

economic BRIEF opportunity BRIEF

INDIANA TOLL ROAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

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 TECHNOLOGY

ACTIVITY UNIVERSITY/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Technology Developments and Partnerships with Universities

The Indiana Toll Road Corridor is home to seven major colleges and universities. These institutions include: Indiana University-Northwest, Purdue University-Calumet , Purdue North Central, Indiana University-South Bend, University of Notre Dame, Goshen College, and Trine University. Additionally, several other major institutions are in close proximity. Corridor economic development leadership has an opportunity to support targeted technology development and other partnerships with institutions of higher learning that have the potential to provide benefits to both parties.

The University of Notre Dame, for example, is an internationally recognized research institution with decided strengths in a number of areas including nanotechnology. As part of its nanotechnology research, the university has partnered with a number of other recognized institutions of higher learning. Innovation Park in South Bend is a technology park developed through a public/private partnership between the City of South Bend and the University of Notre Dame. This tech park provides a place for research and development of intellectual property intended to transform knowledge into commercialization.1 Other notable research efforts occur at Purdue University's and Indiana University's campuses in the Corridor. University-sponsored community engagement and technology research and development are present across the Corridor, but may not be as connected to their communities or regions as either party would prefer. This presents an area of opportunity to develop these relationships in the future.

Identifying opportunities for additional partnerships where both universities and communities benefit can be a difficult and time-consuming task. However, realizing these opportunities has the potential for significant, positive impacts on regions that can successfully achieve them. Such partnerships that are often recognized for their positive regional impacts include Silicon Valley, Boston's Route 128, and North Carolina's Research Triangle. University/community collaborations exist elsewhere across the U.S.² A university needs a healthy community in order to attract top faculty and administrators. Communities can benefit from the creation of intellectual property in their back yards, and university research and engagement activities which are becoming more common throughout the U.S.

¹ For more information, see http://or.nd.edu/technology-transfer/technology-transfer-faqs/#mission.

² Among others, an enlightening perspective from universities' points of view can be found at http:// www.pew-partnership.org/pdf/new_directions/2_ partnerships.pdf.