

CHAPTER 5.4: ACHIEVING TOMORROW... FOR THE CITY OF FOSTORIA

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The previous chapter (Chapter 4) outlines six integrated goals and related objectives that all partners participating in the Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan agreed are either directly or indirectly important to each one's vision for the future. This chapter is customized to address the goals, objectives and related strategies that are directly applicable to the City of Fostoria. The primary entities responsible for carrying out the strategies include the City and Fostoria Economic Development Corporation. This chapter includes photographs to help illustrate the strategies, as well as a matrix that indicates the anticipated time frame for beginning the various strategies. Many of the plan's recommendations will require additional study and the development of more detailed action steps that go beyond the scope of this project. The vision directly applicable to the City of Fostoria is:

Vision for Fostoria

To be a place where all residents feel safe and secure; a hub for job training and skills development; and a place where families and businesses feel good about investing. Having galvanized local leaders and engaged residents, Fostoria will continue to embrace its heritage while actively preparing for its future.



This chapter focuses on the relevant strategies for the City to achieve the goals and objectives described in detail in Chapter 4. The numbering of Goals and Objectives is consistent with the numbering scheme in Chapter 4; therefore, wherever the Objectives are not numbered sequentially, it indicates that the missing objective is not applicable to Fostoria.



CITY OF FOSTORIA GOALS

•Ensure we are prepared to and successfully capitalize on opportunities in the local, regional, national and global economy, with an emphasis on jobs and tax revenue.

1. Prosperous and Resilient Economy



•Ensure we have sustainable quality places for living and socializing, with a sense of place that embraces our cultural heritage.

2. Attractive, Desirable, & Livable Places (Built Environment)



•Create/foster a strong sense of community & ensure social needs are met with equitable programs & access to a wide range of community and public facilities and services.

3. Quality Community Facilities and Services



•Be good stewards of our natural resources as they contribute to human and economic well-being, provide recreation and educational opportunities for locals and tourists, and significantly enhance the character of our community.

4. Environmental Stewardship – Valued Natural Resources



•Provide modern, well-maintained infrastructure and utilities (roads, water, sewer, telecommunication, etc.) to serve current and future residents and businesses.

5. Enhanced Mobility, Accessibility, & Public Utilities



•Enhance and strengthen our community character and brand to: establish a reputation as a great place to live, work, study and visit; to instill community pride; and attract new residents, businesses and visitors.

6. Strong Community Character and Image



GOAL 1. PROSPEROUS & RESILIENT ECONOMY

Objective 1.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

1.1.1 FEDC - Develop and/or update three- to five-year economic development strategic plan(s) for Fostoria on a routine basis, and identify organizational partner(s) needed to implement the plan(s). Hancock and Wood Counties do not have Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs), while Seneca County does. Work with Seneca County to accomplish the goals outlined therein, and work with Hancock and Wood Counties to undertake planning efforts to create those strategies.

1.1.2 Organizations - Ensure that organizations such as FEDC, Fostoria Learning Center (FLC), the City, and other economic development organizations tasked with implementation and oversight of the plan(s) have sufficient resources to do their work. As FLC comes under the leadership and management of FEDC, align programs and projects to more efficiently meet economic development needs in the community.

1.1.3 Ongoing Dialogue - Maintain and strengthen the dialogue and collaboration among elected officials with respect to development.



Objective 1.2 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1.2.1 Workforce Plans - Develop a workforce development strategic plan.

1.2.2 Collaboration - Collaborate with Hancock, Seneca and Wood Counties in ways that enhance and strengthen Fostoria's workforce.

1.2.3 Partnerships - Maintain and increase FLC's and FEDC's multiple non-profit, educational and private sector partnerships within the tri-county service area (Seneca, Hancock, Wood Counties) to strengthen, improve, and innovate workforce development.

1.2.4 Marketing - Effectively market jobs, career opportunities, and employers to the local community and regionally, using the resources and outlets available in Seneca, Hancock and Wood Counties.

1.2.5 Training and Assistance - Continue to promote FLC's and FEDC's existing curriculum, and expand the course catalogue based on needs identified both by local businesses and by the FEDC and FLC Boards, to help residents enhance and expand their skills, or be retrained so they better match the needs of local businesses.

1.2.6 Professional Development - Maintain and strengthen the research, benchmarking, networking, and professional development opportunities for professionals and organizations engaged in workforce development to ensure programs offered are effective.

1.2.7 Attract Workers to Fostoria - Develop, strengthen, and maintain assets, programs, initiatives, and organizations that encourage youth/ young adults to stay or return to the city after college, and encourage in-migration of new residents. Offer young professionals the opportunity to forgive portions or all of their student loans as an incentive to relocate to the City. Target students at Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. See also Goals 2, 3 and 5 for other strategies for enhancing housing, neighborhoods, community facilities and transportation systems, which are all necessary to attract new residents.





1.2.8 Apprenticeships and Shadowing Programs – Use FLC’s partnerships with local businesses to create an apprenticeship and/or shadowing program. Expand programs like “Career Exploration” to allow people to better see the kinds of jobs available to learners on any given career or educational path.

1.2.9 Remove Obstacles - Design and implement programs, initiatives, and services to remove obstacles for people who want to work locally. Investigate programs like The GRIT Project that pair opioid recovery with workforce development training. Develop companion programs offering childcare and transportation to allow learners’ primary focus to remain on obtaining new skills. Offer specialized classes concentrating



on assisting those who are re-entering the workforce after a period away, such as stay-at-home moms, persons recovering from addictions, transient and homeless individuals, or people embarking on their “encore careers.”

Objective 1.3 SUITABLE LOCATIONS

1.3.1 Sites & Buildings - Identify vacant sites and facilities that are available for development and also those suitable for redevelopment (adaptive re-use, rehabilitation, or demolition). Strategically expand and/or add business parks. Map these sites and make the pertinent details available via GIS maps in an electronic format that is available to potential developers 24/7. Rank and evaluate sites based on the necessary effort to make each one shovel ready. Work with commercial realtors to effectively market developable sites. Adopt a policy of directing new development to areas of existing commercial and industrial concentrations in order to maximize use of existing infrastructure.

1.3.2 Redevelopment – Promote and incentivize the redevelopment of declining, obsolete or severely underutilized commercial and industrial sites and facilities, including locations in Downtown Fostoria. Rank and prioritize these sites. See also Objective 1.7 for recommendations regarding Downtown redevelopment.

1.3.3 Brownfields – Specifically identify and remediate (or assist property owners in remediating) brownfield sites and encourage redevelopment of those sites, including those in historic Downtown Fostoria. Consider developing a policy to prioritize, accelerate, and incentivize Downtown brownfield redevelopment.

1.3.4 Infrastructure – Map existing infrastructure and utilities (including broadband access) using GIS and pair it with a database that can be updated regularly (by those with authorized access) and available in real time for all partners and stakeholders engaged in economic development (City, FEDC, FLC, property owners, realtors, businesses, etc.). Align the



City's capital improvement plans and FEDC's strategic plans to ensure adequate infrastructure capacity to existing and new development. Pursue grants and other incentives to defray costs. Consider P3 arrangements where feasible. See also Goal 5. Mobility, Accessibility and Public Utilities for additional discussion on transportation and utility strategies.

1.3.5 Development Agreements – Explore and implement mutually acceptable annexation and development agreements between the City and adjacent townships (in all three Counties) to increase the supply of developable land needed to support continued economic development.

1.3.6 Zoning – Continue to review and update the Zoning Code and Land Development Regulations, as needed, to reflect the desires and strategies of the partners with respect to development.

1.3.7 Broadband – Increase the access to and affordability of broadband access within the City.

Objective 1.4 RETENTION, EXPANSION & ATTRACTION

1.4.1 Programs – Enhance and expand FEDC's existing Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program.

1.4.2 Incentives & Resources – The City; Seneca, Hancock and Wood Counties; FEDC, and the Chamber offer a variety of programs and resources to support the local businesses community. Collect and distill this information, then work with each of the partners to cross-promote all funding and incentive programs, at minimum including links and information on each organization's website. As existing programs are expanded and new incentives are developed, aggressively market these new resources to the local business community and supporting businesses including realtors. Examples of new programs to develop could include:

- » Develop and distribute a community calendar to the local business community. The calendar could include information on event(s)

that may bring their targeted demographic into the community, and information on planned capital improvements, which would enable businesses to plan ahead for disruptions with shipping logistics or customer access.

- » Regularly conduct community wide market analysis and then distribute relevant information to local businesses. Meet with business owners to review trends, discussing potential impact to that specific business, the wider industry and Fostoria overall.
- » Create a mentoring program for business owners and executives.

1.4.3 Industry Groups – Identify or develop industry councils or peer-to-peer networking groups to address specific concerns faced by that industry, especially any issues that prohibit or slow growth, expansion and/or retention.

1.4.4 Marketing – Promote Fostoria's assets both internally and externally. Work on changing negative narratives and perceptions. Promote every positive thing happening in Fostoria, such as business openings and expansions, to multiple media outlets (including social media) and to local civic, social, and faith-based organizations. Sharing



news about success stories helps build confidence and encourages other local businesses to stay and expand.

1.4.5 Targeted Industries – Identify specific industry clusters that are fundamental to Fostoria's economic health, and prioritize positive marketing toward them. See Objective 1.3 for additional information on suitable locations.

1.4.6 Retail Strategy – Identify existing and desired retail clusters. Map those to illustrate potential infrastructure and/or parking needed to ensure each cluster's success. Conduct a market analysis to determine sales leakage, daytime and nighttime populations, available and underutilized space (and its condition or ability to be immediately occupied). Convene a team of "champions" among local retailers who would be available to meet with people looking to relocate or open a retail store in Fostoria.

1.4.7 Economic Stability – Through BR&E visits, identify businesses that are having difficulties and work with them on strategies to recover. For small business owners looking to retire, work with them well in advance to develop a succession plan and market the business to potential buyers.

1.4.8 Regulation – Evaluate the zoning approval process (such as site plan review) conducted by Fostoria and the building permitting process (administered through Wood County Building Inspection to determine if there are ways to streamline the process.

1.4.9 Technology – The evolution of technology is changing the way business is done. Work with local businesses, both start up and existing, to better use technology for efficiency and growth.

Objective 1.5 AGRIBUSINESS

1.5.1 Strategic Plan – Develop an agriculture and food industry cluster strategic plan, assign a group or organization to oversee its implementation, and make it a priority in public policy.

1.5.2 Local Food – Identify locally owned restaurants, other entities such as the school district that purchase food, and businesses that are engaged in the food industry. Quantify current demand for local food and encourage commitments from institutions (hospitals, schools, government agencies) and other large scale public and private entities to buy locally. Convene discussions with them and local food growers to develop programs dedicated to developing local assets, encouraging "buying local," and strengthening the local food industry.

1.5.3 Cluster Development – Enhance and encourage local agricultural capacity and viability, including expanding value added related accessory businesses and services

1.5.4 Agribusiness – Make supporting local food systems a public policy priority.

Objective 1.6 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1.6.1 Entrepreneurship Plan – Focus on entrepreneurship as a key component of the City's Economic Development Strategy (see Objective 1.1). Identify and/or develop the group(s) or organization(s) to shepherd its implementation.

1.6.2 Entrepreneurship Facilities – FLC has a Small Business Training series; expand that program and develop companion programs and services such as business incubators, accelerators, makerspaces, and pop-up stores. The FLC facility is perfectly positioned and equipped to host classes; programming should be carefully scheduled to maximize the facility and its resources. Devote the resources necessary to create, market, and implement these classes.

1.6.3 Resources – Support the establishment and growth of entrepreneurial ventures by implementing a system of support services and educational opportunities for new and emerging entrepreneurs. Identify and effectively leverage and develop more resources for entrepreneurs, start-ups, and tech-based businesses.



1.6.4 Capital – Reach out to the local business community, local angel investors and other likely partners to create a pool of venture capital funds. Fostoria's Opportunity Zone is a significant draw for local investment, while its CRA districts, Enterprise Zone, and local Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) further incentivize development. Research and vet potential partners, then make connections and facilitate meetings between prospective investors, developers, and budding business people. Market these opportunities to potential developers, both inside Fostoria and out.

1.6.5 Entrepreneurship Marketplace – As FEDC, FLC, the Chamber and CVB are now all in one location, entrepreneurs are likely to regularly visit this one-stop-shop. Develop programs designed to raise their profile and encourage people to purchase their goods or services. Consider setting aside dedicated space to allow new entrepreneurs to pitch their ideas, products, or services to learners who visit the Center for classes. Consider creating a space for “pitch parties,” where inventors can use the public forum to raise capital, in the spirit of the TV show Shark Tank, either from a one-time angel investors or through crowdfunding sights. Develop and promote classes geared toward helping local residents to build their own business. Expand and promote FLC's Small Business Training series.

1.6.6 Culture – Support a culture of entrepreneurship in Fostoria. Begin by working with youth programs such as Junior Achievement (JA) to allow school age children, from elementary through high school, to learn the benefits and responsibilities of owning and operating a business. Consider possible linkages between the FLC's Small Business Training program and a school based programs like DECA (formerly known as Distributive Education Clubs of America). Develop business plan contests; winners might be offered “free” rent by a willing local building owner or secure space in a local business incubator.

1.6.7 Collaboration – There are more than 100 2- and 4-year educational institutions within a 100-mile radius of Fostoria. Research program

offerings, identify those with programs most closely aligned with FLC's programs and Fostoria's needs, and begin pursuing partnerships to expand on-line and in-person learning opportunities for the Fostoria business community using FLC's well-appointed classrooms.

Objective 1.7 Revitalize DOWNTOWN FOSTORIA

1.7.1 Plans – Update Fostoria's Downtown Plan. Be sure it includes recommendations for the physical, economic, and social environments as well as a work plan that prioritizes projects, assigns a responsible person or team to do the work, and identify the budget needed to carry out the proposed actions. Consider organizing stakeholders according to the Main Street Four Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization. This program is comprehensive in its scope and has a proven track record in downtowns across the country to help rebuild value and sense of community. If joining the Ohio Main Street Program network is a goal, reach out to Heritage Ohio to host a Downtown Assessment Resource Team (DART) visit to get stakeholders “fired up.”

1.7.2 Downtown Resources – Catalogue and distribute a list of resources available to downtown property and business owners, including: local incentive programs and funding assistance programs; the Small Business Trainings offered by FLC and others that are developed; annotated excerpts of recently completed plans and studies with analyses of how the resulting data or information informs or impacts Downtown Fostoria. Become knowledgeable and distribute information on both the state and federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HRTC) programs, as well as New Markets Tax Credits (NMTCs) and other tax credit programs that incentivize downtown investment. C-PACE, or Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy programs are gaining popularity with redevelopers. Consider offering packets containing a comprehensive list of resources to new business and property owners as they consider Downtown as an opportunity and/or as they purchase and move into their space.





1.7.3 Downtown Incentives - Develop and implement appropriate incentive programs to foster downtown revitalization. Educate local property owners and with developers to use federal and state incentives, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs), Historic Tax Credits (HTCs), and New Market Tax Credits (NMTCs) as well as local incentives such as PACE, CRA, job tax credits, etc. Create new local programs to further incentivize reinvestment within the historic urban core for both commercial and residential re-development. Some options to incentivize downtown redevelopment could include: the City discounting or completely forgiving permit or other fees; the Seneca County Land Bank (or different organization that can acquire properties through receivership) acquiring vacant properties and properly mothballing them until a permanent owner can be found; groups such as FEDC, the CIC, or other stakeholder group creating a contest for entrepreneurs in which the prize is start-up capital, 'free' rent for a specified time period, or other incentive.

1.7.4 Protective Regulations - Adopt specific design standards and guidelines for Downtown Fostoria to protect the historic character of the area. National research has demonstrated that properties within protected districts increase in value over time, even during recessions. Clarify and expand the provisions of Chapter 1335 Preservation and Design Review Regulations in the Building Code, and consider moving this chapter to the Zoning Code to ensure that applicants can easily find and incorporate the design criteria into the construction project. Clearly designate the boundaries of downtown where the design standards and guidelines apply, and depict on the Zoning Map as an overlay district. Chapter 1335, adopted in 1995 and updated in 2010, states that design review is conducted in Historic Preservation Districts, "as shown on the Zoning Map" but there are no such districts shown on the map (last updated in 2007). Talk with property and business owners to gather their input, identify and document important features of existing buildings that are important to build upon and then craft language that fits. Consider making compliance with local design standards a



threshold requirement for participation in local funding programs. The overlay district would be specifically created for and only applicable to the Downtown, though protecting adjacent residential neighborhoods would have the added benefit of stabilizing the areas people go through to get to Downtown.

1.7.5 Building Codes – Work to educate local building code officials about the alternate building code section that allows exemptions for certain historic features. Work with property owners to find alternate solutions to common problems such as universal access; rear entrances can be improved and often more accessible parking accommodated behind buildings that on-street. For properties that have large parking areas located behind the buildings, rear entrance can be ideal, not only allowing all customers better line of sight and closer access to the entrance, but also potentially increasing traffic through a business if they allow customers to then pass through the front door to reach other businesses on the main street. This has successfully worked in other downtowns (example: art gallery).



1.7.6 Festivals and Events – While the needs of the physical and economic environments are many, Fostoria must also support a campaign to improve both Fostoria and regional residents' perception of the Downtown. Improving the streets and buildings and supporting the Downtown business culture is not enough, on its own, to change decades of dismissive attitudes toward the historic central business district. Fostoria must give people a “fun” reason to come Downtown. Promotions generally fall into two categories: special events (which are designed to bring people Downtown and change their negative perceptions, but not necessarily increase sales) and retail events (which are designed to make cash registers ring). Develop a calendar of events that is balanced between retail and special events and distribute it annually to Downtown businesses.

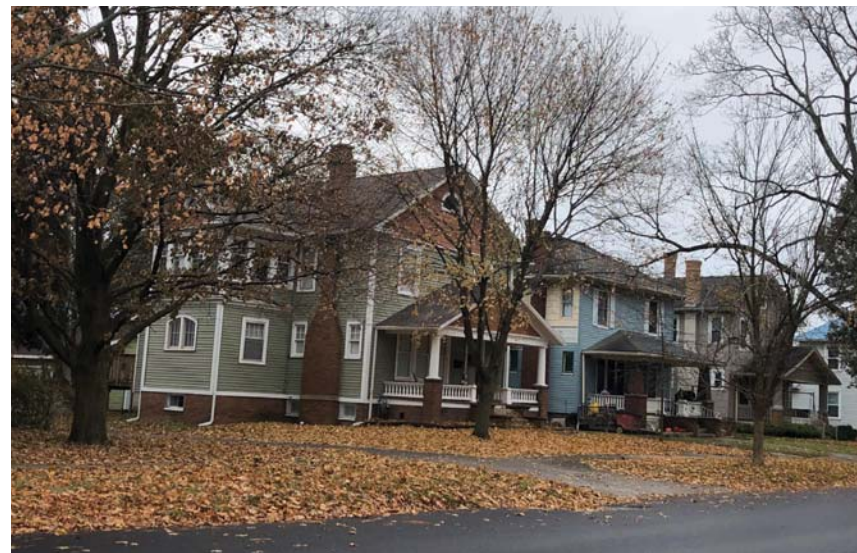


GOAL 2. ATTRACTIVE, DESIRABLE & LIVABLE PLACES (BUILT ENVIRONMENT)

Objective 2.1 HOUSING OPTIONS

2.1.1 Housing Development – Conduct a housing study to evaluate existing housing conditions and to determine the quantity, styles, and price-points of housing needed in Fostoria. Review the results with neighborhood residents and community groups to create consensus, then approach City Council to formally adopt policies and create programs in line with the recommendations. Ensure recommendations for housing rehabilitation and demolition balance historic preservation and authentic sense of place with the reality of demolition by neglect. Promote, maintain, support, and facilitate the development of a sufficient quantity and desired variety of housing types, design, and price points for older and younger residents.

2.1.2 Housing Resources – Fostoria participates in the Ohio Department of Services Agency's Community Housing Improvement and Preservation Program (ODSA's CHIP program). Be sure information on this program as well as Fair Housing materials are regularly circulated to residents throughout the community, especially in areas where eligible households are concentrated. Consider developing a program like Cleveland Restoration Society's very successful Heritage Homes Program that offers both technical and financial assistance to owners of homes built prior to 1968 (houses are not required to be historic nor located in an historic district). This type of incentive program would be beneficial for many homeowners because 48% of the homes in Fostoria were built prior to 1940, more than 75% prior to 1960. Offer homeownership classes to teach basic maintenance to new homeowners as well as those who have owned for a longer time, but would like to learn more about home maintenance. Consider bringing the Ohio Historic Preservation Office's Building Doctor program to town; preservation experts



skilled in older techniques can meet with owners of historic homes to address special needs. Consider launching a community development corporation (CDC) or similar organization to champion housing needs, and become expert in assistance programs specifically designed to support housing renovation and construction.

2.1.3 Adaptive Reuse - If a building can no longer serve in the capacity for which it was originally built, encourage owners to rehabilitate it to provide housing. Good examples of this include school buildings, warehouses, and even churches. Review and update the Zoning Code to include provisions (such as appropriate density allowances) that will encourage this kind of redevelopment.

2.1.4 Creative Design - Allow for and encourage creative design in developing residential structures. Review and update the Zoning Code to ensure new homes are in scale with the surrounding neighborhood, and that new development will integrate in to the existing neighborhood fabric.

2.1.5 Context Sensitive Development - Encourage sensitivity to both the built and natural environments when developing new housing or rehabbing existing buildings. Though Fostoria is relatively flat, developers should pay attention to natural features to avoid causing (or worsening) improper drainage or flooding. Particularly in historic neighborhoods, consider adopting place-specific design standards and guidelines to ensure design, scale and set-back are compatible with adjacent and surrounding properties. This is critical to preserving sense of place, which is one of Fostoria's greatest assets.

2.1.6 Fair Housing - Educate landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities. Develop a program to regularly distribute information to vulnerable populations, and also make it readily available at public locations such as the library, senior center, food pantries, and any businesses that will allow it. While some funding programs may still require more traditional distribution methods, rethink those and include



more modern technology, such as social media, chat groups, and other on-line platforms to reach a greater percentage of local residents.

2.1.7 Downtown Upper-Floor - Encourage building owners to consider creating upper-floor housing when renovating downtown commercial structures. Educate building owners about tax credit programs that could assist with financing. Develop a list of local architects, structural engineers, and contractors who have successfully renovated other historic commercial properties to distribute to property owners.

2.1.8 Historic Neighborhoods - Use incentive programs to renovate older homes or build new structures where previous ones were demolished. Not only does this make it more affordable for everyone from single and/or first-time home buyers to large, even multi-generational families, but it preserves the authentic urban fabric that makes Fostoria what it is. It also uses existing infrastructure, which is more financially efficient and responsible. Consider creating new, local programs to further incentivize reinvestment within the historic urban core.

2.1.9 Incentive Programs - Educate local property owners and developers about federal and state incentives, such as LIHTCs, HRTCs, and NMTCs as well as local incentives such as CRA, job tax credits, etc. Create new programs to further incentivize reinvestment in the City's historic urban neighborhoods for both commercial and residential re-development.

Objective 2.2 DESIREABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

2.2.1 Sidewalks & Lighting - Conduct a windshield inventory and assessment of all sidewalks in the community. Use this inventory to prioritize sections based on age and/or condition, universal access compliance, and impact to the surrounding neighborhood. Similarly, conduct a lighting inventory and assessment. Use this inventory to prioritize lighting improvements based on the kind of neighborhood and their respective lighting needs (less harsh in residential areas,

higher density and coverage in commercial areas). Include age and/or condition. In areas where additional lighting is needed, work with the City or local electric provider to determine if there is sufficient electric service to the area to support additional or upgraded lighting. Consider using LEDs to reduce energy costs.



2.2.2 Alleys – Maintain alley surfaces and regularly pick up debris to improve appearance of alleys throughout Fostoria. Historically, these paths allowed services vehicles such as trash collection, to happen away from the front of the houses, keeping those less attractive functions out of sight. Alleys can be a character defining feature in older, historic neighborhoods and should be preserved as part of the City’s landscape.

2.2.3 Public Safety – Organize and/or expand Neighborhood Block Watch programs. This partnership between residents and City Police not only helps make neighborhoods more safe, but it also facilitates regular, positive communication between the two groups, which can be a helpful bridge during tense situations.

2.2.4 Neighborhood Appearance – Conduct regular neighborhood pride days. Organize volunteers to pick up trash and mow or otherwise remove overgrown vegetation from vacant lots. Consider organizing volunteer paint programs that assist older and physically challenged residents with exterior painting or other modest home maintenance. Have collection days to take old tires, paint cans and other household hazardous waste. Work with local media outlets to organize neighborhood garden contests or other activities aimed at promoting and celebrating neighborhood pride. Work with programs like America in Bloom that offer structure and guidance on how to locally organize efforts.

Objective 2.3 VALUED CULTURE AND PLACES

2.3.1 Promotion (Events & Meetings) – Increase the use of Downtown Fostoria as a lively gathering place, with flexible multi-use spaces, meeting spaces, and event programming.

2.3.2 Promotion (Culture & Entertainment) - Maintain and develop a variety of cultural and entertainment opportunities for residents, students and visitors. Work with institutions like Kaubisch Memorial Public Library, the Fostoria Area Historic Society and Museum, local bands and theater groups to promote interest in local history.





2.3.3 Design - Improve the overall appearance of Downtown Fostoria, both publicly and privately owned properties and spaces. See also 1.7 for specific strategies for Downtown.

2.3.4 Historic Preservation & Resources - Create an inventory of notable historic structures and encourage their long-term preservation and economic well-being. Consider development/protection regulations for areas with unique historic worth, informing property owners of various programs available for historic buildings. Consider placing individual buildings or even entire neighborhoods or districts on the National Register of Historic Places, then work with owners to take advantage of state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits as they renovate and improve properties.



2.3.5 Commercial Development - Encourage commercial development that will enhance, preserve, and strengthen downtown, including hotels.

2.3.6 Sunshine Point - Continue endeavors like the Fostoria Gardeners' initiative at Sunshine Point to beautify areas throughout Fostoria. Not only does this aesthetically improve the community, but it builds pride and unique sense of place.

2.3.7 Lodging - Encourage the development of more lodging facilities, including house-sharing alternatives such as Bed & Breakfast

establishments, Airbnb, etc. Review and update the Zoning Code to appropriately regulate.

2.3.8 Farmers Market - Encourage a year-round, indoor farmers market.

Objective 2.4 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

2.4.1 Property Maintenance and Building Codes - Maintain and strengthen property code enforcement, including minimum maintenance standards. The City's vacant property registration legislation should be re-visited regularly and strengthened if problems with absentee landlords persist. Work with property owners and local contractors to be sure they are obtaining permits prior to renovation and/or new construction to ensure the structural safety and functional integrity of all buildings. See also Objective 1.7.5 for additional discussion.

2.4.2 Workshops - Conduct educational workshops to provide opportunities for homeowners to learn techniques for long-term maintenance. See also Objective 1.7.5 for additional suggestions.

2.4.3 Library - Create and manage a tool lending library.

2.4.4 Vacant Property Clearinghouse - Inventory and evaluate all vacant buildings in the City. Buildings that remain vacant or unoccupied for an extended period often become an attractive nuisance to children, a nesting place for rodents, an increased fire hazard and dumping place for garbage. Keep track of and monitor vacant properties city-wide by establishing a vacant property registration. Work with a local contractor or developer to realistically determine which properties can be saved. Detroit conducted a massive inventory using volunteers and a standardized evaluation tool. The volunteer work directly informed and helped guide improvements to the City's demolition programs. Work with the County Land Bank or other similar organization to (at minimum) properly mothball solid properties until they can be sold, or (better) improve the buildings and offer them to buyers, either at subsidized or market rates, depending on renovation costs vis-à-vis property values in the surrounding neighborhood. See Objective 1.3 for additional recommendations on available buildings and sites.



2.4.5 Blight Abatement/Demolition - Create and enforce citywide blight abatement guidelines (potentially partnering with the Seneca County Land Bank). Demolish vacant houses and other vacant structures when rehabilitation or re-use is not viable. Work with local demolition contractors to salvage architectural elements from buildings being demolished. Work with Habitat for Humanity's ReStore to collect architectural materials and provide them at reasonable cost to property owners who are restoring buildings.

2.4.6 PACE - Educate residential and commercial property owners on the benefits of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs to make building improvements and improve energy efficiency.



Objective 2.5 SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

2.5.1 Historic Districts - Identify historic neighborhoods and, where feasible, work to list them on the National Register of Historic Places. Install signage unique to that neighborhood to define the area and help instill sense of place. Work with property owners to utilize incentives such as state and federal historic rehab tax credits to improve their homes or commercial buildings.

2.5.2 Zoning Review - Review the zoning districts and related uses and development standards, and the application of the districts on the Zoning Map to be sure the districts are inclusive of the types of land uses the community wants to see in those areas. Example: zoning in Downtown Fostoria might be tweaked to promote live/work spaces. Evaluate regulations to assess their success relative to revitalizing urban areas and make changes accordingly. Update zoning regulations to encourage development of vacant or underutilized properties and brownfield sites.

GOAL 3. QUALITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Objective 3.1 INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

3.1.1 Special Interest Groups - Create, strengthen, and support organizations, groups, programs, initiatives, and assets focused on addressing and serving the interests and needs of particular groups that reflect particular segments of our diverse population (e.g., young professionals, international students, religious groups, 4H, etc.).



3.1.2 Connection & Interaction - Create, strengthen, and support organizations, groups, programs and initiatives and assets that encourage interaction and foster connection between representatives of different groups and/or diverse individuals (e.g., organizations that pair young and old residents and initiatives to encourage more volunteer efforts from all students to help elderly residents).

3.1.3 Events - Create, strengthen and support events that support, foster, and celebrate diversity, inclusivity, and uniqueness of individuals in the community (e.g., Culturefest, International Dinner, Special Olympics).

3.1.4 Education & Training - Create, strengthen and support programs and initiatives that educate about, and promote diversity and inclusivity. Work with local employers, schools, and faith-based organizations to implement. Support Fair Housing outreach and education activities.

3.1.5 ADA Transition Plan - Identify physical and psychological barriers throughout the community, then create a work plan to address identified deficiencies per guidelines established by the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

Objective 3.2 EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

3.2.1 Fostoria City Schools - Partner with the school district to increase the percentage of high school students graduating with college credit and/or an industry credential. Maintain, strengthen, increase, support, celebrate and reward teaching excellence, innovation, and capacity in the PreK-12 system.

3.2.2 Fostoria Learning Center - Maintain Fostoria Learning Center and increase the quality and capacity of public and private PreK-12 educational facilities. Partner with local public schools to increase technical and vocational study programs.

3.2.3 Kaubisch Memorial Public Library - Continue communitywide programs via the public library.

3.2.4 Head Start - Provide greater access to programs to assist children from low to moderate income households.

3.2.5 Higher Education - Develop programmatic connections to four year institutions such as Heidelberg and Tiffin Universities, and two year programs such as Terra Tech and Owens Technical Colleges.

Objective 3.3 ACTIVE LIVING

3.3.1 Walkability - Regularly conduct walkability audits for all public spaces to assess accessibility challenges, then prioritize and undertake projects as resources permit.

3.3.2 City Parks - Evaluate current park locations for service coverage across the city.

3.3.3 City Trails - Maintain existing and develop new trails and/or non-motorized connectors within the city limits. Please see the recently completely Active Transportation Plan for detailed recommendations on trail development.

3.3.4 Local History - Where applicable, tell Fostoria's story through interpretive signage, public arts, or other media in public spaces. Showcase Fostoria's rich railroad and glass history in public art, signage, educational scavenger hunts, etc.



3.3.5 Cooperative Programs – Build strong intra-park coordination between City and County Parks to provide diverse programs and offer a broad range of facilities and experiences to City residents.

Objective 3.4 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

3.4.1 Behavioral and Mental Health - Continue to support and collaborate with local health care providers to campaign for education, awareness and support of mental health and behavioral health concerns.

3.4.2 Hospital and Medical Coordination - Continue to support efforts with hospitals and other medical professionals to increase the number of programs and facilities to address mental and behavioral health issues including recovery programs for those struggling with drug addiction.

3.4.3 Safe Communities – Develop and strengthen partnerships between Fostoria Police Department and local schools and neighborhoods using programs such as “Lunch with a Cop” or Neighborhood Watch organizations.

3.4.4 Emergency Services – Maintain police and fire departments with updated equipment. Foster an environment that help maintain emergency/safety services. Streamline overlapping services.



3.4.5 Access – Explore options for public transportation to ensure all residents can access health and wellness facilities.

Objective 3.5 FOOD SECURITY & ACCESS

3.5.1 Urban Gardening - Encourage urban gardening. Work with groups like Fostoria Garden Club, Fostoria Learning Center, local 4-H and FFA clubs to create educational programs for the community. Create demonstration projects at strategic locations in residential neighborhoods, particularly in those areas of town that have poor access to grocery stores and fresh foods (i.e. food deserts).

3.5.2 Farmers Market – Fostoria's open air Farmers Market is located in Downtown Fostoria and runs from May to September. Work with local vendors to discuss expanding to a year-round market. Identify (and, if needed, refurbish) a location in Downtown Fostoria for colder months. Work with Fostoria Learning Center, the Fostoria Area Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations that support entrepreneurs to support new pop-up businesses in becoming regular vendors to build a local clientele.



GOAL 4. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – VALUED NATURAL RESOURCES

Objective 4.1 RESOURCE PROTECTION

4.1.1 Cleanups - Engage in Portage River, Lamberjack and Mosier Lake cleanups and invasive species removal campaigns at these bodies of water as well as at other local greenspaces and parks.

4.1.2 Stormwater Management - Update the City's stormwater management regulations to maintain/protect riparian buffers along the East Branch of the Portage River, and employ best management practices. Establish mandatory setbacks from watercourses and wetlands in order to protect their beneficial functions in managing storm water. Encourage sensitive site design of new development and rehabilitation of existing development sites to reduce storm water runoff and pollutants from entering into bodies of water such as Lamberjack and Mosier Lakes.

4.1.3 Planned Unit Development Design – Review and evaluate the existing Planned Unit Development regulations (Chapter 1129) to ensure it includes adequate criteria for ensuring the required open space adequately preserves key natural areas such as riparian corridors, woodlands, and wetlands, in the order of priority determined by the City. Ensure that the approval process and density allowances make this an attractive form of development.

4.1.4 Tree Preservation/Restoration - Plant and protect trees to first maintain and then increase canopy coverage. Consider adopting a tree preservation/conservation ordinance that would require large wooded areas to be preserved to the extent practicable, especially for new residential development.

Objective 4.2 ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE

4.2.1 City Parks – Maintain and improve all city parks, including Portage, Gray, City Park and others.

4.2.2 Parks - Strike a balance with available acreage for parks with access and private land ownership. Inventory and map existing greenspaces. Identify a balance of park acreage to private land acreage.

4.2.3 Fostoria Reservoir - Develop Fostoria Reservoir with facilities for non-motorized watercraft opportunities.

4.2.4 Collaboration– Groups such as the Shade Tree Commission, City Park Department, Fostoria Garden Club and others interested



in preserving and celebrating greenspace should communicate regularly regarding the care, conservation and expansion of Fostoria's greenspaces.

Objective 4.4 RIVER LIFE

4.4.1 Water Trails - Talk with ODNR to investigate the possibility of creating a blue trail to connect the city with the main expanse of the Portage River.

4.4.2 NPS-IS - Work with OEPA and other communities in Hancock, Ottawa, Sandusky and Wood Counties to prepare and update a Non-Point Source-Implementation Strategy (NPS-IS) for the Portage River watershed. This is an important planning document to have when pursuing funding for stream improvements, such as Section 319 funds.

4.4.3 Combined Sanitary and Storm Sewer Overflow (CSO) - Work with OEPA to find funding to separate the combined sewer. Minimize (and eventually eliminate) harmful discharge in the East Brand of the Portage River.

Objective 4.5 GREEN ENERGY

4.5.1 Zoning - Review the Fostoria Zoning Code to ensure it allows for placement of alternative energy infrastructure in both residential and commercial/industrial areas. Consider adding allowances for large scale renewable energy facilities such as solar fields on otherwise unusable land, such as brownfields, and ensuring that energy systems geared for on-site use can be easily erected on top of structures like rooftops (example: Owens Corning Headquarters surface parking lots treatment, Toledo, OH).

4.5.2 Partnerships - Encourage Hancock-Wood Electric Coop and North Central Electric Coop to make residential and commercial usage of solar and other alternative power resources easier.

4.5.3 LEED (Leader in Energy and Environmental Design) - Encourage structures, whether new or those being rehabilitated, follow the

standards necessary to become LEED certified. Investigate becoming LEED accredited professionals.

Objective 4.6 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.6.1 Landfill Improvements - Work with the Health Department and Ottawa-Sandusky-Seneca Solid Waste District to address maintenance of the existing landfills to ensure problems are addressed and monitored.

4.6.2 Recycling - Explore and encourage recycling with an emphasis on waste reduction, reuse and reduce. Work with local schools to encourage a new generation of Fostorians to recycle and re-use. - Work with Ottawa-Sandusky-Seneca Solid Waste District to maximize programs such as their Recycling Container Loan Program to reduce waste going into a landfill and increase awareness of the importance of recycling. OEPA's Litter Prevention Program has grants available for similar waste reduction/recycling expansion programs.



GOAL 5. ENHANCE MOBILITY, ACCESSIBILITY & PUBLIC UTILITIES

Objective 5.1 ROADWAY MAINTENANCE

5.1.1 Repairs - Inventory and rate the need for improvements to all local bridges, overpasses, and roads. Investigate and pursue funding programs available to assist with these projects. Develop a roadway grading system to create a long-term maintenance plan for the street system.

5.1.2 Truck Routes - Evaluate and improve truck routes through Fostoria to ensure trucks can adequately maneuver through and avoid residential neighborhoods.

5.1.3 Local Roads - Enhance the appearance of roadways through the city, especially the main routes. The main roads through Fostoria serve as the city's "front door", and their appearance contributes to residents' and outsiders' perception of Fostoria. As such, investments in trees, other landscaping, etc., can make a big contribution toward improving local perceptions and community pride.

5.1.4 Signage - Improve signage and create a wayfinding system. Particularly with the number of federal and state highways that converge



and wind throughout Fostoria, an easy-to-interpret wayfinding system is paramount.

Objective 5.2 CONNECTED ROADWAY SYSTEM

5.2.1 Fostoria Loop Road – Continue to investigate funding sources so this massive, 7-phase loop around Fostoria can be built.

5.2.2 Transportation System - Improve and maintain transportation system in order to address present and future traffic challenges.

5.2.3 Access Management – Employ access management techniques to limit points of ingress/egress, and maintain the level of service on commercial corridors.

5.2.4 Transportation Networks - Support public transportation networks and other multi-modal transportation alternatives (biking, walking paths, etc.) to link population centers, areas with employment opportunities, and other destinations that are economically feasible.

5.2.5 Collaboration - Collaborate with federal, state, and local planning agencies and transportation departments to enhance transportation networks in the region. Participate in regional transportation summits and planning workshops to ensure local needs are included and prioritized on regional plans.

5.2.6 Congestion - Implement congestion management techniques at key intersections through redesign, additional traffic lanes, and improved signalization.

Objective 5.3 ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

5.3.1 Trails – Implement the trail recommendations in the recently completed Active Transportation Plan that are relevant to Fostoria.

5.3.2 Walkability - Develop infrastructure and educational campaigns that encourage people to commute to work and school on bike or on foot. Inventory and assess existing sidewalks, then rank repairs/ replacement and new construction according to need and potential for

use. Encourage the use of safe and “walkable” streetscape design and signage standards. Design spaces for both pedestrian and vehicular circulation, comfort and safety. Consider conducting safe routes to schools audits.

5.3.3 Bike Shares - Develop a rent-a-bike or bike-sharing program. Pursue grants to help offset local costs.

5.3.4 Public Transit - Enhance public transit and mobility.

5.3.5 Funding - Identify alternative funding mechanisms for enhanced transit.

5.3.6 Ride Shares – Encourage ride sharing transportation on demand businesses such as Uber or Lyft.

Objective 5.4 AIR & RAIL NETWORKS

5.4.1 Promote Air & Rail - Promote alternate means of transportation and shipping such as aviation and rail.

5.4.2 Highways - Reconnect rail to major highways.

5.4.3 Airport - Use the airport as an economic opportunity.



Objective 5.5 SMART COMMUNITY Technologies

5.5.1 High Speed Internet - Provide high speed internet access to all areas. Investigate and pursue grant and other funding programs to offset local costs.

5.5.2 Telecommunications - Promote the proper placement and provision of telecommunication services.

5.5.3 Electric Charging Stations - Encourage the installation of electric car charging facilities.

Objective 5.6 WATER & WASTE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

5.6.1 Distribution & Collection - Regularly evaluate water and sewer rates in conjunction with regular evaluation of current systems. Establish rates that will allow proper short- and long-term maintenance of Fostoria's water and waste water systems. Investigate and pursue funding programs to help offset local costs for improvements.

5.6.2 Utility Extensions - Extend utilities in accordance with local zoning and plans for future growth. Plan for future extensions when developing utility facilities management plans; forecast those needs when evaluating rates.



GOAL 6. STRONG COMMUNITY CHARACTER & IMAGE

Objective 6.1 CELEBRATE FOSTORIA

6.1.1 Publicity- Continually identify and develop an inventory of the reasons why Fostoria is a great place to live, work, visit, study, and run a business (brand reasons). Regularly emphasize those attributes in press releases, encourage positive stories every time Fostoria takes steps toward achieving its goals.

Objective 6.2 BRANDING & PROMOTION

6.2.1 Marketing - Advertise Fostoria activities and attractions to townships, villages and cities in Seneca, Hancock, and Wood Counties. Increase exposure to all assets, using a broad range of media including: social media, print, radio, television, local newsletters as well as various partners' websites.

6.2.2 Branding - Develop and/or implement a community brand to enhance the reputation and experience of the community as a great place to live, work, and operate a business.



Objective 6.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

6.3.1 Strategic Planning – Develop and continually update a strategic plan for tourism development for Fostoria.

6.3.2 Railroad Heritage – Promote the Iron Triangle. Work with local partners to create “package” offerings for visitors, including retailers, restaurants, lodging and other

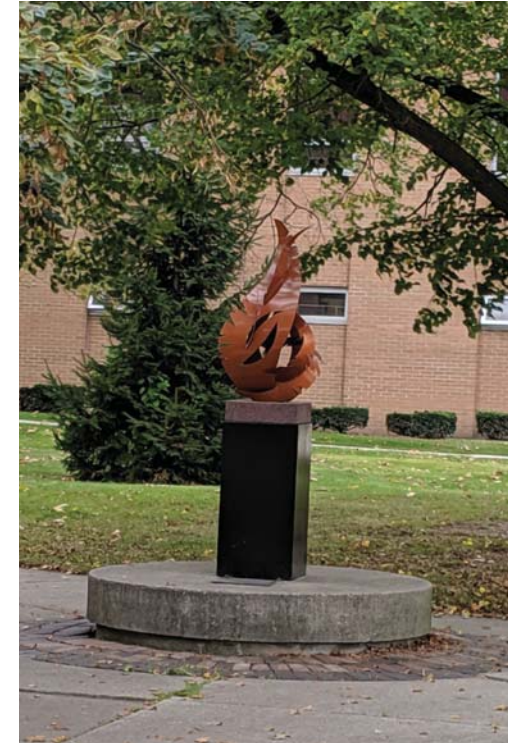


services needed by visitors, with an emphasis on telling Fostoria's train history.

6.3.3 Glass Heritage - Promote Fostoria's rich history in the glass industry. Work with the Museum and local partners to create "package" offerings (as above).

6.3.4 Public Art - Continue to commission public art and install at various locations throughout the community. Use local artists whenever possible, not only to build community pride, but also to celebrate the talent residing in the city. Celebrate and promote Downtown Fostoria as a destination using murals and other public art pieces.





Implementation Timeframe

This plan identifies a number of strategies that the City of Fostoria and its partners can take to move toward the City's vision for the future. Yet, we recognize that we cannot do everything at once. To this end, the matrix below identifies ongoing programs and initiatives that are important to maintain and allocates a preferred timeframe for expanding or enhancing existing programs and starting new initiatives, programs and projects.

Note: Existing programs/projects that will continue are noted in the "Ongoing" column. New programs/projects and enhancements to existing programs/projects are shown in the implementation timeframe based on anticipated start date.

FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
Goal 1. Prosperous and Resilient Economy				
Objective 1.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING				
1.1.1 FEDC - Develop and/or update three- to five-year economic development strategic plan(s) for Fostoria on a routine basis; identify organizational partner(s) needed to implement the plan(s).	X			
1.1.2 Organizations - Ensure that the City and economic development organizations such as FEDC, Fostoria Learning Center (FLC), and other organizations tasked with implementation and oversight of the plan(s) have sufficient resources to do their work.	X			
1.1.3 Ongoing Dialogue – Maintain/strengthen the dialogue and collaboration among elected officials with respect to development.	X			
Objective 1.2: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT				
1.2.1 Workforce Plans - Update the City's workforce development strategic plan.		X		
1.2.2 Collaboration – Collaborate with Hancock, Seneca and Wood Counties in ways that enhance and strengthen Fostoria's workforce.		X		
1.2.3 Partnerships - Maintain and increase FLC's and FEDC's partnerships within the tri-county service area to strengthen, improve, and innovate workforce development.	X			
1.2.4 Marketing - Effectively market jobs, career opportunities, and employers to the local community and regionally, using available resources and outlets.	X			
1.2.5 Training & Assistance – Continue to promote FLC's and FEDC's existing curriculum, and expand the course catalogue based on skills expansion and retaining needs identified both by local businesses and by the FEDC and FLC Boards.	X			
1.2.6 Professional Development - Maintain and strengthen research, benchmarking, networking, and professional development opportunities for professionals and organizations engaged in workforce development.		X		
1.2.7 Attract Workers to Fostoria - Develop, strengthen, and maintain assets, programs, initiatives, and organizations that encourage youth/young adults to stay or return to the city after college, and encourage in-migration of new residents.		X		
1.2.8 Apprenticeships and Shadowing Programs – Use FLC's partnerships with local businesses to create an apprenticeship and/or shadowing program.		X		



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
1.2.9 Remove Obstacles - Design and implement programs and needed support services, such as childcare and transportation, to remove obstacles for people who want to work locally.			X	
Objective 1.3 SUITABLE LOCATIONS				
1.3.1 Sites & Buildings – Identify, evaluate, rank and map vacant sites and facilities that are available for development and those suitable for redevelopment (adaptive re-use, rehabilitation) or demolition.	X			
1.3.2 Redevelopment – Rank, prioritize, promote and incentivize the redevelopment of declining, obsolete or severely underutilized commercial and industrial sites and facilities, including locations in Downtown Fostoria. See also 1.7 for Downtown redevelopment.		X		
1.3.3 Brownfields – Specifically identify and remediate (or assist property owners in remediating) brownfield sites and encourage redevelopment of those sites.		X		
1.3.4 Infrastructure– Create and maintain an updated database inventory of existing infrastructure and utilities (including broadband access) and associated GIS maps. Pursue grants and other incentives to defray costs.		X		
1.3.5 Development Agreements – Explore and implement mutually acceptable annexation and development agreements between the City and adjacent townships (in all three Counties) to increase supply of developable land.		X		
1.3.6 Zoning – Continue to review/update the Zoning Code and Land Development Regulations, as needed, with respect to development.	X			
1.3.7 Broadband – Increase access to and affordability of broadband access within the City.			X	
Objective 1.4 Business RETENTION, EXPANSION, & ATTRACTION				
1.4.1 Programs – Enhance and expand FEDC’s existing Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program.	X			
1.4.2 Incentives & Resources – Collect and distill information about existing local business resources; work with partners to cross-promote the programs.			X	
1.4.3 Industry Groups – Identify or develop industry councils or peer-to-peer networking groups to address industry-specific concerns, especially issues that prohibit or retard growth, expansion and/or retention.		X		
1.4.4 Marketing – Continue to promote Fostoria’s assets and positive news both internally and externally, such as business openings and expansions, to multiple media outlets and local entities.	X			
1.4.5 Targeted Industries – Develop & maintain a targeted industry sector retention, expansion, and attraction strategy. See Objective 1.3 for additional information on suitable locations.		X		
1.4.6 Retail Strategy – Identify existing and desired retail clusters; identify improvements needed to ensure each cluster’s success; conduct a market analysis; and convene a team of “champions” to meet with people looking to relocate to Fostoria.		X		



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
1.4.7 Economic Stability – Identify businesses that are having difficulties and work with them on strategies to recover or develop a succession plan.	X			
1.4.8 Regulation – Evaluate and streamline the zoning approval process and building permitting process to be more business-friendly.		X		
1.4.9 Technology –Work with local businesses, both start up and existing, so they are better able to use technology for efficiency and growth.			X	
Objective 1.5 AGRIBUSINESS				
1.5.1 Strategic Plan – Develop an agriculture and food industry cluster strategic plan and assign a group or organization to oversee its implementation.			X	
1.5.2 Local Food – Identify local entities that are engaged in the food industry. Develop programs dedicated to developing local assets, encouraging “buying local,” and strengthening the local food industry			X	
1.5.3 Cluster Development – Enhance and encourage local agricultural capacity and viability, including expanding value added related accessory businesses and services			X	
1.5.4 Agribusiness – Make supporting local food systems a public policy priority.			X	
Objective 1.6 ENTRENEURSHIP				
1.6.1 Entrepreneurship Plan – Develop an entrepreneurship strategic plan as part of the City's Economic Development Strategy (see Objective 1.1); identify and/or develop group(s) or organization(s) to shepherd its implementation.	X			
1.6.2 Entrepreneurship Facilities – Expand Small Business Training programs and develop companion programs/services such as business incubators, accelerators, makerspaces, and pop-up stores.	X			
1.6.3 Resources – Identify, effectively leverage and develop more resources for entrepreneurs, start-up, and tech-based businesses.		X		
1.6.4 Capital – Work with local partners to create a pool of venture capital funds; pair with existing incentive programs (e.g. local Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)) and market these opportunities to potential developers, both inside Fostoria and out.		X		
1.6.5 Entrepreneurship Marketplace – Identify and vet existing and develop new entrepreneurial opportunities; connect entrepreneurs with those opportunities and capital; increase awareness of services provided by FEDC, FLC, the Chamber and CVB; and develop and promote classes geared toward helping local residents to build their own business.	X			
1.6.6 Culture – Support a culture of entrepreneurship in Fostoria; work with youth programs such as Junior Achievement (JA) to introduce young people.	X			
1.6.7 Collaboration –Continue to strengthen collaboration with entities and organizations most closely aligned with Fostoria's needs, and expand on-line and in-person learning opportunities.			X	
Objective 1.7 Revitalize DOWNTOWN FOSTORIA				
1.7.1 Plans - Update Fostoria's Downtown Plan.		X		



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
1.7.2 Downtown Resources – Catalogue and distribute a list of resources available to downtown property and business owners.		X		
1.7.3 Downtown Incentives - Develop and implement appropriate incentive programs to foster downtown revitalization; educate local property owners/developers on use of federal, state and local incentives.		X		
1.7.4 Protective Regulations – Adopt specific design standards and guidelines for Downtown Fostoria. Clarify/expand provisions of Chapter 1335 Preservation and Design Review Regulations; designate the boundaries of downtown where the design standards and guidelines apply, and depict on the Zoning Map as an overlay district.		X		
1.7.5 Building Codes – Educate local building code officials about the alternate building code section that allows exemptions for specific historic features, and help property owners find alternate solutions to common problems related to older buildings.		X		
1.7.6 Festivals and Events – Develop a calendar of events that bring people downtown, and distribute it annually to Downtown businesses.		X		
Goal 2. ATTRACTIVE, DESIRABLE & LIVABLE PLACES (Built Environment)				
Objective 2.1 Increase HOUSING OPTIONS				
2.1.1 Housing Development - Conduct a housing study to evaluate existing housing conditions and to determine the quantity, styles, and price-points of housing needed in Fostoria.	X			
2.1.2 Housing Resources - Increase awareness of housing resources that are available to residents, including Fair Housing materials. Consider launching a community development corporation (CDC) or similar organization to provide assistance programs designed to support housing renovation and construction.		X		
2.1.3 Adaptive Reuse – Encourage/facilitate adaptive reuse of vacant buildings (schools, churches, etc.) for new housing. Update the Zoning Code to include provisions to encourage this kind of re-development.		X		
2.1.4 Creative Design – Review/update the Zoning Code to include place-specific design standards and guidelines to new homes and new developments are integrated into the existing neighborhood fabric.		X		
2.1.5 Context Sensitive Development - Encourage new housing development to be sensitive to the natural environment, to avoid causing (or worsening) improper drainage or flooding.		X		
2.1.6 Fair Housing – Continue to educate landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities.	X			
2.1.7 Downtown Upper Floor - Encourage building owners to consider creating upper floor residential units when renovating downtown commercial structures.			X	
2.1.8 Historic Neighborhoods – Create local programs to incentivize renovation of older homes and reinvestment within the historic urban core.			X	
2.1.9 Incentive Programs - Educate local property owners and developers about federal and state incentives, such as LIHTCs, HRTCs, and NMTCs, and local incentives such as CRA.		X		



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
Objective 2.2 DESIRABLE NEIGHBORHOODS				
2.2.1 Sidewalks & Lighting - Conduct a windshield inventory and assessment of all sidewalks and street lighting in the city. Maintain the inventory and use as a mechanism to systematically maintain these public improvements.		X		
2.2.2 Alleys - Maintain alley surfaces and regularly pick up debris to improve appearance of alleys throughout Fostoria.		X		
2.2.3 Public Safety - Organize and/or expand Neighborhood Block Watch programs.	X			
2.2.4 Neighborhood Appearance - Conduct regular neighborhood pride days.		X		
Objective 2.3 VALUED CULTURE AND PLACES				
2.3.1 Promotion (Events & Meetings) - Increase the use of Downtown Fostoria as a lively gathering place, with flexible multi-use spaces, meeting spaces, and event programming.		X		
2.3.2 Promotion (Culture & Entertainment) - Maintain and develop a variety of cultural and entertainment opportunities for residents, students and visitors.		X		
2.3.3 Design - Improve the overall appearance of Downtown Fostoria, both publicly and privately owned properties and spaces. See also 1.7 for specific strategies for Downtown.		X		
2.3.4 Historic Preservation & Resources - Create an inventory of notable historic structures and encourage their long-term preservation and economic well-being.		X		
2.3.5 Commercial Development - Encourage commercial development that will enhance, preserve, and strengthen downtown, including hotels.	X			
2.3.6 Sunshine Point - Continue endeavors like the Fostoria Gardeners' initiative at Sunshine Point to beautify areas throughout Fostoria.	X			
2.3.7 Lodging - Encourage the development of more lodging facilities; review/update the Zoning Code to appropriately regulate.		X		
2.3.8 Farmers Market - Encourage a year-round, indoor farmers market		X		
Objective 2.4 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE				
2.4.1 Property Maintenance and Building Codes - Maintain and strengthen property code enforcement, including minimum maintenance standards. See also 1.7.5 for additional discussion.	X			
2.4.2 Workshops - Conduct educational workshops to provide opportunities for homeowners to learn techniques for long-term maintenance. See also 1.7.5 for additional suggestions.			X	
2.4.3 Library - Create and manage a tool lending library.			X	
2.4.4 Vacant Property Clearinghouse - Inventory and evaluate all vacant buildings in the City; establish a vacant property registration to monitor vacant properties city-wide.	X			
2.4.5 Blight Abatement/Demolition - Create/enforce citywide blight abatement guidelines. Demolish vacant structures when rehabilitation or re-use is not viable.	X			



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
2.4.6 PACE – Educate residential and commercial property owners on the benefits of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs to improve energy efficiency.		X		
Objective 2.5 SUSTAINABLE LAND USE				
2.5.1 Historic Districts – Identify and preserve historic neighborhoods; Install signage; Help property owners use state and federal historic rehab tax credits to improve buildings.		X		
2.5.2 Zoning Review – Review/update zoning regulations to encourage revitalization of downtown, and new development on vacant, underutilized and brownfield sites.	X			
Goal 3. Quality Community Facilities & Services				
Objective 3.1 INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES				
3.1.1 Special Interest Groups - Create, strengthen, and support organizations and programs that address/serve the interests and needs of particular segments of our diverse population.			X	
3.1.2 Connection & Interaction – Create, strengthen, and support organizations, groups, programs, initiatives and assets that encourage interaction and foster connection between diverse groups/ individuals.				X
3.1.3 Events – Create, strengthen and support events that support, foster, and celebrate diversity, inclusivity, and uniqueness of individuals in the community.				X
3.1.4 Education & Training – Create and support programs and initiatives that educate, train, communicate about, and promote diversity and inclusivity, and support fair housing initiatives.			X	
3.1.5 ADA Transition Plan – Identify and correct any physical and psychological barriers throughout the community per guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act.				X
Objective 3.2 EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING				
3.2.1 Fostoria City Schools – Partner with the school district to increase the percentage of high school students graduating with college credit and/or an industry credential.	X			
3.2.2 Fostoria Learning Center - Maintain Fostoria Learning Center and partner with local public schools to increase technical and vocational study programs.	X			
3.2.3 Kaubisch Memorial Public Library - Continue community-wide programs via the public library.		X		
3.2.4 Head Start - Provide greater access to programs to assist children from low to moderate-income households.		X		
3.2.5 Higher Education - Develop programmatic connections to four-year institutions such as Heidelberg and Tiffin Universities, and two year programs such as Terra Tech and Owens Technical Colleges.		X		
Objective 3.3 ACTIVE LIVING				
3.3.1 Walkability - Regularly conduct walkability audits of public spaces to assess accessibility challenges; prioritize and undertake projects as resources permit.			X	



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
3.3.2 City Parks - Evaluate current park locations for service coverage across the City.		X		
3.3.3 City Trails - Develop new trails and/or non-motorized connectors within the City limits, according to recommendation in the 2019 Active Transportation Plan.				X
3.3.4 Local History - Install interpretive signage, public art, and other media in public spaces to highlight key aspects of Fostoria's history.				X
3.3.5 Cooperative Programs - Build strong intra-park coordination between City and County Parks to increase program diversity and range of facilities available to City residents.			X	
Objective 3.4 HEALTH AND WELLNESS				
3.4.1 Behavioral and Mental Health - Continue to support and collaborate with local health care providers to campaign for education, awareness and support of mental health and behavioral health concerns.		X		
3.4.2 Hospital and Medical Coordination - Continue to support efforts with hospitals and other medical professionals to increase the number of programs and facilities to address mental and behavioral health issues including recovery programs for those struggling with drug addiction.		X		
3.4.3 Safe Communities - Develop and strengthen partnerships between Fostoria Police Department and local schools and neighborhoods.		X		
3.4.4 Emergency Services - Maintain police and fire departments with updated equipment; streamline overlapping services.	X			
3.4.5 Access - Explore options to provide public transportation to ensure all residents can access health and wellness facilities. (Also addressed in 5.2 and 5.3)				X
Objective 3.5 FOOD SECURITY & ACCESS				
3.5.1 Urban Gardening - Encourage urban gardening; create demonstration projects at strategic locations with poor access to grocery stores and fresh foods (i.e. food deserts).			X	
3.5.2 Farmers Market - Work with local vendors to expand the Farmers Market to a year-round market. Identify (and, if needed, refurbish) an indoor location in Downtown Fostoria.		X		
Goal 4. Environmental Stewardship -Valued Natural Resources				
Objective 4.1 RESOURCE PROTECTION				
4.1.1 Cleanups - Organize cleanups and invasive species removal campaigns at Portage River, Lamberjack and Mosier Lake and other local greenspaces and parks.	X			
4.1.2 Stormwater Management - Update the City's stormwater management regulations to establish mandatory setbacks to maintain/protect riparian buffers along the East Branch of the Portage River, and employ best management practices.	X			
4.1.3 Planned Unit Development Design - Review and update the existing Planned Unit Development regulations (Chapter 1129) to encourage this form of development and ensure key natural areas such as riparian corridors, woodlands, and wetlands are conserved.		X		



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
4.1.4 Tree Preservation/Restoration - Plant and protect trees to maintain current and increase canopy coverage; consider adopting a tree preservation/conservation ordinance.		X		
Objective 4.2 ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE				
4.2.1 City Parks – Maintain and improve Portage, Gray and City Parks.	X			
4.2.2 Parks - Inventory and map existing greenspaces; determine need for additional park acreage.		X		
4.2.3 Fostoria Reservoir - Develop Fostoria Reservoir with facilities for non-motorized watercraft opportunities.		X		
4.2.4 Collaboration– Encourage regular communication and coordination among entities that manage and preserve Fostoria's greenspaces.	X			
Objective 4.4 RIVER LIFE				
4.4.1 Water Trails: Investigate with ODNR the possibility of creating a blue trail to connect the City with the main expanse of the Portage River.				X
4.4.2 NPS-IS – Work with OEPA and other communities in the Portage River watershed to prepare/ update a Non-Point Source-Implementation Strategy (NPS-IS).		X		
4.4.3 Combined Sanitary and Storm Sewer Overflow (CSO) systems– Work with OEPA to find funding to separate the combined sewer.	X			
Objective 4.5 GREEN ENERGY				
4.5.1 Zoning – Review the Fostoria Zoning Code to ensure it allows for placement of alternative energy infrastructure in both residential and commercial/industrial areas.		X		
4.5.2 Partnerships - Encourage Hancock-Wood Electric Coop and North Central Electric Coop to make residential and commercial usage of solar and other alternative power resources easier.		X		
4.5.3 LEED (Leader in Energy and Environmental Design) – Encourage structures to become LEED certified. Investigate becoming LEED accredited professionals.		X		
Objective 4.6 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT				
4.6.1 Landfill Improvements – Work with the Health Department and Ottawa-Sandusky-Seneca Solid Waste District to monitor and address maintenance of the existing landfills.	X			
4.6.2 Recycling - Encourage recycling; work with Ottawa-Sandusky-Seneca Solid Waste District to maximize programs to reduce waste going into a landfill.			X	
GOAL 5. Enhance Mobility, Accessibility & Public Utilities				
Objective 5.1 ROADWAY MAINTENANCE				
5.1.1 Repairs – Inventory condition of all local bridges, overpasses, and roads; develop a roadway grading system; identify needed improvements; and create a long-term maintenance plan. Pursue funding programs to assist with these projects.	X			



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
5.1.2 Truck Routes - Evaluate and improve truck routes through Fostoria to ensure trucks can adequately maneuver through and avoid residential neighborhoods.	X			
5.1.3 Local Roads - Enhance the appearance of roadways through the City, especially the main routes with tree planting, other landscaping, etc.	X			
5.1.4 Signage - Improve signage and create a wayfinding system to enable visitors to maneuver throughout Fostoria.			X	
Objective 5.2 CONNECTED ROADWAY SYSTEM				
5.2.1 Fostoria Loop Road - Continue to investigate funding sources for the seven-phase loop around Fostoria.	X			
5.2.2 Transportation System - Improve and maintain transportation system in order to address present and future traffic challenges.	X			
5.2.3 Access Management - Employ access management techniques to limit points of ingress/egress, and maintain the level of service on commercial corridors.	X			
5.2.4 Transportation Networks - Support public transportation networks and other multi-modal transportation alternatives to link population centers with employment opportunities and other destinations.	X			
5.2.5 Collaboration - Collaborate with federal, state, and local planning agencies to enhance transportation networks in the region.	X			
5.2.6 Congestion - Implement congestion management techniques at key intersections through redesign, additional traffic lanes, and improved signalization.	X			
Objective 5.3 ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION				
5.3.1 Trails - Implement the trail recommendations in the recently completed Active Transportation Plan that are relevant to Fostoria.				X
5.3.2 Walkability - Develop infrastructure and educational campaigns that encourage people to commute to work and school on bike or on foot.		X		
5.3.3 Bike Shares - Develop a rent-a-bike or bike-sharing program. Pursue grants to help offset local costs.				X
5.3.4 Public Transit - Enhance public transit and mobility.	X			
5.3.5 Funding - Identify alternative funding mechanisms for enhanced transit.	X			
5.3.6 Ride Shares - Encourage ride-sharing transportation on demand businesses such as Uber or Lyft.		X		
Objective 5.4 AIR & RAIL NETWORKS				
5.4.1 Promote Air & Rail - Promote alternate means of transportation and shipping such as aviation and rail.	x			
5.4.2 Highways - Reconnect rail to major highways.	X			



FOSTORIA'S IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME	Ongoing	Immediate (0-2 yrs)	Short-term (2-5 yrs)	Long-term (5+ yrs)
5.4.3 Airport - Use the airport as an economic opportunity.	X			
Objective 5.5 Embrace SMART COMMUNITY Technologies				
5.5.1 High Speed Internet - Provide high-speed internet access to all areas. Investigate and pursue grant and other funding programs to offset local costs.	X			
5.5.2 Telecommunications - Promote the proper placement and provision of telecommunication services.	X			
5.5.3 Electric Charging Stations - Encourage the installation of electric car charging facilities.	X			
Objective 5.6 WATER & WASTE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE				
5.6.1 Distribution & Collection – Regularly evaluate water and sewer rates in conjunction with regular evaluation of current systems.		X		
5.6.2 Utility Extensions – Plan for future utility extensions to accommodate future growth.				X
Goal 6. Strong Community Character & Image				
Objective 6.1 CELEBRATE FOSTORIA				
6.1.1 Publicity– Continually identify and publicize reasons why Fostoria is a great place to live, work, visit, study, and run a business (brand reasons).	X			
Objective 6.2 BRANDING & PROMOTION				
6.2.1 Marketing – Advertise Fostoria activities and attractions to townships, villages and cities in Seneca, Hancock, and Wood Counties.	X			
6.2.2 Branding - Develop and/or implement a community brand to enhance the reputation and experience of the community as a great place to live, work, and operate a business.	X			
Objective 6.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT				
6.3.1 Strategic Planning – Develop and continually update a strategic plan for tourism development for Fostoria.		X		
6.3.2 Railroad Heritage – Promote the Iron Triangle; work with local partners to create “package” offerings for visitors.		X		
6.3.3 Glass Heritage – Promote Fostoria's rich history in the glass industry. Work with the Museum and local partners to create “package” offerings (as above).		X		
6.3.4 Public Art – Continue to commission, celebrate and promote Downtown Fostoria as a destination using murals and other public art pieces.	X			

