



REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 6, Issue 3

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Fall 2005

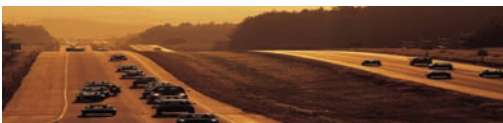
FUEL TAX DECREASE—YOU MAY WANT TO THINK TWICE

By: Michael J. Paprocki

While many advocates may be clamoring for a decrease in state and federal fuel taxes as a practical way to reduce gasoline prices, the reduction of the user fee may have long-term effects on many state and local transportation initiatives. Repealing or suspending the gas user fee would jeopardize essential highway improvements, such as a new Ohio River Bridge, without assuring lower gas prices to consumers.

Recently, West Virginia Deputy State Highway Engineer, James Sothen stated that a one-cent reduction in the state fuel tax would cost the Division of Highway nearly \$11 million. By law, a 20% match from a non-federal source is required from any state or local government to construct a transportation project with federal funding, including congressional earmarks. The \$11 million lost in state revenue would be enough to match \$44 million in federal funds that could have built a \$55 million project.

On the other hand, the Federal Highway Administration estimates the average driver consumes 708.9 gallons of gas per year. A six-month suspension of the 18.4-cents-per-gallon federal fuel would result in only a \$65.22 savings, or roughly 36 cents a day.



HISTORY OF THE FUEL TAX (Internet Research)

A fuel tax is exactly what it says—a sales tax imposed on the sale of fuel. In the United States, the funds are dedicated or hypothecated to transportation, or even roads, so that the fuel tax is considered by many a user fee. In other countries, the fuel tax is considered a source of general revenue and is not designated for roads.

Oregon introduced the first U.S. state fuel tax in February 1919 at 1 cent per gallon. Within the next ten years all 48 states and Washington, D.C. had a gasoline tax. By 1939 the average tax was 3.8¢ per gallon.

The first federal gasoline tax was not created until June 6, 1932 when the Revenue Act of 1932 was enacted with a tax of 1 cent per gallon. As of 2005, the U.S. federal gasoline tax is 18.4¢ per gallon.

As stated in a report by Dr. William Buechner (Buechner, American Road & Transportation Builders Association), the proceeds of the gas tax went into general revenues until 1956. The amount raised each year was used as an informal benchmark for Federal highway spending.

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 established the Highway Trust Fund and stipulated that 100% of the gas tax be deposited into the fund.

The Fund was used entirely to finance the federal highway program until mass transit first received revenues with the enactment of the Surface Transportation Act of 1982. The gas tax was increased from 4 cents to 9 cents per gallon with one cent, or 20%, of the increase dedicated to the newly-established Mass Transit Account.

Each time there has been an increase in the amount of gas tax going into the Fund—1990, 1993 and 1997—20% of the increase has been allocated to the Transit Account and 80% to the Highway Account. Of the current gasoline tax, 2.86 cents is allocated to the Mass Transit Account.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chuck Noll, the hall of fame football coach for the Pittsburgh Steelers and coach for four Super Bowl championships, upon a stunning defeat stated, "We have issues and they are many." With the recent layoff of 800 steelworkers in the last ten months, our region has issues. We also have options and proposed solutions (See our newsletter article titled "Invitation to Our Regional Future: Valley Venture").



A key solution is the economic diversification of our economy through small business enterprises and investments. Frequently referred to as "entrepreneurship," these businesses have a strong track record and provide an insurgence of local, long-term dollar investment. Since mid-summer, a partnership of private, public and academic contributors have met on a continuing basis to coordinate an entrepreneurial renaissance.

The upside of entrepreneurship is best illustrated by Disney Online and the Kauffman Foundation. In late 2004, they opened the new Opportunity City exhibit at INNOVENTIONS East pavilion at Epcot at the Walt Disney World Resort. Featuring interactive, state-of-the-art activity stations, the exhibit brings to life the fun and challenge of learning about entrepreneurship that kids have enjoyed through the highly successful Disney-Kauffman Hot Shot Business Internet simulation (www.hotshotbusiness.com).

"Kids have a natural desire for the independence and control that come with owning a business and being their own boss," says Carl J. Schramm, president and CEO of the Kauffman Foundation. In fact, research tells us that more than 41 percent of kids ages nine to twelve say they would like to start their own business. Exposing them early to entrepreneurship as a choice and reinforcing the value small business bring to our economy is crucial.

While kids are only part of the entrepreneurial success formula, early steel worker retirees searching for an alternative business path are strong entrepreneurial investors. A key to the rebirth of small business in the BHJ region is existing training programs and facilities. For example, Jefferson Community College in 2004 opened a new state of the art training center. West Virginia Northern is the site for the Center for Economic and Workforce Development. The Rockefeller Vo-Tech Center in Hancock County is a modern career center for high schoolers. Bethany College and West Liberty State offer faculty and students eager to excel in business development.

Clearly, regional partners and investments are present. Our next step is to encourage and nurture future risk takers through an even stronger collaboration of resources.

John Brown, AICP
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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AWARDS BHJ WITH A SECOND BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANT

by Dr. John Brown, Executive Director

In July, BHJ was awarded a second Brownfield Assessment Grant in the amount of \$200,000 to further assess thirty-eight (38) brownfield sites in Brooke and Hancock County. A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases a local tax base, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, takes development pressure off undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects the environment.

In 2004 and 2005, BHJ through a regional task force, identified sites and prioritized them for redevelopment or job creation potential. The top ten (10) sites were clustered into five (5) redevelopment areas. The top sites were prioritized based upon a willing property owner, existing infrastructure, site location and access.

BHJ, through the cooperation of site owners, has already begun to highlight these sites through their web site. In November, BHJ staff will attend a "Brownfields Transaction Forum" at the National Brownfields Conference in Denver to identify emerging market opportunities with developers, buyers and investors.



Even local projects like the East Street Extension at the Mittal Steel Coil Yard in Weirton may require an initial Phase I Environmental Assessment. The East Street Project solved a community safety issue while exposing the redevelopment potential of Cove School adjacent to the new State Office Building.

BHJ HAS OPENING FOR A TRANSPORTATION PLANNER/ENGINEER

BHJ has an opening for a Transportation Planner/Engineer. The position is full-time with benefits and requires a Bachelor's degree in planning, engineering or geography plus two years relevant experience. A Master's degree in related field may substitute for two years experience. Ability to research and apply transportation computer analysis. GIS familiarity useful. Good communication skills. Detailed description at www.bhjmpc.org. With cover letter, send résumé by November 30 to:

Dr. John Brown, Executive Director
Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission
124 North Fourth Street
Steubenville, OH 43952

PROPOSED OHIO RIVER BRIDGE NEAR WELLSBURG TAKES GIANT STEP FORWARD

Through the generous support and leadership of West Virginia Senators Robert C. Bryd and Jay Rockefeller, the recently passed federal transportation bill called SAFETEA-LU appropriated \$18 million toward the construction of an Ohio River Bridge near Wellsburg, WV.

This investment moves the region away from a demanding challenge where two of three bridges in an 18 mile river corridor are 100 years or older and approaching their projected life-time. This investment substantiates funding for a location/environmental analysis, design and pre.construction work.

The BHJ Commission forwarded a letter of appreciation to the senators for their valued appropriation.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!



Congratulations to Dave Snelting on his retirement as the Steubenville City Engineer!

Since the start of his employment with the City in 1987, Mr. Snelting has been a member of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) as well as the BHJ Full Commission. Shortly after becoming a member, Mr. Snelting assumed the role of TAC chairman, and has served continuously in that capacity for the past 18 years.



Mike Paprocki, BHJ Transportation Study Director, congratulates Dave Snelting on his retirement.

At the September 28 TAC and Full Commission meetings, members passed a resolution acknowledging Mr. Snelting's contribution to the region. Mike Paprocki, BHJ transportation study director, presented him with a plaque.

Fortunately for BHJ, Mr. Snelting will continue to serve on the Full Commission having been appointed as a representative of the City of Steubenville by Mayor Domenick Mucci.

 FALL  CALENDAR 		
November 8	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon
November 11	Veteran's Day—BHJ Office Closed	
November 16	BHJ TAC/Full Commission	10:30/Noon
November 24-25	Thanksgiving Holiday—BHJ Office Closed	
December 25	Christmas Holiday—BHJ Office Closed	
JANUARY EVENTS		
3	BHJ Executive Committee	12:00
18	TAC/Full Commission (Reorganization Meeting)	10:30/Noon
27	Open House	12:00-2:00

AN INVITATION TO OUR REGIONAL FUTURE: VALLEY VENTURE

BY: JOHN BROWN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Valley Venture, a four-county consortium of educators, entrepreneurs, foundations, and job skill agencies, want more local self-initiated jobs. To carry out this mission, this broad-based task force of 25+ members has prepared an entrepreneurial strategic plan. An action plan will be released by the end of the year. To kick off its strategic plan and to solicit further public investment, Valley Venture has invited over 100 future partners to a kick-off luncheon on October 26th. Further details may be obtained through R & D Associates at 304-723-4528.

The key to Valley Venture's approach is its effort to embrace and utilize existing job generation efforts. "This is not a new program with a new staff and a new facility. It is, however, a hopeful and focused effort to acknowledge the vast contribution of existing partners and respond head on to our loss of wage-friendly jobs," states Doris Davis, a consultant to Valley Venture.

While positive regional economic news has been tough to find over the last year, Valley Venture believes regional recovery through small business is the heart of the matter. Eighty percent of all new jobs are created from small business. Small business is local and regionally committed. Small business is economic job diversification.

A recent study of entrepreneurial growth (*A Preliminary Feasibility Study of Establishing a Personal Assistance Services Incubator in the Brooke-Hancock County Region of West Virginia. West Virginia University Institute of Technology EDA University Center*), documents a need

for small business investment. Brooke and Hancock counties are 50% and 53% below the national average for entrepreneurial start-ups.

Funded initially through a planning grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and administered locally by BHJ, Valley Venture's goal is "to provide technical assistance, quality programming, financial resources and support to create 200 new businesses by December 2007."



Mike Jacoby, Executive Director for Progress Alliance, was recognized at the October meeting of Valley Venture, a regional strategic planning group for entrepreneurial development, for obtaining a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to create new, small business jobs.

The Trivia Block

The world's first gas station was opened by the Gulf Refining Company on December 1, 1913, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

One barrel of crude oil makes about 19½ gallons of gasoline, 9 gallons of fuel oil, 4 gallons of jet fuel, and 11 gallons of other products, including lubricants, kerosene, asphalt, and petrochemical feedstocks to make plastics.

America's first gasoline-powered commercial car manufacturers were Charles and Frank Duryea. The brothers were bicycle makers who became interested in gasoline engine and automobiles and built their first motor vehicle in 1893, in Springfield, Massachusetts.

In 1954, gasoline cost **29 cents per gallon.**

HIGHER FUEL COSTS REQUIRE DRIVING MORE EFFICIENTLY

Drive Sensibly



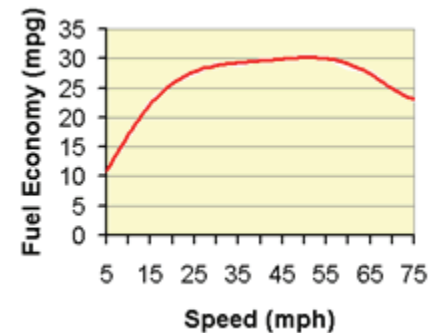
Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town. Sensible driving is also safer for you and others, so you may save more than gas money.

Fuel Economy Benefit:	5-33%
Equivalent Gasoline Savings:	\$0.15-\$1.01/gallon

Observe the Speed Limit

While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph.

As a rule of thumb, you can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.21 per gallon for gas.



Fuel Economy Benefit:	7-23%
Equivalent Gasoline Savings:	\$0.21-\$0.71/gallon

Remove Excess Weight

Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your MPG by up to 2%. The reduction is based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the vehicle's weight and affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones.

Fuel Economy Benefit:	1-2%/100 lbs
Equivalent Gasoline Savings:	\$0.03-\$0.06/gallon

Avoid Excessive Idling: Idling gets 0 miles per gallon. Cars with larger engines typically waste more gas at idle than do cars with smaller engines.

Use Cruise Control: Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.

Use Overdrive Gears: When you use overdrive gearing, your car's engine speed goes down. This saves gas and reduces engine wear.

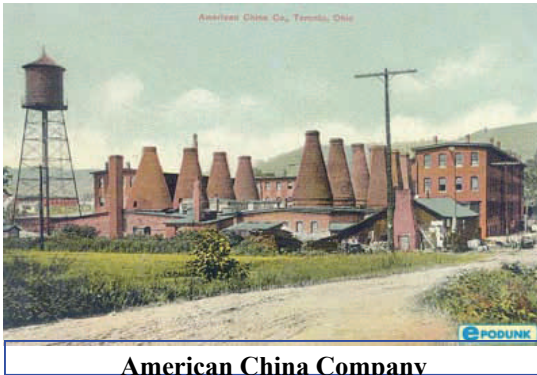
Note: Cost savings are based on an assumed fuel price of \$3.07/gallon.

Data Sources: Estimates for fuel savings from sensible driving are based on studies and literature reviews performed by Energy and Environmental Analysis, Inc., Washington, DC.

TORONTO—THE GEM CITY

In the early 1800s, a government scout, Mike “Auver” Myers, was awarded a section of land located along the west bank on the Ohio River for his outstanding service. In 1818, the area became known as Newburg, and attracted many settlers because of the beauty of its location as well as being situated above the highest flood plain. There was no manufacturing; however, it became a well-known steamboat landing as well as an inlet to the back country.

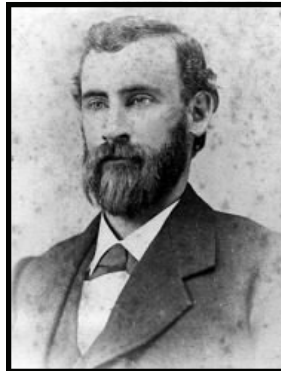
Industry flourished and the town grew. By 1853, the Carlyle & McFadden pottery was founded, and in 1856 the Cleveland & Pittsburgh Railroad



American China Company

came to the area. However, since the railroad already had a station called Newburg near Cleveland, the name was changed to Sloane’s Station after William Sloane who granted a right-of-way to the railroad.

The name changed again in 1881 when the town with a population of 2,536 (1890 census) was incorporated. Mr. Thomas Daniels, a pioneer manufacturer, suggested naming the town in honor of a business associate, W.F. Dunsbaugh, from Toronto Canada and the chief stockholder in the Great Western Fire Clay Company. The citizens agreed and voted to change the town’s name to Toronto. By 1931, the village became the City of Toronto.



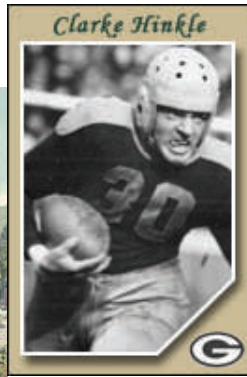
Thomas Daniels

Toronto is also known as “The Gem City.” According to the city’s resident and visitor information guide, the name came from the many river boat captains who landed on the banks to load their barges. They said it was a “gem of a city” because the varied industries made it a one-stop shopping trip.

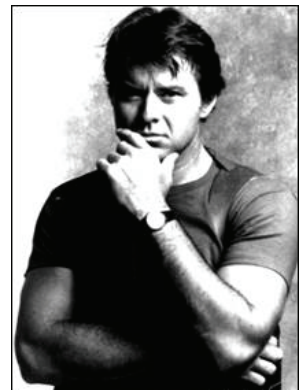
The city has the distinction of having the first World War monument ever erected in the United States. The world’s first titanium mill, Titanium Metals Corporation of America, was opened on November 2, 1957.



Besides having an impressive industrial history, Toronto can boast of being the hometown of two notable celebrities. After playing football in high school, William Clark Hinkle went on to a successful college career at Bucknell University where he was known as the “Bucknell Battering Ram.” From there, an outstanding career with the Green Bay Packers brought him induction into the Football Hall of Fame in 1971.



Perhaps the most famous Toronto resident was Robert Urich who also was an outstanding football player for his school and played for Florida State University on a scholarship. His real claim to fame, however, was in Hollywood. His career took off in 1972 when he played the younger brother of Burt Reynolds in the stage production of “The Rainmaker.” Through the course of his career, he starred in such TV series as “The Lazarus Man.” It was during this time he was diagnosed with cancer, but went into remission after treatment and resumed acting again with a role on “The Love Boat—The Next Wave.” Sadly, he lost his battle on April 16, 2002.



The gazebo is the gathering point for many community activities including a series of concerts sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and an arts and crafts festival during the Labor Day weekend.

The citizens of Toronto have a reason to be proud of their city, and their pride shows!



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Related Web Sites

Appalachian Regional Commission
www.arc.gov

Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc
www.brookepioneertrail.org

**Business Development Corporation of the
Northern Panhandle**
www.bhbdc.org

CHANGE, Inc.
www.changeinc.org

City of Steubenville
www.ci.steubenville.oh.us

CommuteInfo
www.commuteinfo.org

Hancock County Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.hancockcvb.com

Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce
www.jeffersoncountychamber.com

Ohio Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.oh.us

Progress Alliance
www.progressalliance.com

State of Ohio Government Information
www.state.oh.us

State of West Virginia Government Info.
www.state.wv.us

State Route 2 & Interstate 68 Authority
www.route2andi68.com

U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov

U.S. Department of Transportation
www.dot.gov

Village of Wintersville
www.wintersville.net

Weirton Chamber of Commerce
www.weirtonchamber.com

West Virginia Bureau of Business & Economic Research
www.bber.wvu.edu

West Virginia Department of Transportation
www.wvdot.com

West Virginia Development Office
www.wvdo.org