

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

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.

Building Better Communities

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ACTIVITY COMMUNICATION

Marketing Plan

An identified opportunity for the Indiana Toll Road Corridor is the crafting of a marketing plan that produces a common look for materials and information to be distributed to internal and external markets.

Content for this plan might include regional and state economic development contact information, information about Toll Road upgrades and traffic counts, the availability of investment and job creation incentives across the Corridor, new business locations, expansions and start-ups, technology transfer initiatives, small business development programs, venture capital access. Additional content might include periodic feature stories/opportunities such as the availability of skills training, incubators, higher education, foreign trade zones, enterprise zones, intermodal facilities, airports, commuter rail, business tax comparisons, labor market skills and availability. Features could also include presentations by existing business leaders and state and regional economic developers covering topics and resources such as the Port of Indiana - Burns Harbor, the Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad, and Indiana's business tax climate.

Additional content should address the quality of place characteristics with the purpose of attracting and retaining talent. Featured assets include state parks, respected universities, ready access to Lake Michigan and Chicago, cost-of-living, availability and range of housing options, etc.

The informational content should be made

available via multiple media platforms including email, social media, text messaging and a Corridor website. This initiative will require the hiring or contracting of marketing expertise with skills in new media, information technology, graphic arts and strong writing skills.

The richness of resources along the Corridor is insufficient by itself to create an awareness of them among key targeted audiences. Creating a consistent look and ensuring a continuous stream of information about the Corridor and its comparative advantages can only be accomplished via a Corridor-wide collaboration involving businesses and economic development organizations. The Indiana Toll Road Economic Development Corridor Study Group is well-positioned to coordinate this initiative.