

## 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.

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## ACTIVITY ORGANIZATION AND COORDINATION

# Regional Coordinating Organization

The development of an identity for the Indiana Toll Road Corridor requires the creation of a regional coordinating body. It may be organized on an ad-hoc basis, as an association or as a non-profit corporation. In any event, a service organization is necessary to establish consistency in communicating the assets of the Corridor as well as in marketing and programming activities. In short, this is a classic case of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

Examples of the kinds of services that must be performed by such an organization include the development of a marketing plan for the Corridor, effectively creating the Toll Road Corridor as an economic entity and the Toll Road as an economic driver for Indiana. Additional services might include education for Toll Road Corridor stakeholders.

The I-39 Logistics Corridor Association serves as a potential model for organization of the Indiana Toll Road Economic Development Corridor. Organized as an association, it employs a part-time executive director who ensures currency of information posted on the website, including business services available to the logistics industry. Member services include quarterly presentations by experts in various aspects of economic development. Presentations are scheduled throughout the length of the 323-mile, multi-state logistics corridor from Janesville, Wisc. to Bloomington, Ill. The rotation of presenta-

tions permits stakeholders from throughout the corridor to attend on a regular basis. Membership fees are nominal. The value of membership instead focuses on members' acceptance of common marketing principles, sharing of information, and collaboration, all of which are agreed to in writing as a condition of membership.<sup>1</sup>

The Ball State project team recognizes a sensitivity that has been expressed throughout the Indiana Toll Road Corridor against the creation of new economic development organizations. To address these legitimate concerns, it is not recommended that the coordinating body for the Indiana Toll Road Economic Development Corridor be an economic development organization per se: it would not be organized to interface directly with site location consultants or business prospects, for example. Instead, it would serve as an image marketing organization, resource bank, and clearinghouse for information about the Indiana Toll Road Corridor. It is, anticipated, however that certain activities will require staff support, more akin to that of an association than an economic development organization.

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<sup>1</sup>See <http://www.i39logistics.com/> for more details.