



# Otsego County Economic Alliance Semi-Annual Report



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1062 Cross Street, Gaylord, MI 49735 Executive Director: Jeff Ratcliffe  
Telephone 989-731-0288 Fax: 989-731-0289 Email: ratclifj@msu.edu Web: www.gaylord-otsego.com

## A Choice



*Continue dealing with this? Or...*

It has been part of the Alliance's job to identify and fix the problems that affect our community's development and quality of life. Traffic congestion on M-32 has been a big one. Over the past 4 years we led a community effort that identified solutions to this problem – new road crossings at Milbocker/McCoy and Van Tyle/South Wisconsin - and netted a large chunk of the funds needed – \$13.05 million – to build them. Unfortunately, we didn't land the total amount needed - which is just under \$18 million.

We now have a choice. Support a 5 year tax of up to .8 mills and build both of these crossings now or don't and put the issue off until later when the costs are higher – both in terms of money and congestion. We can complain about the politics, the timing, the economy, Georgia-Pacific's closure, and too many millages already. However, the time to finish a critical piece of transportation infrastructure is now. We may not have this opportunity again.

Let's not look back and say we should have done this. Let's say we did it! We have a choice. Please choose to keep our community moving forward.

*For more information see Unlock the Gridlock on page 3.*

## Strategic Goals

### Business Retention/Expansion/Attraction

- Coordinated Georgia-Pacific plant closure response activities with Michigan Works!, Sen. Stamas, Rep. Elsenheimer and local officials and organizations.
- Testified before the House Commerce Committee in support of an amendment to the Renaissance Zone act that would allow a zone to be established at the G-P site as a location incentive if we so chose
- Secured \$40,000 Economic Development Administration grant to be used to undertake reuse planning for the G-P facilities.
- Working with companies interested in the G-P facilities including arranging plant tours and providing facility and community information.
- Made retention visits to 3 companies and provided follow up to all three.
- Continued to work with A&L Iron and Metal and Lake State Railway Company to build rail infrastructure to support A&L's expansion. After considerable delay, G-P has consented to grant the rail easement. Execution of the final agreement is pending. Secured a one year extension on the CDBG funding.
- Continued working with the City of Gaylord and Independent Bank on a streetscape project that will support Independent Bank's expanded Main Street offices. Streetscape design was completed, project was bid and construction is well underway. The Bank expansion was completed with demolition of old building substantially completed.
- Testified before the Senate Committee on Local, Urban and State Affairs regarding the possible closure of the Gaylord mail processing center and in support of a resolution presented by Sen. Stamas
- Continued working with several prospective company locations

*Continued on page 2, Strategic Goals*

## Otsego County Economic Alliance 2006 Annual Partnership Meeting



Fifty-one people attended the Otsego County Economic Alliance Annual Partnership Meeting held at the University Center at Gaylord on May 8, 2006.

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### Business Resources

#### Otsego County Public Library

You can now access the Reference USA business contact database from your office. All you will need is your library card bar code number. The data base will be accessible from the library's home page (<http://www.otsego.lib.mi.us/>) after August 15. In addition to the business database, you will also have access to the U.S. Residence database.

#### SBA 504 Loan Program

The 504 is a fixed interest loan to help growing companies reach their fullest potential and create jobs. For more information regarding the 504 Loan Program contact the Michigan Certified Development Corporation at 822 Centennial Way, Suite 180, Lansing, MI 48917, web at [www.michigancdc.org](http://www.michigancdc.org) or by phone at (517) 886-6612.

#### Northeast Michigan Consortium Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

PTAC provides government contracting assistance in 15 counties in northeast Michigan. For further information contact Denise Hoffmeyer at the Northeast Michigan Consortium at P.O. Box 711, Onaway, MI 49765. Tel. (989) 733-8548, Fax (989) 733-8069 or [denise@miworks-nemc.gen.mi.us](mailto:denise@miworks-nemc.gen.mi.us).

## Strategic Goals

### Infrastructure to support base industry

- Working with I-75 Crossings Task Force, secured updated project costs and cost comparisons required by MDOT. Received approval from MDOT for the construction of an at-grade crossing of I-75 at Milbocker and McCoy Roads. Applied for and have been listed as a project under the Governor's Jobs Today program that will provide an additional \$2.6 million towards the crossings project. Amended August ballot language reducing millage request to "up-to .80 mills."

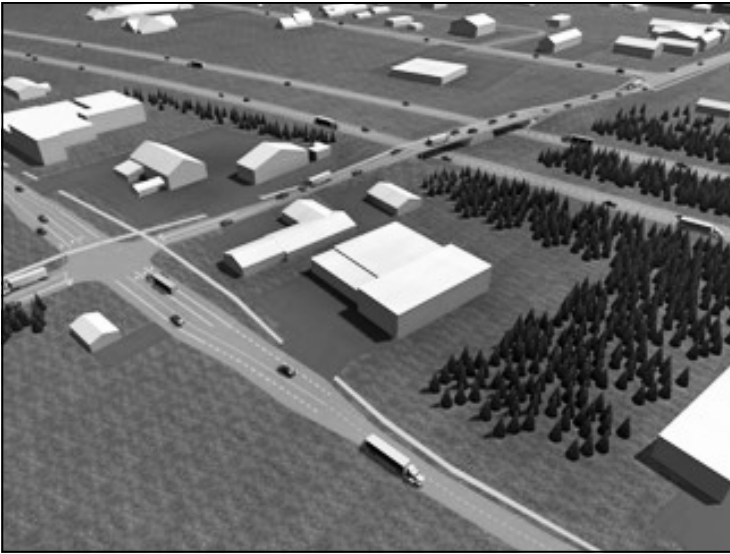
### Community Development projects and services

- Working with Corwith Township began work on a \$286,000 CDBG funded high volume fire protection well designed to provide rapid filling of fire trucks. Well will be designed so that it can serve as part of a future municipal water system for Vanderbilt. A well site purchase agreement is being negotiated and an engineer has been selected.
- Continue to work with the Airport Advisory Committee and providing support to new Airport Director.
- Continue to average 3-4 business counseling sessions per month.
- Working with NE and NW Michigan Works!, NE Michigan Consortium, DLEG, and MRS began planning the 2006 Employer Forum. The forum, scheduled for October 12, 2006, 8:00am – 4:30pm at the Otsego Club in Gaylord will feature Bob Neegan and focus on acquiring new customers, getting more from existing customers, and building a "wiz-bang" staff. For more information and to register contact Jane at Michigan Works! 800-371-2533..

### Growth Management Initiative

- Working with the Otsego County Department of Land Use Services, applied for and secured \$90,000 PAL grant to assist the County complete the county-wide master plan and implement development design guidelines. Entered into contract with R.Clark and LIAA to facilitate completion of updated County master plan. Received confirmation of being a pilot project under the Grand Traverse New Designs for Growth design guidelines update being funded by PAL.
- Continued participating in Gaylord Area Cooperative Planning Committee with the City, Livingston and Bagley Townships and County representatives.

# ...Unlock the Gridlock!



*VanTyle/Wisconsin Crossing*

## The Facts:

- Each day over 24,000 vehicles travel on M-32 between South Otsego Avenue and South Townline Road.
- This area averages 270 crashes with 40 injuries per year.
- If things are left as they are, M-32 will be gridlocked by 2020.
- The millage requested will be for only five years and is expected to be reduced over this time period.

## The Objective:

- Reduce travel time and gridlock on M-32.
- Boost development and job creation at the Georgia Pacific properties, the two industrial parks, and the airport.
- Shorten response time for our Fire, Police, and EMS Departments.

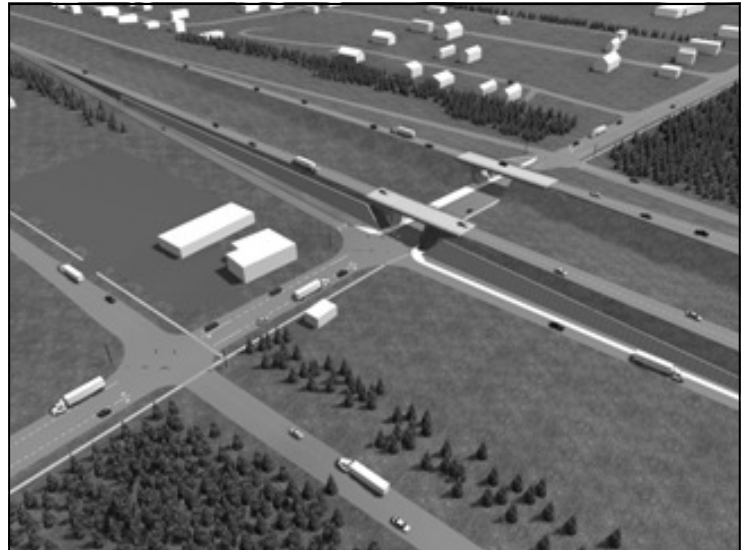
## The Bottom Line:

- Results in a tangible benefit to everyone that drives a vehicle!

On August 8th voters will be asked to decide if they would support an \$18 million transportation project that would place two new crossings over I-75 to connect Milbocker Road to McCoy Road and VanTyle Road to South Wisconsin Avenue.

Voters are being asked to support an up to .8 mill levy for a period not-to-exceed five years to fund both of these crossings. That would cost the average taxpayer of a \$100,000 home up-to only \$40 annually in additional taxes. That's about 11 cents per day!

It is estimated that these two crossings could reduce traffic on M-32 by 18%. A reduction of more than 4,320 vehicles per day!



*Milbocker/McCoy Crossing*

Upgrades of the local road network to support these crossings are currently underway with S. Townline and Dickerson Roads completed, Krys Rd. scheduled and the McVannel Extension (M-32 to Van Tyle) and McCoy Rd. planned.

Do you want to change the present gridlock and improve our future?

**A "YES" vote on PROPOSAL C will allow for two I-75 crossings.**

*For less than the price of a cup or coffee or a soda pop per week, we can dramatically change our lives!*

**Please VOTE on August 8th!**

## ***Thanks to Our 2006 Partners***

*Advanced Insurance Marketers, Albie's Foods, Inc., BDK Group of Northern Michigan, Catt Development, Citizens Bank, City of Gaylord, Consumers Energy, Crossroads Industries, Fifth Third Bank, Freeman Family Enterprises, Gaylord Herald Times, Gaylord/Otsego County Chamber of Commerce, Gornick Properties, Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, Independent Bank, Kirkpatrick & DuBois PLC, Lakeview Quality Tool, mBank, Northwestern Bank, Otsego County, Otsego County Road Commission, Otsego County Township Officers Association, Otsego Memorial Hospital, Paxton Resources/Otsego County Community Foundation, RE/MAX Gaylord, The Bank of Northern Michigan, Topp Law PLC, University Center at Gaylord, Village of Vanderbilt, Wagar Motor Sales, Wal-Mart Foundation, Winn Telecom, and Wolverine Power Cooperative.*

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*An Economic Development Partnership  
serving Gaylord and Otsego County.*

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