

A Fairfield company has big plans to quadruple in size. Here's how.



NICK GRAHAM/STAFF

The Fischer Group currently consists of three facilities along Bohlke Blvd. The company is forecasting continued growth and, should this project proceed, will construct a 30,000 square foot addition to its existing 52,000 square foot manufacturing facility located at 2052 Bohlke Blvd. It will also construct a brand new 20,000 square foot corporate headquarters at 2030 Bohlke Blvd. The total building investment for the expansion and new facility is valued at approximately \$3 million in new building construction. The company will retain 114 full-time existing jobs and will create at 100 new full time jobs within three years of the completion of building construction for 214 total employees.

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By Michael D. Pitman, Staff Writer

FAIRFIELD —

A Fairfield business wants to invest upwards of \$17.4 million to quadruple its footprint on Bohlke Boulevard and add between 300 to 400 new jobs over the next several years.

The large expansion project for The Fischer Group will be done in phases, the first of which was approved by the Fairfield City Council on Monday. A seven-year, 65 percent tax abatement was granted to the project.

In exchange, the company will add 100 new jobs within three years after it completes two new buildings. Part of the tax deal includes the business paying Fairfield City Schools \$13,000

annually and Butler Tech \$230 annually during the life of the abatement period, according to the deal.

“It’s a huge win for Fairfield,” said Alex Kraemer, Fairfield Economic Development manager.

The Fischer Group sits at 2052 Bohlke Blvd. with a 52,000-square-foot manufacturing facility. Later this year, the company, founded in 2005 and headquartered in Fairfield since 2007, plans to invest \$3 million in a 30,000-square-foot manufacturing facility and a 20,000-square-foot corporate headquarters. Two-thirds of those jobs will be skilled labor positions, while the remainder will be office jobs at the company’s headquarters, Kraemer said.

Founder and owner Al Fischer, who retired from P&G 18 years ago, has seen significant growth in his company over the past few years and told Fairfield City Council he expects that same growth over the next few years, which is the catalyst behind the expansion plan. The Fischer Group is the umbrella company for nine businesses that take product ideas from “idea to shelf” for clients, Fischer said. They have developed more than 100 products, he said.

“We basically invented the technology that de-risks and brings new products into the market at about the fifth of the time and at a quarter of the cost of what large companies do,” Fischer said. “And that is really is the base of our expansion. We have a demand for our services that is shooting up and doubling up for the next three years, we think.”

Construction on the manufacturing building is expected to wrap up this summer, and the corporate headquarters should break ground in the third quarter this year and be completed by mid-2020. The 100 jobs to be added are projected to have a collective payroll of \$3.9 million.

Then in 2021, Fischer said he plans to start the next phases of his expansion project: a 15,000-square-foot machine line manufacturing building and a 100,000-square-foot manufacturing building. These projects should be completed by 2022 or 2023, and he anticipates doubling the number of employees again.

Fischer said he anticipates he could employ a total of “400 to 500” people, which he said is a “conservative” estimate.

“We’re pretty aggressive,” Fischer said. “We got the plans laid out for five years. Originally when I started the planning process last year, I looked at it as less.”

If the company reaches that high end of Fischer’s estimates, that would land The Fischer Group on the city’s top 10 employers list. He said he currently employs 110 to 120 people.

Another part of the company’s growth is due to Fischer’s investment strategy.

“I don’t take any money out of the company and I invest the profits into building companies,” he said. “We’re looking at that being an organic reinvestment, returning the money from the profits. It’s basically how I built up the company. From my standpoint, it’s building into the community and building what I’ve got here ... and the employees, they’re going to benefit significantly from the expansion, well beyond my lifetime.”