



# Economic Development Strategy for Fisher, Illinois



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## INTRODUCTION

The Village, businesses and residents of Fisher are actively pursuing positive economic development. The county is home to friendly residents, lovely open spaces, a solid workforce, and an overall high quality of life. Over the years, community members have expressed the desire to make Fisher more attractive to potential residents, regional events, and employers. With so many different possible actions to bring these ideas to fruition, the Village decided to prioritize developing a strategy for how to go about achieving them in a logical manner.

In July 2012, the Village contracted with Champaign County Regional Planning Commission to create an economic development strategy. A first step was to identify potential participants in a short-term economic development strategy process. Ten members of the Fisher community volunteered their time and ideas to create this Strategy. During the three meeting process, representatives of local government, schools, business, agriculture, banking, realty and development created goals, objectives, and action items toward strengthening economic development in Fisher.

This strategy document has two sections: Data Trends and Analysis, and Goals and Objectives. Data Trends and Analysis provides a baseline of economic development related information including the following generalized data categories:

- Demographics
- Community Infrastructure
- Economy

The Goals and Objectives section includes goals and a variety of objectives for each of ten elements:

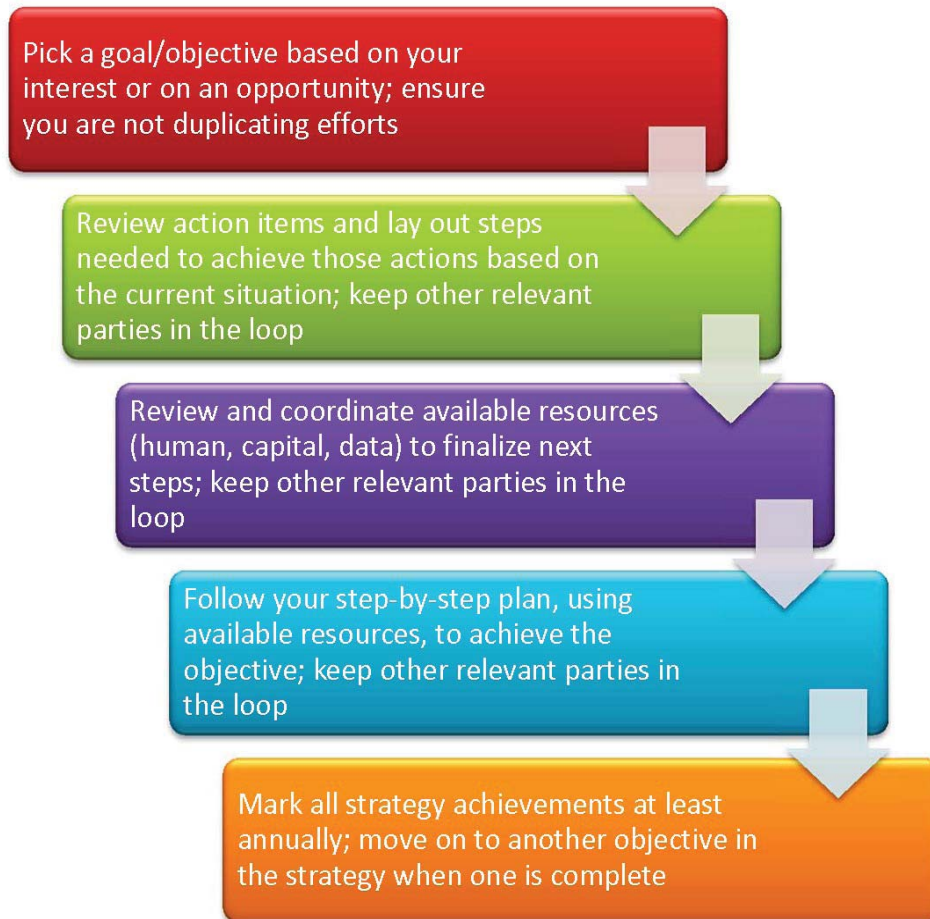
- Manufacturing
- Commercial/Services
- Residential
- Downtown
- US136 Corridor
- Attractions/Tourism
- Infrastructure
- Beautification
- Marketing
- Administration

It is our hope that any individuals, agencies, businesses, and government offices will help implement the strategy, monitor its effectiveness, change it as need dictates, and reach the overall goal of improving the economic foundation in Fisher.



## USING THE STRATEGY

Economic development needs to focus on multiple elements in order to create a stronger community. This strategy will succeed when embraced by the Village and anyone else with an interest in making Fisher an even better place to live and work. The following chart provides a general method for implementing this strategy:



If possible, different groups and individuals should focus on opportunities relevant to their knowledge and resources to accomplish the goals in balance with one another. How long each objective takes will depend on the availability and effective deployment of financial and staff resources, volunteer and auxiliary agency assistance, and other factors that are of priority to the Village and its residents.

The strategy should be reviewed at least annually to gauge how successful implementation is and whether any areas need to be added, deleted or refocused. In addition, implementers should review achievements periodically to ensure that efforts are not being duplicated and that resources are being used most efficiently and effectively.

It is essential that a group or person interested in implementing the strategy focus on one objective at a time so that efforts do not become too burdensome, which can sometimes lead to neglecting strategy implementation. It is also essential to have a coordinator (individual or group) for the entire strategy who can be the “go-to” person for ensuring effective and efficient implementation.



**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Demographics**

A community’s economic strength and competitiveness depends in part on the composition of its residents. Demographic data can help identify who our potential workforce is; what educational resources our residents can contribute; how poverty impacts available resources; and what housing, infrastructure, and services are available, among other factors. The following sections provide more specific information about the Village of Fisher, its residents, and its resources.

**Population**

Fisher experienced a 12.4% increase in population between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Population 1990-2010**

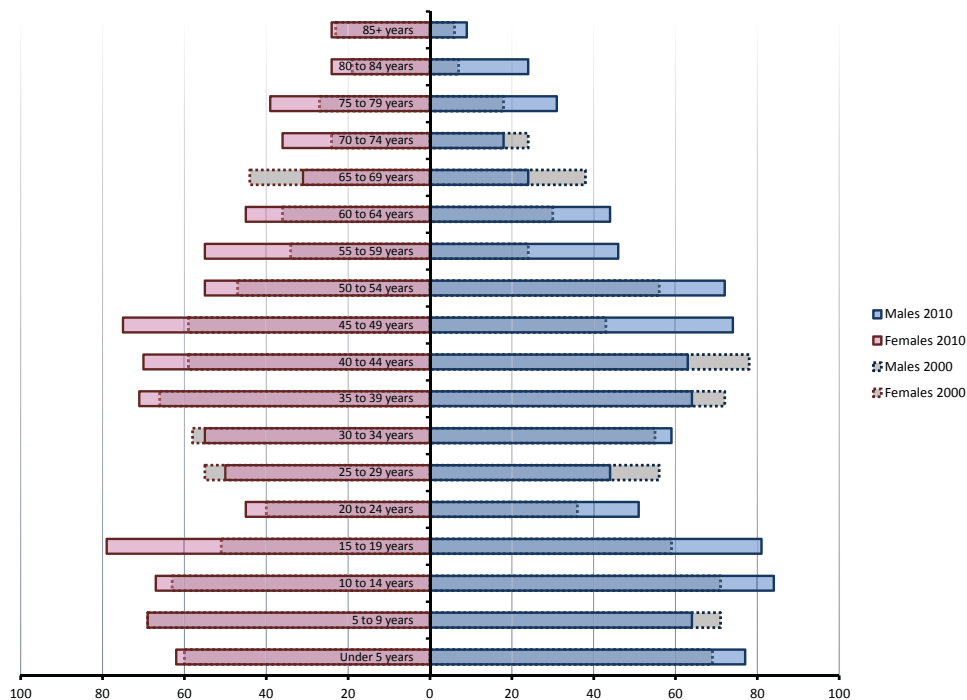
	1990	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
<b>Fisher</b>	1,526	1,647	1,881	234	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Age**

Figure 1 and Table 2 illustrate changes in age distribution between 2000 and 2010 for the Village. Over the last ten years, Fisher’s population has maintained age groups that support continued growth in the community. Residents in the child-raising ages of 25-45 years show a slight decline in numbers, but there are more children in the Village than a decade ago. A substantial increase in population ages 45 and older suggests that residents are staying in the community after raising their children. The community might focus on attracting young families that will help make Fisher grow, and to provide resources for aging residents who are already choosing to stay.

**Figure 1: Age Distribution, 2000 - 2010**



**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Table 2: Age Distribution, 2000 - 2010**

Age	2000	2010	Change	% Change
Under 5 years	129	139	10	8%
5 to 9 years	140	133	-7	-5%
10 to 14 years	134	151	17	13%
15 to 19 years	110	160	50	45%
20 to 24 years	76	96	20	26%
25 to 29 years	111	94	-17	-15%
30 to 34 years	113	114	1	1%
35 to 39 years	138	135	-3	-2%
40 to 44 years	137	133	-4	-3%
45 to 49 years	102	149	47	46%
50 to 54 years	103	127	24	23%
55 to 59 years	58	101	43	74%
60 to 64 years	66	89	23	35%
65 to 69 years	82	55	-27	-33%
70 to 74 years	48	54	6	13%
75 to 79 years	45	70	25	56%
80 to 84 years	26	48	22	85%
85+ years	29	33	4	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>1,881</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>14%</b>

**Educational Attainment**

Table 3 shows the educational attainment for residents age 25 and older. The data indicates that 92% of Village residents received a high school diploma or higher education degree, according to Census Bureau estimates from 2006-2010. Fisher also exceeds state and US totals for Associate’s degrees, suggesting residents are taking advantage of nearby Parkland College or other community colleges in the area.

**Table 3: Educational Attainment**

	8th Grade or Less	9th-12th, no diploma	H.S. grad, GED, or alternative	Some college, no degree	Associate’s degree	Bachelor’s degree	Graduate Degree
Fisher	1.05%	6.77%	38.20%	26.91%	10.07%	11.44%	5.56%
Champaign County	2.60%	5.00%	23.50%	19.70%	7.90%	20.50%	20.70%
Illinois	6.00%	7.80%	27.90%	20.80%	7.30%	18.90%	11.40%
U.S.	6.20%	8.70%	29.00%	20.60%	7.50%	17.60%	10.30%

Source: US Census Bureau; 2010 data is from American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2006-2010

One point of concern from this data is that the Village falls behind the state and national average for higher education in spite of the region’s numerous higher education opportunities. Part of this could stem from local high school graduates leaving the community to attend college elsewhere and then not returning; this is reflected in the decreasing numbers of people ages 25-29 in the community. While this “brain drain” phenomenon is common to many communities in the Midwest, the wealth of higher educational assets in the region provides an opportunity to increase the level of education among residents. A closer look should be taken at what educational resources residents need to achieve higher educational levels.

**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Income**

Table 4 below compares three measures of income. Per capita income measures average annual income across the entire workforce. Median household income measures income by residence of people who live together but are unrelated. Median family income measures annual income by residence for people who are related and live together.

Fisher residents experienced a substantial increase in per capita income between 1999 and 2010. While lower than the state and US averages, the Village did have a higher per capita income than Champaign County as a whole. Median household and family incomes also experienced significant gains over the decade, and Fisher leads the county, state and national averages for these types of income.

**Table 4: Income Comparison, 1999-2010**

County	Per capita income			Median Household Income			Median family income		
	1999	2010	% Change	1999	2010	% Change	1999	2010	% Change
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>18,262</b>	<b>26,540</b>	<b>45.3%</b>	<b>41,891</b>	<b>62,269</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>50,050</b>	<b>71,289</b>	<b>42.4%</b>
Champaign	19,708	24,553	24.6%	37,780	45,262	19.8%	52,591	65,785	25.1%
Illinois	23,104	28,782	24.6%	46,590	55,735	19.6%	55,545	68,236	22.8%
US	21,587	27,334	26.6%	41,994	51,914	23.6%	50,046	62,982	25.8%

Source: US Census Bureau; 2010 data is from American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2006-2010

**Poverty**

Fisher has a very low poverty rate compared to Champaign County, the state and nation. The data in Table 5 suggests that the Village has more resources than other communities to devote to strengthening its economy.

**Table 5: Poverty, 1999-2010**

	1999	2010
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>7.9</b>
Champaign County	16.1	20.5
Illinois	10.7	12.6
U.S.	12.4	13.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2010 data from ACS 2006-2010 5-year estimates

## DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

### Housing

The Village had 765 housing units in 2010, with over 93% of them occupied. Fisher falls below the vacancy rates for Champaign County, the state and nation. This trend suggests that there could be higher demand for housing in Fisher than in other counties, and that neighborhoods could be more attractive due to fewer vacant properties. Both elements are significant to promoting economic development.

**Table 6: Housing Occupancy and Vacancy, 2000 and 2010**

	2000				2010				Vacant % Change 2000-2010
	Total Units	Occupied	Vacant	Percent	Total Units	Occupied	Vacant	Percent	
Fisher	667	630	37	5.5%	765	717	48	6.3%	29.7%
Champaign County	75,280	70,597	4,683	6.2%	87,569	80,665	6,904	7.9%	47.4%
Illinois	4,885,615	4,591,779	293,836	6.0%	5,296,715	4,836,972	459,743	8.7%	56.5%
US	115,904,641	105,480,101	10,424,540	9.0%	131,704,730	116,716,292	14,988,438	11.4%	43.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Censuses 2000 and 2010

Table 7 below shows that over half of Fisher homeowners have a mortgage or loan, about 25% own their homes free and clear, and about 18% rent their homes. Fisher has a relatively low rental occupancy rate and higher ownership rates compared to Champaign County, the state and nation. This suggests that Fisher residents are more likely to stay where they are and thus provide a solid foundation for growth.

**Table 7: Housing Tenure by Ownership, 2010**

	Total Occupied Units	Owned with a mortgage or loan		Owned free and clear		Renter occupied	
			%		%		%
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
Champaign County	80,665	30,149	37.4%	13,270	16.5%	37,246	46.2%
Illinois	4,836,972	2,338,493	48.3%	925,146	19.1%	1,573,333	32.5%
US	116,716,292	52,979,430	45.4%	23,006,644	19.7%	40,730,218	34.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 8 below shows new privately-owned residential building permits for the Village. Despite the almost universal economic downturn that was reflected in fewer new homes being built in 2008 and 2009, Fisher has shown an upswing starting in 2010.

**Table 8: New Residential Construction Permits, 2007-2011**

	Buildings	Construction Cost
2011	9	\$1,505,593
2010	6	\$961,052
2009	0	\$0
2008	2	\$322,293
2007	15	\$2,292,486

**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

As can be seen in Table 9, Census estimates from 2006 to 2010 indicate that Fisher’s median home value was \$115,700, lower than the county, state and nation. This suggests that the Village has a competitive housing market due to its affordability that could draw more residents.

**Table 9: Median Home Values**

	Median value (dollars)
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>\$115,700</b>
Champaign County	\$145,200
Illinois	\$202,500
U.S.	\$188,400

Source: US Census Bureau; 2010 data is from ACS 5 year estimates 2006-2010



## DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

### Community Infrastructure

#### Schools

The Village of Fisher has one elementary school and one combined middle/high school. Table 10 shows enrollment for the school district for the last five school years. A decrease in enrollment in the District can be seen since the 2007-2008 school year, but it has stabilized over the last three years. With education being a primary attraction for families with school age children, the Village should consider more in-depth study of its schools, amenities, and programs.

**Table 10: School Enrollment, 2007-2011**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Fisher Grade School (K-6)	331	319	314	313	333
Fisher High School (7-12)	303	306	286	285	267
District Total	634	625	600	598	600

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

#### Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services

The Village has two full time and two part time police officers as well as a 25-member volunteer fire department (Source: DCEO Community Profiles updated 4/25/12).

#### Water

The Village is served by the Mahomet Aquifer, the major groundwater source for East Central Illinois. Table 11 shows water storage and treatment capacities for the Village's system. The Village will need to consider additional capacity for its water system if it anticipates substantial growth in the future.

**Table 11: Water Capacities**

	Storage Capacity	Treatment Capacity	Avg. Daily Demand	Peak Daily Demand	Excess Capacity
Fisher	150,000	250,000	150,000	250,000	0

Source: Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Community Profiles updated 4/25/12

#### Public Sanitary Sewer

Table 12 below provides information regarding the availability of public sanitary sewer service for the Village. The Village of Fisher treats its wastewater at an activated/lagoon treatment plant. The plant is rated at 200,000 gallons per day under normal conditions and 500,000 gallons per day under heavy flow conditions.

**Table 12: Availability of Public Sanitary Sewer**

	Gallons per day
Treatment Capacity	200,000
Present Load	140,000
Excess Capacity	60,000

Source: Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Community Profiles updated 4/25/12

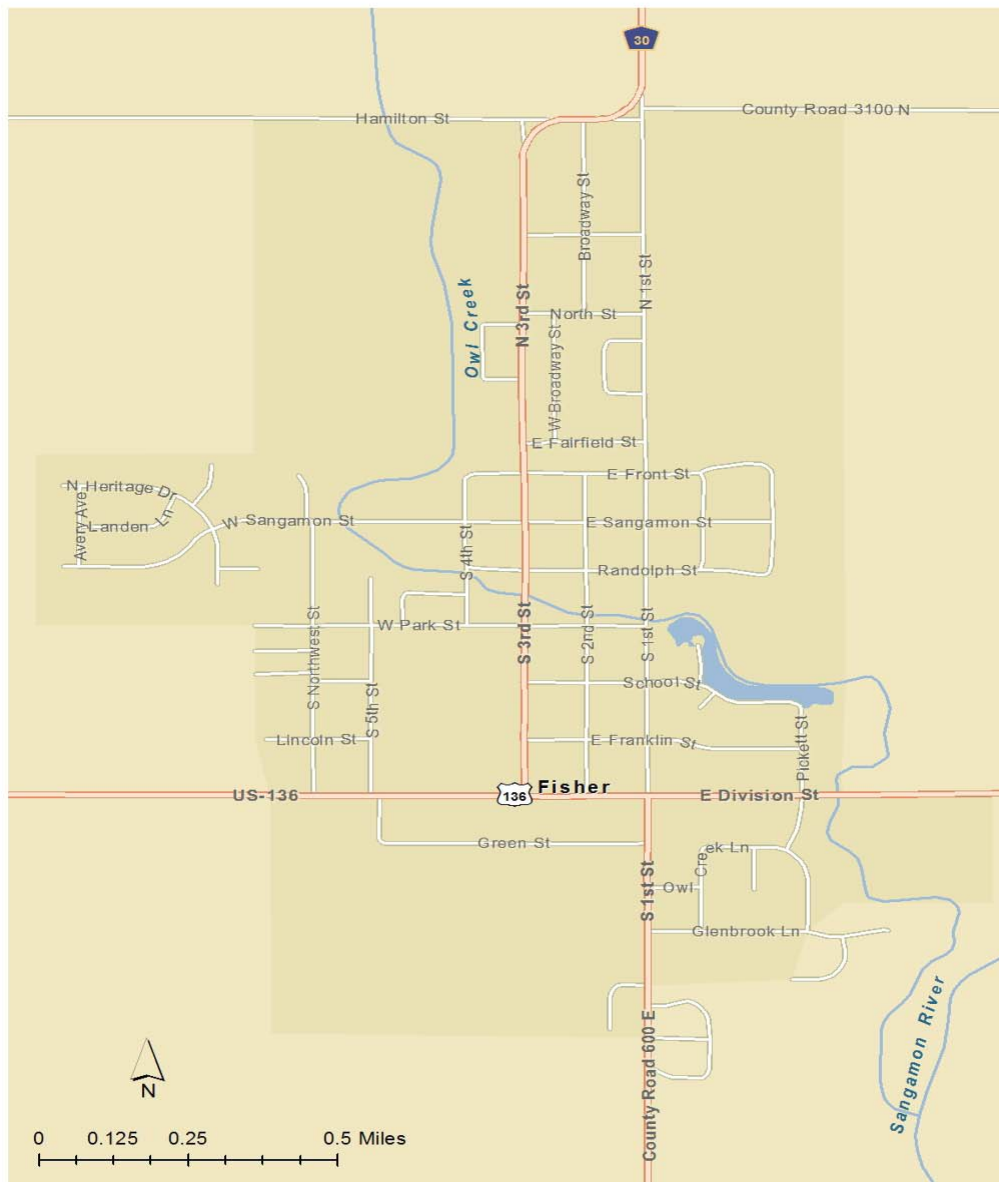
**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Transportation**

The Village roadway network is primarily comprised of local roads. US Route 136 traverses the Village east to west. There are no rail lines, airports, or bicycle facilities in the Village.

Traffic volumes can be measured using the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) count. The ADT counts are bi-directional 24-hour traffic volumes for a given roadway segment. US 136 carries approximately 3,000 vehicles per day. School Street and South First Street each carry close to 1,700 vehicles. In contrast, smaller residential streets carry anywhere from a few to several hundred vehicles per day.

**Map 1: Fisher Road Network**





## DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

### Commuting

The mean travel time for commuters living in Fisher is 24.6 minutes, compared to 16.9 minutes for Champaign County as a whole. This suggests that many employees travel to other locations such as Champaign-Urbana or Danville. This is further reflected by Census data indicating approximately 87% of working Fisher residents go to another community to work, as shown in Table 14.

**Table 13: Commuting Time**

	Mean Travel Time (minutes)
Fisher	24.6
Champaign County	16.9
Illinois	28.1
US	25.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2006-2010 estimates

**Table 14: Residents' Place of Work**

	Worked in Place of Residence	Worked Outside Place of Residence
Fisher	13%	87%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2006-2010 estimates



**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Economy**

**Employment**

*Labor Force*

Fisher’s labor force includes 1,151 residents, of whom 5.9% were unemployed according to the Census 5-year estimates for 2006-2010. As shown in Table 15, Fisher’s unemployment rate was lower than Champaign County’s, the state and nation in the 2010 estimates.

**Table 15: Fisher Labor Force**

	<b>Labor Force</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Rate</b>
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>1151</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
Champaign County	106,647	99,764	6,883	6.5%
Illinois	6,632,592	6,062,848	569,744	8.6%
US	154,037,474	141,833,331	12,204,143	7.9%

Source: Census American Community Survey 5 year estimates, 2006-2010

*Employment Structure*

Most working residents in the Village are employed in three primary industries: educational services, manufacturing, and retail trade. Table 16 below shows the number of Fisher residents working by industry.

**Table 16: Fisher Resident Worker Occupations**

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,083
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	271
Manufacturing	160
Retail trade	129
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	96
Construction	93
Other services, except public administration	84
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	83
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	52
Wholesale trade	37
Public administration	33
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	20
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	14
Information	11

Source: US Census 5-year estimates, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

## DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

### Major Employers

Fisher has several large employers. Design and Manufacturing, Inc. provides a newer but steady economic base for the Village, with over 50 employees. The two public schools also employ approximately 80 people, followed by Ingold's Grocery (pictured at right) with 13 employees. The Village has numerous smaller businesses with a diverse economic base in retail and services.



**Table 17: Major Employers**

	<b># Employees</b>
Design & Manufacturing, Inc	50-99
Fisher Grade School	45
Fisher High School	35
Ingold's Grocery	13
Papa Burly's	12
Casey's General Store	12
Praxsym Inc	12
Buzzard's Fine Dining	12
Fisher National Bank	11
Fisher Transportation Dept.	10
Christian Kids Care	8
Mennonite Mutual Aid	8
Village Garden Restaurant	7
Village of Fisher	6
Flowers Etc	5
US Post Office	5
People's Gas	5-9
Hicksgas	5-9

Source: Illinois Workforce Info Center,  
<https://illinois.virtuallmi.com/empsearch.asp>,  
 ESRI Business Analyst

**DATA TRENDS AND ANALYSIS**

**Municipal Tax Revenues**

Fisher’s sales tax revenues depend largely on restaurants and the gas station. Sales tax revenues have increased since a low in 2009 attributable to the recession. The Village could focus on diversifying its tax base to strengthen the local economy.

**Table 18: Municipal Sales Tax Revenues, 2007-2011**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
General Merchandise	-	-	-	-	-
Food	-	-	-	-	-
Drinking and Eating Places	\$3,928	\$3,894	\$4,966	\$5,381	\$5,331
Apparel	-	-	-	-	-
Furniture & Household & Radio	-	-	-	-	-
Lumber, Bldg, Hardware	-	-	-	-	-
Automotive & Filling Stations	\$29,356	\$32,266	\$27,384	\$31,065	\$41,435
Drugs & Misc. Retail	\$3,328	\$13,789	\$1,194	\$913	\$879
Agriculture & All Others	\$1,569	\$6,374	\$1,201	\$35	\$233
Manufacturers	\$878	\$1,213	\$630	\$609	\$672
Totals	\$55,611	\$74,270	\$50,258	\$52,445	\$62,577

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue





## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Goals and Objectives

#### Goals and Objectives Defined

A *goal* is an ideal future to which one aspires. Goals define characteristics of a desired future state of development. Goals are usually expressed in adjectives and nouns and are not quantified<sup>1</sup>.

An *objective* is a tangible, measurable outcome leading to the achievement of a goal. Objectives can be set as intermediate steps toward attaining a goal based on benchmarks that are time-specific. Objectives may also be one aspect of a larger goal<sup>1</sup>.

*Action items* are steps to be taken to achieve an objective and thus the overall goal.

For this strategy, the Village of Fisher created the following goal themes:

- Manufacturing
- Commercial/Services
- Residential
- Downtown
- US136 Corridor
- Attractions/Tourism
- Infrastructure
- Beautification
- Marketing
- Administration

In the following pages, Goals, their objectives and action items will be listed under High Priority, Medium Priority and Low Priority. In the columns to the right of each High Priority objective, Existing and Potential Resources have been identified. As the High Priority Goals are achieved or if an opportunity arises to fulfill a lower priority Goal, the Village can identify resources for those new priorities. There is no timeline indicated for implementing the action items or achieving the goals; rather, the strategy will be implemented as resources allow.

#### High Priority Goals

##### Goal Theme: Commercial / Services

##### **GOAL: FISHER WILL BE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.**

Objective: Foster local businesses by sharing information, talents, and resources.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Develop a mentoring program for existing businesses and homegrown potential businesses.	Business Association	Volunteers, Example: Fairfield, Iowa grassroots mentoring program.
Continue to work with other communities to develop new ideas and networks.	Mayors' multi-municipality group	Champaign County Economic Development Corporation, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

<sup>1</sup> Urban Land Use Planning, 5th Edition, Philip Berke et al., pp. 296-297.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal Theme: Commercial / Services - *continued***

**GOAL: FISHER WILL BE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.**

Objective: Develop additional programs/incentives for existing and new business development if feasible.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Gather input from existing businesses for determining their needs for programs and incentives.	Village Board Business Association	Other municipalities' programs as models
Create incentives approved by the Village Board to be consistently implemented with business owners.	Village Board and Business Association can help formulate new incentives or other programs.	

**Goal Theme: Downtown**

**GOAL: DOWNTOWN FISHER WILL BE FULLY OCCUPIED BY HEALTHY BUSINESSES.**

Objective: Make structures more marketable.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Create an inventory and improvements assessment for vacant properties when feasible.	TIF District funds	Village Board, Volunteers
Identify improvements the Village is willing to make to these properties if permissible.	TIF District funds	Village Board
Consider purchasing properties as a Village in order to improve or demolish as resources permit.	TIF District funds	Village Board
Identify and implement appropriate incentives for downtown redevelopment.	Business Association	Champaign County Economic Development Corporation

Objective: Existing businesses will increase their sales due to a healthier downtown.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
The Village will continue to have a strong relationship with local business owners and work with them to provide a stable and welcoming environment.	Village Board, Business Association	Agenda item or subgroup focused on downtown improvements

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Goal Theme: US136 Corridor

**GOAL: THE US136 CORRIDOR WILL ATTRACT MORE VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FROM IL-47 AND RANTOUL.**

Objective: Increase visibility of the Village.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Improve way finding signage to local businesses and to the community in general.	Village Board, Business Association	Graphic arts students at University or Parkland could create designs for new signs
Improve lighting to draw more people down the corridor.		Grant funding for lighting, Ameren, TIF, Fisher National Bank
Consider business signage along the corridor in terms of lighted signage while also considering how much lighting is desirable for Village character.		Cost share between Village and businesses for improved signage and lighting

### Goal Theme: Beautification

**GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS VISUALLY PLEASING “CURB APPEAL” AND APPEARANCE.**

Objective: Organize and implement beautification efforts.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Draft an overall appearance plan.		UIUC Dept. of Landscape Architecture, or urban design students in Urban Planning Dept; Parkland Horticulture program
Draft a Capital Improvement Plan for infrastructure improvements.	Village Board	Other municipalities' CIPs can serve as model
Spruce up welcome signs	Village funds	Dave Lindsay - local sign company
Locate signs and determine plan of action for increased/improved signage	Village Board, Business Association	
Find information on and design banners for US136 and Downtown areas		Parkland or UIUC graphics art students; local residents Dave Lindsay, Laura Trovillian
Obtain knowledge about plants		Parkland Horticulture program; local FFA program; local resident Todd Cotter
Draw up community-wide designs and locations for plantings		UIUC Dept. of Landscape Architecture, Parkland Horticulture program, Steve Bos
Seek help (financial and from organizations / individuals)	Village budget, TIF funds	ECIEDD funding sources database, local donations
Maintain beautification projects		Community volunteers, local FFA program, students



**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal Theme: Beautification - *continued***

**GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS VISUALLY PLEASING “CURB APPEAL” AND APPEARANCE.**

Objective: Fisher will reduce the number of blighted buildings in the community.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Seek brownfields technical and financial assistance	Village Board, IL EPA	ECIEDD free labor hours for research and grant writing; ISU Brownfields Program - <a href="http://stevensoncenter.org/services/brownfields.shtml">http://stevensoncenter.org/services/brownfields.shtml</a>
Build relationships and communicate more aggressively with building and site owners who could make improvements.	Village Board, TIF	Business Association

**Goal Theme: Administration**

**GOAL: THE VILLAGE OF FISHER WILL BE READY TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO ALL APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.**

Objective: Maintain and add content to the Village website.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Identify regularly requested data for economic development interests.	Webmaster, Business Association	CCRPC has comparative communities data on website topics to include
Gather input from the Business Association and Village Board to make the Village website as effective as possible.	Village Board, Business Association	High School computer class

Objective: Continue working to implement economic development goals.

Action Item	Existing Resources	Potential Resources
Continue accountability of action groups identified as resources.	Village Board, Business Association	Periodic meetings and networking
Identify new action groups if necessary.	Village Board, Business Association	Volunteers
Create a contact list of community members who have helped implement strategy action items to refer to as new opportunities for assistance arise.	Village Board, Business Association	Village Clerk
Make a periodic item on Village Board agendas to update and plan for implementation of this strategy.	Village Board	

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Medium Priority Goals

#### **Goal Theme: Commercial / Services**

#### **GOAL: FISHER WILL BE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.**

Objective 1: Proactively recruit retail businesses and services.

Action Items:

- Create marketing materials about Fisher, business incentives and base data for distribution to potential developers.
- Create and enforce business friendly zoning laws.
- Become an arts or niche business and entrepreneurial friendly town.

#### **Goal Theme: Residential**

#### **GOAL: FISHER IS A VIBRANT RETIREMENT COMMUNITY, INCLUDING A STATE-OF-THE-ART SENIOR ASSISTED LIVING CENTER.**

Objective: Proactively recruit retail businesses and services.

Action Items:

- Research assisted living facilities in other communities to identify desirable characteristics and other relevant information.
- Meet with developers of such facilities to determine whether they would be interested in building in Fisher.
- Consider incentives for development in conjunction with desired design guidelines and the fiscal health of the community in any discussions with developers.

#### **Goal Theme: US136 Corridor**

#### **GOAL: THE US136 CORRIDOR WILL BE AN ATTRACTIVE, VIBRANT EMPLOYMENT CENTER.**

Objective: Fisher will attract new businesses by making aesthetic improvements to the corridor.

Action Items:

- Seek regional resources to create a low cost beautification plan.
- Ask for cooperation and participation of local businesses, land owners and other community champions to make aesthetic improvements as resources allow.

#### **Goal Theme: Attractions and Tourism**

#### **GOAL: FISHER HAS ACCESSIBLE BIKING, HIKING, WALKING, JOGGING, AND CROSS COUNTRY SKIING TRAILS.**

Objective: Create a plan, design and budget for developing a multi-use path, perhaps along the Creek, linking the Sangamon River Forest Preserve, and community destinations.

Action Items:

- Appoint a steering committee.
- Investigate existing plans, right-of-ways and access opportunities.
- Identify scenarios for potential path alignments.
- Gather public input on scenarios, desired amenities, and interest.
- Formulate a final draft concept to have a budget and design developed.
- If feasible, seek funding for the project.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Medium Priority Goals - *continued*

#### **Goal Theme: Marketing**

#### **GOAL: FISHER WILL INCREASE ITS POPULATION, NUMBER OF BUSINESSES, AND REGIONAL REPUTATION.**

Objective: Fisher will market its character, community, businesses and amenities in the region.

Action Items:

- Create a marketing plan that focuses on local marketing, regional marketing and other relevant geographies/populations.
- Create a line item in the Village budget for community marketing.
- Work with businesses, schools, and other community residents to identify appropriate marketing efforts and prioritize them.
- Implement prioritized marketing action items.

#### **Goal Theme: Administration**

#### **GOAL: THE VILLAGE OF FISHER WILL BE READY TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO ALL APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.**

Objective: Establish and communicate information about regulations and incentives.

Action Items:

- Review existing incentives for development
- Consider what disincentives to development may exist in the Village
- Consider what potential changes are needed in the Village ordinances to attract and maintain desirable businesses.

### Low Priority Goals

#### **Goal Theme: Manufacturing**

#### **GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS HIGH TECH INDUSTRIES.**

Objective: Village residents will increase their use of regional educational opportunities to be a ready labor base for high tech industries.

Action Items:

- Advertise learning opportunities in town about Parkland College, University of Illinois, the Rantoul satellite of the University's Research Park and others.
- Work with these educational institutions and local businesses seeking training to create new training programs.
- Establish local business mentoring programs or events to increase local capabilities.

Objective: Local industries will consider providing educational opportunities to their employees to help them achieve higher qualifications and benefits.

Action Items:

- Identify local training needs and assist businesses in finding relevant educational opportunities.

#### **GOAL: FISHER WILL BE READY FOR POTENTIAL NEW BUSINESS INVESTMENTS.**

Objective: Facilitate development of "shovel ready" sites and buildings for new or expanding manufacturing facilities.

Action Items:

- Seek brownfields technical and financial assistance.
- Fill gaps in infrastructure (sewer, water, streets, gas/electric, internet) to prioritized sites as resources allow.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Low Priority Goals - *continued*

Objective: Establish policies for encouraging appropriate standards, locations and phasing of manufacturing growth in the Community.

Action Items:

- Develop design guidelines or standards for future manufacturing developments; adopt them as part of municipal code.

Objective: Proactively recruit appropriate industries and market manufacturing assets.

Action Items:

- Continue to use State of Illinois Location One site availability online tool to help market Fisher's available sites and buildings.
- Create marketing materials about Fisher, business incentives and base data for distribution to potential developers.
- Create and enforce business friendly zoning laws.

### **Goal Theme: US136 Corridor**

**GOAL: THE US136 CORRIDOR WILL ATTRACT MORE VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FROM IL-47 AND RANTOUL.**

Objective: Have "brand name" businesses develop in Fisher.

Action Items:

- Create and implement a business marketing plan.
- Discuss and implement reasonable incentives for appropriate businesses which seek to expand or develop along the corridor.

### **Goal Theme: Attractions and Tourism**

**GOAL: FISHER IS A PLACE WHERE ALL ITS RESIDENTS CAN FIND WHAT THEY DESIRE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

Objective: Create community recreational destinations for all ages.

Action Items:

- Conduct a community survey followed by a feasibility study for a new attraction in Fisher.
- Increase and improve family-friendly amenities (i.e. benches, trash cans, water fountains, etc.).
- Prioritize potential projects, and seek resources to implement them.

**GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES.**

Objective: Create new and enhance existing leisure opportunities to attract people and revenues to the community.

Action Items:

- Identify new recreational events that would be desirable for the Village (i.e. Farmer's Market, FFA Fair, etc.)
- Prioritize and find human and capital resources for creating a new event for the community.
- Find opportunities to work with existing events in the region to attract more visitors (i.e. Boneyard Arts Festival)

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### **Current and Ongoing Goals**

The Village of Fisher has several existing goals and objectives that will continue to be worked on as resources allow.

#### **Goal Theme: Residential**

##### **GOAL: FISHER HAS HOUSING FOR A DIVERSITY OF INCOMES AND FAMILY SIZES.**

Objective: Continue to respond to housing demand.

Action Items:

- Continue to analyze market demand and local feedback.
- Define infrastructure needs and manage municipal growth as capacity and resources allow.

#### **Goal Theme: Infrastructure**

##### **GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS EXCELLENT SCHOOLS AND A “DEBT FREE” SCHOOL DISTRICT.**

Objective: Fisher schools will continue to achieve progress with its students, maintenance in its buildings, and build a reputation in the area for excellence, all of which will attract more residents to the community.

Action Items:

- Maintain or exceed adequate yearly progress.
- Continue to work within budget and with a Capital Improvements Plan that efficiently and effectively spends funding on maintenance and improvements to school facilities.
- Market Fisher schools through the media, website, Village website, within town and other locations.

##### **GOAL: FISHER WILL HAVE ADEQUATE SEWER, WATER, AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE TO MEET CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED DEMAND.**

Objective: Fisher will be ready for potential developers, business expansion, and increased population without adversely affecting its economic base or existing residents.

Action Items:

- Consider recommendations and make longer term plans via a Capital Improvements Plan so that improvements can be made logically and with economic efficiency.

#### **Goal Theme: Administration**

##### **GOAL: THE VILLAGE OF FISHER WILL BE READY TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO ALL APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.**

Objective: Explore funding options for prioritized actions and unexpected opportunities.

Action Items:

- Find or hire a champion to search funding sources.
- Build relationships with potential funding sources.
- Be aware of application deadlines and how they affect expected and unexpected developments.

## HIGH PRIORITY CHECKLIST

The following table lists the high priority goals, objectives and action items. It can be used to review the status of each item the Village seeks to achieve. If there are issues impeding the achievement of an item, community members can meet to discuss how best to resolve the problems and move forward.

Goal/Objectives/Action Items	Status			
<b>Commercial &amp; Services</b>				
<b>GOAL: FISHER WILL BE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY.</b>				
<b>Objective: Foster local businesses by sharing information, talents, and resources.</b>				
➡ Develop a mentoring program for existing businesses and homegrown potential businesses.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Continue to work with other communities to develop new ideas and networks.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
<b>Objective: Develop additional programs/incentives for existing and new business development if feasible.</b>				
➡ Gather input from existing businesses for determining their needs for programs and incentives.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Create incentives approved by the Village Board to be consistently implemented with business owners.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?

Goal/Objectives/Action Items	Status			
<b>Downtown</b>				
<b>GOAL: DOWNTOWN FISHER WILL BE FULLY OCCUPIED BY HEALTHY BUSINESSES.</b>				
<b>Objective: Make structures more marketable.</b>				
➡ Create an inventory and improvements assessment for vacant properties when feasible.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Identify improvements the Village is willing to make to these properties if permissible.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Consider purchasing properties as a Village in order to improve or demolish as resources permit.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Identify and implement appropriate incentives for downtown redevelopment.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
<b>Objective: Existing businesses will increase their sales due to a healthier downtown.</b>				
➡ The Village will continue to have a strong relationship with local business owners and work with them to provide a stable and welcoming environment.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?

**HIGH PRIORITY CHECKLIST**

Goal/Objectives/Action Items	Status			
<b>US136 Corridor</b>				
<b>GOAL: THE US136 CORRIDOR WILL ATTRACT MORE VEHICULAR TRAFFIC FROM IL-47 AND RANTOUL.</b>				
<b>Objective: Increase visibility of the Village.</b>				
➡ Improve way finding signage to local businesses and to the community in general.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Improve lighting to draw more people down the corridor.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Consider business signage along the corridor in terms of lighted signage while also considering how much lighting is desirable for Village character.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?

Goal/Objectives/Action Items	Status			
<b>Beautification</b>				
<b>GOAL: FISHER IS KNOWN FOR ITS VISUALLY PLEASING "CURB APPEAL" AND APPEARANCE.</b>				
<b>Objective: Organize and implement beautification efforts.</b>				
➡ Draft an overall appearance plan.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Draft a Capital Improvement Plan for infrastructure improvements.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Spruce up welcome signs	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Locate signs and determine plan of action for increased/improved signage	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Find information on and design banners for US136 and Downtown areas	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Obtain knowledge about plants	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Draw up community-wide designs and locations for plantings	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Seek help (financial and from organizations/individuals)	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Maintain beautification projects	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
<b>Objective: Fisher will reduce the number of blighted buildings in the community.</b>				
➡ Seek brownfields technical and financial assistance	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
➡ Build relationships and communicate more aggressively with building and site owners who could make improvements.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?



Goal/Objectives/Action Items	Status			
<b>Administration</b>				
<b>GOAL 1: THE VILLAGE OF FISHER WILL BE READY TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO ALL APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.</b>				
<b>Objective 1a: Maintain and add content to the Village website.</b>				
☞ Identify regularly requested data for economic development interests.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
☞ Gather input from the Business Association and Village Board to make the Village website as effective as possible.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
<b>Objective 1b: Continue working to implement economic development goals.</b>				
☞ Continue accountability of action groups identified as resources.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
☞ Identify new action groups if necessary.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
☞ Create a contact list of community members who have helped implement strategy action items to refer to as new opportunities for assistance arise.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?
☞ Make a periodic item on Village Board agendas to update and plan for continued implementation of the economic development strategy.	Not Started	Started	Success!	Issues?