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1.0. Program Evaluation

Utilizing the public health core functions of assessment, assurance and policy development, project activities aimed at the successful development of the Gaylord Business Corridor (GBC) will be based on an integrated strategic and financial management approach. The information contained in this evaluation will systematically outline a plan that will be included within the existing Task Force collaborative network.   In addition, a quarterly assessment will be conducted to ensure the efficacy of the project and to identify any modifications that may be need to be implemented.   The project staff will work closely with local government, federal granting and regulatory organizations to ensure ongoing program evaluations and where appropriate, make changes to ensure the goal of improved program outcomes.

1.1   Process/Monitoring Evaluation

Process evaluation represents the earliest phase of the process evaluation plan and refers to the preliminary assessments of the appropriateness of materials and procedures prior to beginning the project. It is a systematic and continuous observation that takes place over a given period of time in order to see whether the project activities are taking place with the quality and the rate necessary to achieve the stated objectives. This phase of the evaluation will take place during implementation of the project, thus allowing for feedback and the revision of strategies when appropriate.

Many of the baseline activities have been completed prior to submission of the TIGER grant application so as to provide justification of the proposed project including traffic volume assessments of all roadway segments, safety and educational material selection, projections of short-term and long-term economic impacts through job recreation and new investment (reflective of per square foot of commercial and industrial buildings), implementation of strategic management tools and timelines. Additional tasks will include human resources such as staff hiring based on ability, outreach education and community response, scheduling a public open-house, environmental reviews, baseline inventory of developmental property, preliminary title work, initial contact with property acquisition owners, adaptation of the ongoing program to unanticipated events, comparing progress statistics with other program standards to enhance the program analysis. In addition, data such as budget reports regarding monthly expenditures in specific categories and rate of expenditures indicating the amount of program activity necessary to achieve the stated objectives.

1.1.1   Standard Process Evaluation Questions

* Are the activities taking place as planned?
* Are there enough resources to carry out the activities?
* Are specific segments of the community involved and participating in the activities?
* Are the activities reaching the right people?
* Are there problems with the approach or materials being used?
* Are there difficulties in the management of the project?

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1.1.2   Process Objectives (Dates will be inserted when an award notice has been received.)

- By __/__/__, engineering plans will have been completed and obtained.
- By __/__/__, environmental review steps will be completed.
- By __/__/__, required property acquisition, right-of-way, and/or grading permits will have been secured for those road segments requiring acquisition, ROW, and/or grading permits.
- By __/__/__, bids will have been advertised, contractors selected and contracts executed.
- By __/__/__, a Construction Project Manager will be hired.
- By __/__/__, the research staff will be hired and expectation delineated.
- By __/__/__, a road segment construction schedule will be created and agreed upon.

1.2   Outcome/Impact Evaluation

Outcome (summative) evaluation assesses the achievement of objectives by measuring the expected outcomes to determine the success or failure of the project. The research components of the GBC will measure the effect of on knowledge, attitudes, behavior and skills of the community, prove that efforts have been worthwhile, discover what works and what doesn't work in addition to providing credibility to the overall project. Baseline data will be collected for comparison with similar data gathered during the program and following up periods.

The results of the program evaluation will be disseminated to the funding agency through progress reports and also made available for use by other local governmental agencies to facilitate and contribute to the advancement of professional knowledge, practice and policies.

1.2.1   Impact/Outcome Evaluation Questions

- What are the measurable results of the project?
- Has there been any change in the efficiency, environment, economic status, safety and quality of life within the community?

1.2.2   Strategic Management Tools

As part of the integrated strategic management planning of the GBC, it will be imperative to establish a set of objectives and a framework in which to link actions and results of the proposed project. In an effort to provide cohesion to all aspects of the project monitoring, SMART objectives and the Logical Framework Analysis will be utilized as a planning and evaluation tool.

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1.2.2.2.   SMART Objectives

The operational objectives of the GBC project define the deliverables that will be accomplished over the short and medium-term of the study period. These objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely (SMART); reflecting clarity and direction along with increasing accountability through documentation.

1.2.2.3.   Logical Framework Analysis (LFA)

The Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) is a strategic planning, monitoring and management tool used to organize key components of the project by implementing a concise, quantifiable and systematic approach.

1.2.2.4   Combined Overview

Below are the SMART objectives and the Logical Framework Analysis for the GBC, which are intended to ensure the high quality of the project through a concise and systematic review.

Implementation of an advanced technology-based signal wide light and timing system to facilitate 20% greater efficiency in traffic flow and improve safety throughout the GBC.			
Objectives	**Verifiable Indicators**	**Means of Verification**	**Critical Assumptions**
Goals: Impact	• Observe a 20% increase in traffic mobility by 2013	Interchange study data and traffic volumes at baseline and 1 year post construction	Improved transportation mobility is vital to the quality of life in the community
Purpose: Outcomes	• Improve congestion caused by decreased capacity and improper or malfunctioning signal timing	Monitor synchronized signal timing. Data collection at baseline and 1 year post construction	Surveillance is complete. Synchronized planning will improve traffic flow and reduce fuel consumption
Outputs: Services Provided	• Reduced travel times • Increase fuel savings • Reduce carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon pollution	Agency coordinated traffic signal re-timing program. Data analysis	Improve safety and reduce driver frustration through education and outreach
Inputs: Resources Needed	Research personnel, survey development, educational material for public dissemination, data collection	Data analysis at baseline and 1 year post construction	Budgetary allocations have been made to meet the needs of the education & safety program

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Reduce the congestion problem in the GBC by 25% in an effort to increase the east-west mobility at the I-75/M-32 interchange through the development of a newly constructed alternative infrastructure network.

Objectives	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Critical Assumptions
Goals: Impact	• Improve the efficiency and operation of GBC by 25% in 3 years	Michigan Crash Reporting data, traffic volumes, bus usage rates at baseline and 1 year post construction	Improved transportation efficiency is vital to the quality of life in the community
Purpose: Outcomes	• Annual decreases in congestion and MVC	Data gathered at baseline and 1 year post construction	Surveillance is complete Toxic greenhouse emissions are a public health concern
Outputs: Services Provided	• Advocate the availability of the local bus system • Increase public awareness of trip pooling & transit alternatives such as walking and bicycling	Bus system usage rates at baseline and 1 year post construction Pre and post-test surveys	Improve awareness of greenhouse gas through education & outreach Improve community safety & quality of life
Inputs: Resources Needed	Research personnel, educational material for public dissemination, data collection	MVC, traffic volume and survey data analysis at baseline and 1 year post construction	Budgetary allocations have been made to meet the needs of the education & outreach program

Improve the existing GBC transportation infrastructure to facilitate a 20% increase in economic redevelopment of the central business district, South Otsego Avenue, West M-32 and the Gaylord industrial areas.

Objectives	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Critical Assumptions
Goals: Impact	• Create 20% more employment and business opportunities by 2013	Conduct a regional and local traffic study REMI-PI Cal-B/C Business Corridor Model	Improving the GBC transportation network is critical to the long-term economic sustainability of the community
Purpose: Outcomes	• Reduce unemployment rate each year • Increase the number of businesses	Data gathered at baseline (REMI-PI) and 1 year post construction (Cal-B/C and REMI-PI)	Surveillance is complete Rural depressed area is a public health concern
Outputs: Services Provided	• Long-term economic sustainability GBC transportation infrastructure	Quantitative analysis of the impact of various model parameters disclosed to the public	Improve the livability and long-term economic sustainability of the community
Inputs: Resources Needed	Personnel, data collection, mathematical model identification for proper evaluation of the GBC	Increase in regional and local business growth. Decrease in the unemployment rate	Budgetary allocations have been made to meet the costs incurred to contract out for the traffic study

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Objectives	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Critical Assumptions
Decrease the incidents of motor vehicle crash and pedestrian injury by 20% through improved safety awareness and the development of a Green Corridor in the central business district, South Otsego Avenue and the West M-32 trunk-line.		

Objectives	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Critical Assumptions
Goals: Impact	• Observe a 20% reduction in the incidents of MVCs by 2013	Michigan Crash Reporting data and road evaluation of traffic volumes at baseline and 1 year post construction	Improved transportation safety is vital to the quality of life in the community
Purpose: Outcomes	• Annual decreases in MVC and pedestrian injury and deaths	Michigan Crash Reporting System data gathered at baseline and 1 year post construction	Surveillance is complete MVCs are a public health concern
Outputs: Services Provided	• Traffic education & safety pre and post-test surveys • Media releases to improve public awareness	Pre and post-test educational & safety survey analysis MVC data analysis	Improve community awareness through education & outreach Improve community safety & quality of life
Inputs: Resources Needed	Research personnel, survey development, educational material for public dissemination, data collection	MVC & survey data analysis at baseline and 1 year post construction	Budgetary allocations have been made to meet the needs of the education & safety program

2.0   Summary

Early strategic decisions on new projects must be made despite limited direct evidence of project effects or studies of comparable projects in similar situations. The current evaluation program provides a systematic framework for anticipating the effects of the GBC prior to implementation. Local government will need to be actively involved in the decision making process to ensure collaboration and compliance. A comprehensive budget justification has been developed to include both indirect and direct cost associated with carrying out the GBC project. Taking into consideration the strategies put forth we are certain that our expanded evaluation plan will provide the best available quantitative estimates of long-term outcomes of the GBC transportation infrastructure.