



Graycor picks Portage over Hobart

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Graycor Industrial Constructors has picked Portage as the location for its new operations center.

Graycor President Brad Teckenbrock announced the decision to move facilities to Portage instead of Hobart in a statement released Tuesday night.

That statement said, in part: "After careful consideration and analysis, Graycor Industrial Constructors Inc. has selected Portage as the site of their new Northwest Indiana operations center. With occupancy planned for summer 2011, the facility will offer 44,000 square feet of office and operations support space on approximately 10 acres of land in the AmeriPlex at the Port business park. This decision comes shortly after Graycor announced plans to relocate its Illinois offices to Oakbrook Terrace, Ill."

The Graycor Portage project is estimated to be a \$6 million investment.

Hobart and Portage have been vying for the past several months for Graycor to locate in one of the two cities.

Teckenbrock didn't state why one city was chosen over the other in the statement. But he thanked both communities for their efforts.

"We worked with Hobart and Portage in our search for a new operations center in Northwest Indiana, and we want to thank both communities for their professionalism throughout this process," Teckenbrock said.

Hobart Mayor Brian Snedecor said he had learned earlier Tuesday of Graycor's decision through a phone call from Teckenbrock. Snedecor said he has no hard feelings about the decision.

"Certainly I wished Graycor the best of luck. I hope things go well for them. It's a benefit to Northwest Indiana with them moving operations from their Chicago area facility. We wish them the best with their endeavor," Snedecor said.

Hobart City Councilman John Brezik, D-5th, who also serves on the Hobart Plan Commission, also wished Graycor well.

"We gave them a very attractive and a decent offer. They would have been a tremendous positive for our industrial growth," Brezik said.

Portage Mayor Olga Velazquez couldn't be reached Tuesday for comment.

The Portage City Council in early September gave its final approval to grant a tax abatement to Graycor for relocating its facilities in Portage.

The Portage council also approved two resolutions, one to confirm Graycor's request for a five-year personal property tax abatement and a second to grant AmeriPlex at the Port a 10-year real estate abatement.

Tim Healy, senior vice president of AmeriPlex, could not be reached Tuesday for comment.

The Hobart City Council last month delayed action on a tax abatement request from Graycor after receiving letters to do so from Teckenbrock and Paul Thurston, of Indiana Land Becknell Investors.

Thurston couldn't be reached Tuesday for comment.

Times staff writer Joyce Russell contributed to this report.