent of the local population resided in a household (meaning, conversely, 23 people lived outside of a family or nonfamily).

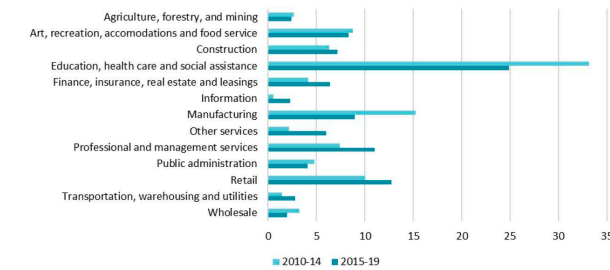
Families and Nonfamilies

Households are identified as families when they contain at least two people related to one another by adoption, birth or marriage. The 2010 Census included three sub-family categories: husband-wife families, female householder with no husband present and male householder with no wife present. A large majority of families in Foster (84.02 percent) were husband-wife families while a minority (38.79 percent) included children under 18 years old. The average family size was 3.05 persons. Households with only one occupant or no occupants related to any other occupants by adoption, birth or marriage are nonfamilies. More than three out of every four nonfamilies in Foster (78.77 percent) consisted of residents living alone.

Employment and Income

The economic recession which occurred in the later 2000s had a particularly strong and extended impact on Rhode Island and its municipalities. The following table shows the shifts in industry employment which occurred among civilian workers aged 16 years and over from Foster between 2014 and 2019, as estimated by the ACS.

Figure 1: Percentage of Workers in Each Industry²



The ACS 2019 5-year estimate of total workers living in Foster is 2,647. Between the two five year periods, there was an estimated increase of 104 workers. Because the ACS data are estimates based on a relatively small sample size for Foster, the margin of error is relatively high for some of these estimates. Nonetheless, the "education, health care and social assistance" sector remains the largest employment sector for Foster residents, accounting for about 25% of employment (665 jobs). Retail and

² Source: 2010-2014 and 2015-2019 ACS

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions

- Organization & Format

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Table 5: Natural Resources, Conservation, and Recreation Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Actions

Goals	Objectives	Policies	Actions
Protect and preserve environmental resources of the town	Develop conservation policies to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect water quality • protect scenic quality • protect wildlife habitat • preserve open space 	Develop conservation zoning to incorporate siting and design standards based on environmental consideration of each lot.	Revise specific regulations for conservation zoning to protect agricultural land, water resources forests and wildlife habitat, open space and scenic views, natural topography of land, and other valuable natural resources including country quiet and dark skies
		Develop a policy for a manufacturing/industrial zone that protects the environment.	Revise regulations for MI zoning to protect all of the above
Allow for responsible and reasonable development, consistent with environmental protection	Develop Policies to promote responsible use of resources	Support taxation policies to preserve forestry agricultural and open space land use	Set up agreements with Scituate, Gloucester and Coventry, RI and Plainfield and Killingly, CT to protect common surface and groundwater resources.
		Promote acquisition of Land or Development Rights for vulnerable and highly valued natural resource areas.	Maintain Land Trust as the key town agency in the program of coordinating land or development rights acquisitions.
			Acquire development rights to large contiguous parcels funded in part by private donations and State open space bond issue funds. Enhance other incentives to preserve these parcels as open space (e.g. tax incentives) or include penalties for

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions

- Organization & Format

Town of Foster, RI Comprehensive Plan

Goals	Objectives	Policies	Actions
			conversion.
			Promote Foster as a whole as a Greenway.
Ensure that the objectives, policies, and action items regarding open space and recreation complement each other.		To plan for recreation, conservation and open space within a comprehensive approach considering development trends and the demands of the community.	Pursue available grant funding through such State, Federal and Private Foundation sources that will allow the town to move forward with its Open-Space and Recreation objectives and goals.
Provide a range of active and passive recreational facilities, programs and open spaces that satisfy the needs of the present and future population of the Foster Community.		To encourage the exploration of additional means for obtaining and preserving recreation, conservation and open space other than outright purchases.	Establish a capital improvement program to efficiently allocate funds for orderly acquisition of open space resources, and development of recreation facilities, in a manner to take advantage of State, Federal and Private Foundation matching funds or other resources.
		To promote a sound and continuous capital improvement program to efficiently allocate funds for orderly acquisition and development of recreation facilities and open space resources according to the priority needs of the town.	
Protect the unique recreational, environmental and cultural resources of the community, including the historic resources, landscape and scenic features, rivers, lakes, ponds,	The preservation of conservation and open space areas for passive recreational use, and to provide public access to those areas while protecting sensitive resources located on those properties.	To continue to require open space dedications and / or fees in-lieu-of land dedication in all residential developments.	Identify all unique areas of conservation concern, including unique habitats and formations, and scenic areas.

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions

- Organization & Format

Town of Foster, RI Comprehensive Plan

Goals	Objectives	Policies	Actions
groundwater resources, agricultural soils, community facilities and open spaces are protected from the potential adverse effects of future growth and development to ensure that these resources continue to enhance the quality of life in Foster for residents and visitors alike.			
	The creation of vibrant, multiple-use areas that are sensitive to the environment, interconnected, accessible, safe, and aesthetically pleasing and integrated into the existing land use patterns.	To endeavor to create open space systems and corridors which protect complete ecological units, provide buffers and character to the built environment and provide passive recreational and open space opportunities close to developed areas.	Develop / Update a list of priority areas critical for preservation with direct assistance from the Conservation Commission and the Land Trust. (Areas designated or listed in the Comprehensive Plan should form the base for this inventory.)
	The acquisition of land for open space and conservation to maintain the rural character of the community.	To encourage Land Trust activities to save and manage open space through donation and other acquisition methods.	
	The maintenance of the right of public access to publicly owned and controlled open space and to all important public natural and cultural resources for all citizens; and the protection of all current and historic rights-of-way which ensure this needed access.		
Encourage and educate Foster's citizens to	The establishment of a proper balance	To ensure that the needs and recreational	Determine the future recreational needs of

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions

- Organization & Format

Town of Foster, RI Comprehensive Plan

Goals	Objectives	Policies	Actions
participate in active recreation programs.	between outdoor and indoor recreational facilities for all residents, of all age groups, physical capabilities and economic standings.	interests for all residents, of all age groups, physical capabilities, and economic standing in all areas of the state, are considered fully in developing town recreational facility plans.	the community – taking into consideration all residents of the community.
	The creation and maintenance of a coordinated effort between the school and recreation departments to maintain and expand existing recreational facilities and to acquire and develop new recreational facilities.	To coordinate the town's provision of recreational facilities and programs with local groups and / or organizations as well as State and Federal agencies to prevent and avoid duplication of services, efforts and costs.	Expand existing recreational sites owned by the town if feasible.
	The citizens are made aware of various recreational programs and opportunities and are encouraged to offer input and insight to the town's recreational programs and policies.	To continue to seek such funding as available from State and Federal agencies, such as grants etc. in order to meet the future needs of the community regarding the maintenance of existing recreational sites, as well as acquiring future sites and development thereof into recreational facilities.	Continue the development of the Foster Center Road athletic field complex.
			Locate areas within the Foster community for future recreation facilities.

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions
 - Proposed New Organization & Format
 - Unique Identifier

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

GOALS:		
NRCR	G1	Protect and preserve environmental resources of the town
NRCR	G2	Allow for responsible and reasonable development, consistent with environmental protection
NRCR	G3	Ensure that the objectives, policies, and action items regarding open space and recreation complement each other.
NRCR	G4	Protect the unique recreational, environmental and cultural resources of the community, including the historic resources, landscape and scenic features, rivers, lakes, ponds, groundwater resources, agricultural soils, community facilities and open spaces are protected from the potential adverse effects of future growth and development to ensure that these resources continue to enhance the quality of life in Foster for residents and visitors alike.
NRCR	G5	Encourage and educate Foster's citizens to participate in active recreation programs.
OBJECTIVES:		
NRCR	O1	Develop conservation policies to protect water quality, scenic quality, wildlife habitat, open space
NRCR	O2	Develop Policies to promote responsible use of resources
NRCR	O3	The preservation of conservation and open space areas for passive recreational use, and to provide public access to those areas while protecting sensitive resources located on those properties.
NRCR	O4	The creation of vibrant, multiple-use areas that are sensitive to the environment, interconnected, accessible, safe, and aesthetically pleasing and integrated into the existing land use patterns.
NRCR	O5	The acquisition of land for open space and conservation to maintain the rural character of the community.
NRCR	O6	The maintenance of the right of public access to publicly owned and controlled open space and to all important public natural and cultural resources for all citizens; and the protection of all current and historic rights-of-way which ensure this needed access.
NRCR	O7	The establishment of a proper balance between outdoor and indoor recreational facilities for all residents, of all age groups, physical capabilities and economic standings.
NRCR	O8	The creation and maintenance of a coordinated effort between the school and recreation departments to maintain and expand existing recreational facilities and to acquire and develop new recreational facilities.
NRCR	O9	The citizens are made aware of various recreational programs and opportunities and are encouraged to offer input and insight to the town's recreational programs and policies.
POLICIES:		
NRCR	P1	Develop conservation zoning to incorporate siting and design standards based on environmental consideration of each lot.
NRCR	P2	Develop a policy for a manufacturing/industrial zone that protects the environment.
NRCR	P3	Support taxation policies to preserve forestry agricultural and open space land use
NRCR	P4	Promote acquisition of Land or Development Rights for vulnerable and highly valued natural resource areas.

State Comments:

- Goals, Objectives, Policies & Actions
 - Proposed New Organization & Format
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NRCR	P5	To plan for recreation, conservation and open space within a comprehensive approach considering development trends and the demands of the community.
NRCR	P6	To promote a sound and continuous capital improvement program to efficiently allocate funds for orderly acquisition and development of recreation facilities and open space resources according to the priority needs of the town.
NRCR	P7	To continue to require open space dedications and / or fees in-lieu-of land dedication in all residential developments.
NRCR	P8	To endeavor to create open space systems and corridors which protect complete ecological units, provide buffers and character to the built environment and provide passive recreational and open space opportunities close to developed areas.
NRCR	P9	To encourage Land Trust activities to save and manage open space through donation and other acquisition methods.
NRCR	P10	To ensure that the needs and recreational interests for all residents, of all age groups, physical capabilities, and economic standing in all areas of the state, are considered fully in developing town recreational facility plans.
NRCR	P11	To coordinate the town's provision of recreational facilities and programs with local groups and / or organizations as well as State and Federal agencies to prevent and avoid duplication of services, efforts and costs.
NRCR	P12	To continue to seek such funding as available from State and Federal agencies, such as grants etc. in order to meet the future needs of the community regarding the maintenance of existing recreational sites, as well as acquiring future sites and development thereof into recreational facilities.
ACTIONS:		
NRCR	A1	Revise specific regulations for conservation zoning to protect agricultural land, water resources forests and wildlife habitat, open space and scenic views, natural topography of land, and other valuable natural resources including country quiet and dark skies
NRCR	A2	Revise regulations for MI zoning to protect all of the above
NRCR	A3	Set up agreements with Scituate, Gloucester and Coventry, RI and Plainfield and Killingly, CT to protect common surface and groundwater resources.
NRCR	A4	Maintain Land Trust as the key town agency in the program of coordinating land or development rights acquisitions.
NRCR	A5	Acquire development rights to large contiguous parcels funded in part by private donations and State open space bond issue funds. Enhance other incentives to preserve these parcels as open space (e.g. tax incentives) or include penalties for conversion.
NRCR	A6	Promote Foster as a whole as a Greenway.
NRCR	A7	Pursue available grant funding through such State, Federal and Private Foundation sources that will allow the town to move forward with its Open-Space and Recreation objectives and goals.
NRCR	A8	Identify all unique areas of conservation concern, including unique habitats and formations, and scenic areas.
NRCR	A9	Develop / Update a list of priority areas critical for preservation with direct assistance from the Conservation Commission and the Land Trust. (Areas designated or listed in the Comprehensive Plan should form the base for this inventory.)
NRCR	A10	Determine the future recreational needs of the community – taking into consideration all residents of the community.
NRCR	A11	Expand existing recreational sites owned by the town if feasible.

- State Comments: Consistency - State Goals & Policies

B	C	D												
RELEVANT STATE GOALS AND POLICIES FROM:														
THE RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STANDARDS GUIDANCE HANDBOOK SERIES														
Rhode Island Department of Administration Division of Statewide Planning														
Compiled by Mason & Associates, Inc. 5/6/2021 (index and Subject/Goal/Policy codes assigned by M&A)														
	Goal /													
Subject	Policy	State Guide Plan / RI General Law Reference	State Goals and Policies											
NR		NATURAL RESOURCES (Handbook # 2 rev. June 2018)												
NR	1	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, Goal 2, page 5-8	A statewide network of greenspaces and greenways that											
NR	2	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, Objective 2A, page 5-8	Permanently protect critical natural resources.											
NR	3	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, LUP 15, page 2-10	Protect and enhance those values of the coastal region, i											
NR	4	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, LUP 17, page 2-10	Preserve and enhance wildlife, fish, and plant species dive											
NR	5	Ocean State Outdoors: Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Policy RCOS-5, page 4.11	Protect wetlands and floodplains to maintain their natura											
NR	6	Ocean State Outdoors: Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Policy RCOS-7, page 4.14	Conserve and enhance urban and community forests for											
NR	7	A Greener Path: Greenspace and Greenways for Rhode Island's Future, Policy G-8, page 7.2	Direct new growth and development to areas and locatic											
NR	8	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, Objective 4C, page 5-15	Utilize infrastructure to avoid or mitigate significant nega											
NR	9	Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsection 45-22.2-3(c)(4))	To promote the protection of the natural, historic and cu											
NR	10	Soil Conservation, RIGL section 2-4-1	In recognition of the ever increasing environmental prob											
NR	11	RIGL chapter 42-17.5	Natural Heritage Preservation Program											
NR	12	RIGL section 44-27-1	Taxation of Farm, Forest and Open Space Land											
NR	13	RIGL subsection 46-23-1(a)	Coastal Resources Management Council											
NR	14	subsections 45-22.2-3(a)(3), 45-22.2-3(c)(1), and 45-22.2-3(c)(4).	Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act											
REC		RECREATION (Handbook # 3 Jan. 2015)												
REC	1	Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, Objective 2C, page 5-9	Provide a diverse, well-balanced system of public outdoo											
REC	2	Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, page 4.22	Rhode Island will improve its system of outdoor recreatic											
REC	3	Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Goal 2, Policy RCOS-13, page 4.27	Preserve and expand public access to the shoreline.											
NR	CR	CSF	NH	TN	GE	HO	LU	OLD Foster & RI	Old RI & Foster	RI G&P	Foster G&P Per Draft Plan	Foster GOPA by Section	Foster G&P by Type	RI G&P refs

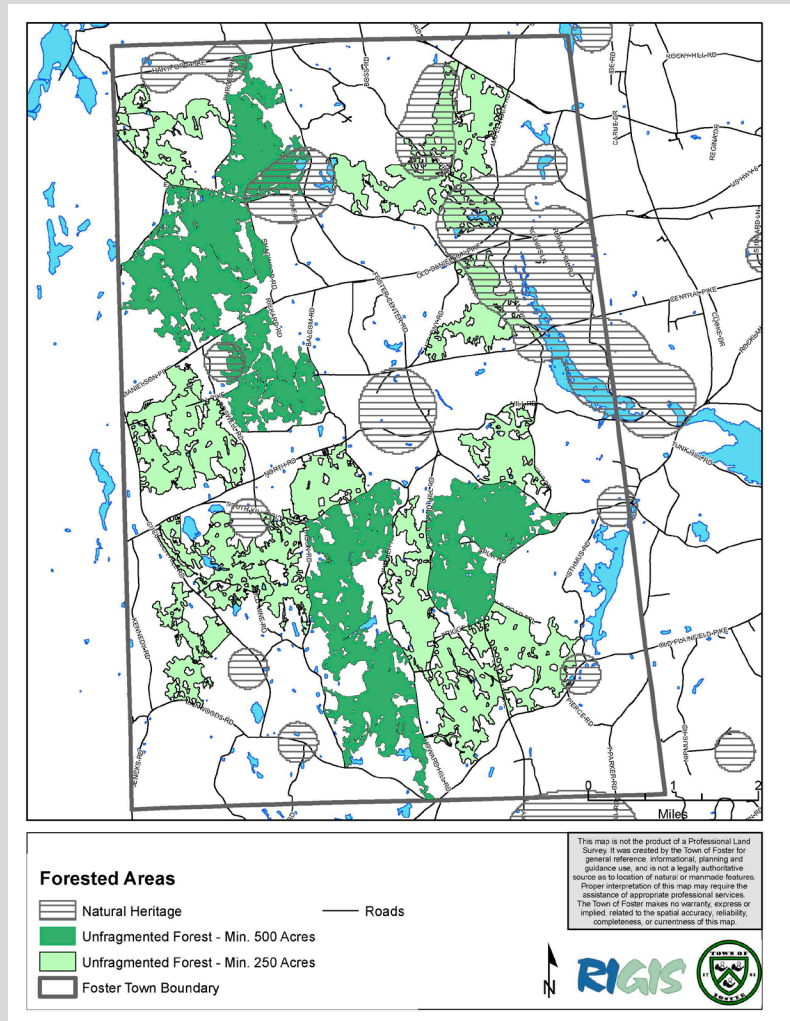
- State Goals & Policies:
 - Listed From RI Comp. Plan Handbooks
 - Assigned Unique Identifier

- State Comments: Consistency - State Goals & Policies

6	not adequately reflected in 2019 Foster G&P				
7	revised per draft 2021 suggestions				
8	Foster Code				
9	Chapter	Subject Code	Goal / Policy	Guidance Handbook	State Goals and Policies
10		NR		NATURAL RESOURCES (Handbook # 2 rev. June 2018)	
11	NRCR P8, O4	NR	1	LU2025, G 2, p 5-8	A statewide network of greenspaces and greenways that protects and preserves the env urban growth.
12	NRCR G1	NR	2	LU2025, O 2A, p 5-8	Permanently protect critical natural resources.
13	Not Applicable	NR	3	LU2025, LUP 15, p 2-10	Protect and enhance those values of the coastal region, including scenic values, which cc their importance to the State as a whole.
14	NRCR O1, NRCR P1, NRCR P2, NRCR G2, NRCR G4	NR	4	LU2025, LUP 17, page 2-10	Preserve and enhance wildlife, fish, and plant species diversity and stability through habi human activities.
15	NRCR G1, NH P1, CFS A10	NR	5	OSO, P RCOS-5, p 4.11	Protect wetlands and floodplains to maintain their natural functions and to minimize dar
16	NRCR G4, NRCR P3, GE P4, LU P3	NR	6	OSO, P RCOS-7, p 4.14	Conserve and enhance urban and community forests for multiple uses - water supply and urban environments.
17	LU O4	NR	7	AGP, P G-8, p 7.2	Direct new growth and development to areas and locations that minimize the potential f
18	CSF P2, P3; GE G2	NR	8	LU2025 O 4C, p 5-15	Utilize infrastructure to avoid or mitigate significant negative environmental impacts from
19	NRCR G1; NRCR G4; HCR G1; GE P9; LU G1,	NR	9	CPLUR, RIGL § 45-22.2-3(c)(4))	To promote the protection of the natural, historic and cultural resources of each municip
20	LU G1				

- State Goals & Policies:
 - Cross – Referenced With Foster’s
 - Goals, Objectives, Policies
 - Identified Gaps & Potential Inconsistencies
 - Suggest Some Changes

State Comments - Maps:



New GIS Maps, So Far:

- Aquifers and Wellheads
- Conservation Areas
- Floodplains
- Forested Areas
- Natural Heritage Areas
- Unfragmented Forests
- Watersheds
- Wetlands

Work to Do:

- Review / Update Action Items, Priorities, Implementation
- Review / Finalize Goals & Policies
- Recreation Inventory / Needs
- Affordable Housing
- Mapping Future Land Use, Zoning
- Assemble / Final Review 2021 Draft
- Suggest Resubmit to State as Draft