

June 4, 2018 Commissioner and Council Joint Meeting

Key Economic Points and Enclosures

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**Summary:** Brown County is not a wealthy county. Based on the income levels of residents, we qualify to apply for federal assistance in obtaining planning grants. Increased spending, more debt and higher taxes can have adverse impacts on the economic health of the county.

A new “Justice Center” and a re-purposed historic courthouse should not be considered until all practical and economical options have been considered.

1. **Third (3<sup>rd</sup>) highest debt per capita in Indiana.** Ref: Debt Comparison Report by County
2. **5th highest income tax rate in the state.** Ref: Dept of Revenue, Department Notice #1
3. Local Tax and Finance Dashboard. Ref: Indiana Gateway. *From 2012-2017:*
  - **County Property Tax rates increased by 33%.**
  - **County Total Tax Levy increased by 40.4%.**
  - **Certified net assessment (from which property tax is derived), increased by 5.5% (cumulative) which is below the inflation rate.** This contributes to the need to raise income and property taxes.
4. Population Growth Projections. Ref: Stats Indiana. **Population peaks in 2020 to 15,393 and decreases to 13,281 (2040) 12,785 by 2050.**
  - Working Age - Loss of 33% in 25-64 age population by 2040; Loss of 9% in population by 2040 (Ref: IU Public Policy Institute)
  - Rural Indiana Getting Older - Increase 288,421 more seniors; Loss -240,691 non-seniors (Ref: IU Public Policy Institute)

Additional Information

- 2017 Economic Income Survey: 53.1% of residents in low to moderate income category
- Indiana Tax Returns – 52.51 % report income 30K or less (2014)
- 52% + of children in BC Schools qualify for free or reduced meals
  - School Enrollment Forecasts 2026-27: Low - 1,354 – high 1,739 (Ref: Brown County Schools 2017 and 2018 Budget Recommendations)