A large number of high-performing economies and businesses today require employees of higher skill and pay in order to thrive. Highly-skilled workers are likely to be well-educated, highly mobile, in demand and desirous of realizing a high quality of life through services such as excellent educational opportunities at all levels, cultural and recreational opportunities, and opportunities for engagement within their areas of interest: arts, cultural, and social activities, for example, but also potentially societal issues about which they may be passionate.

The Indiana Toll Road Corridor offers many amenities that may appeal to highly skilled workers, but they are presently not agglomerated or catalogued on a Corridor basis. Amenities include access to high-quality public and private schools; Indiana’s open access to public school choice; a selection of institutions of higher learning; vineyards and wineries; eating and drinking establishments; retail, service, athletic, and performance centers and venues and easy access to assets from the very urban – such as Chicago and its wealth of cultural and recreational opportunities – to the more pristine environments of Lake Michigan and northern Indiana’s abundant recreational lakes.

Examples of initiatives targeting talent attraction – with the purpose of increasing income and wealth – can be found in at least two Indiana economic development initiatives: the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and the Columbus Chamber of Commerce.

The Northwest Indiana Regional Partnership promotes its existing base of highly-skilled workers as a cornerstone of attracting higher-value, higher-paying jobs to the region.\(^1\)

The Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce’s talent attraction initiative takes a somewhat different approach with attracting and retaining talent – particularly young professionals – at the heart of its economic development strategy. Its purposes are nonetheless in line with those of the Regional Partnership: establishing, attracting and retaining higher-paying industries by providing them with a highly skilled and highly educated workforce.


\(^2\)For more information, see http://www.columbusalent.com/ and http://www.columbusyp.org/cyp/index.php.