

Local Government

Briefings

April 22, 2010, Volume 13, Issue 15 In This Week's Edition:

What's in the News...

In national news...

The Return of the Two-Way Street

Alan Ehrenhalt writes in an article for *Governing*: "The debate over one-way versus two-way streets has been going on for more than half a century now in American cities, and it is far from resolved even yet. But the evidence seems to suggest that the two-way side is winning. A growing number of cities, including big ones such as Minneapolis, Louisville and Oklahoma City, have converted the traffic flow of major streets to two-way or laid out plans to do so. There has been virtually no movement in the other direction."

Ehrenhalt reports in the article the success of Vancouver, Washington, in revitalizing their downtown Main Street by converting a one-way street and opening it up to two-way traffic. This move is credited for bringing life back to mainstreet almost overnight.

While he won't say that two-way streets are a panacea for urban revival, he does say: "When it comes to designing or retrofitting streets, the burden of proof shouldn't fall on those who want to use them the old-fashioned way. It should be on those who think the speedway ideology of the 1950s serves much of a purpose half a century later."

You can read the article at <http://www.governing.com/column/return-two-way-street>. Source:

Governing.com

Rethinking Rural Development

In this article for *The Daily Yonder*, Drabenstott argues that small rural towns have for too long competed with each other to lure new jobs. He says they should start to take a regional approach and work together.

"The rural Midwest could have an economic future as bright as its vibrant past. But it is basing its twenty-first-century future on a twentieth-century playbook. This is not a recipe for success. Towns and counties compete with neighboring towns and counties for jobs and investments. Industrial recruitment—"smokestack chasing"—is the norm. Economic development agencies spend millions on infrastructure and tax breaks to lure companies from afar instead of creating new jobs at home. Boosters sell the rural Midwest as a cheap place to make things, ignoring the region's many other economic assets—its natural resources, its hard-working people, its central location, its schools and universities, and its scientific base, among others—that could all be leveraged into a competitive new economy.

The path to stronger economies in the rural Midwest is plain. Partnering regionally to compete globally is what's needed. This pathway will lead to scores of multicounty, self-defined regions across the Midwest. Only by combining their forces to create new businesses and good jobs at home will the towns and

6counties of the rural Midwest compete and thrive in a global economy where this sort of collaboration is fast becoming the norm."

Read the full story at www.dailyyonder.com/past-silos-and-smokestacks-rural-development-proposal/2010/04/13/2691.

Source: *Planetizen Newswire*, April 22, 2010 and *The Daily Yonder*
