

ABOUT THE PROJECT

This brief is one in a series about opportunities arising from the development of the Indiana Toll Road. Research was conducted by the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University in conjunction with Building Better Communities at Ball State.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

CENTER FOR BUSINESS & ECONOMIC RESEARCH

The Center for Business and Economic Research is an award-winning economic policy and forecasting research center housed within Ball State University's Miller College of Business. CBER research encompasses health care, public finance, regional economics, transportation and energy sector studies.

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Building Better Communities provides comprehensive services to partners across Indiana by connecting them with Ball State University's expertise and resources. BBC offers practical solutions to local challenges and assists with community, economic, and business development.

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SECTOR TALENT ATTRACTION ACTIVITY MARKETING

Improve Corridor Quality of Place Image

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.

¹More information about the talent attraction initiative can be found at <http://www.chooseneindiana.com/news.aspx/2010/9/15/partnership-launches-new-attraction-initiative>.

²For more information, see <http://www.columbusalent.com/> and <http://www.columbusyp.org/cyp/index.php>.