



Tobin Development Corporation

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Paving the way for economic development

by Lu Ann Franklin, Times correspondent

AmeriPlex at the Port builds infrastructure to attract business

Northwest Indiana's infrastructure -- major interstate highways, the Port of Indiana, the Gary airport and railroads -- provides an ideal atmosphere for businesses that require distribution venues to move products.

With those opportunities for economic development in mind, Holladay Properties, of South Bend, built AmeriPlex at the Port in Portage just off Interstate 94 at the Indiana 249 exit. This 385-acre mixed-use commercial/industrial park is one of seven facilities the privately-held development company has built in Indiana, Tennessee and Virginia.

The Portage facility also is the largest industrial part in Northwest Indiana, built to attract business to our market.

Established in 1952, Holladay Properties has grown and diversified from construction of single-family tract housing to one of the largest privately held developers, design/build firms, and fully integrated real estate companies in the eastern half of the United States. Holladay Properties has built projects ranging from \$750,000 to over \$75 million in more than 15 states, with a total project valuation of over \$2 billion.

Industrial parks, such as AmeriPlex at the Port, are investments paid for by private investors. The parks have become popular among businesses in the last 15 or more years because developers prearrange all the services and amenities and obtain all the necessary permits. That means a business looking for space knows the zoning regulations already have been met and that the building covenants and all permits have been obtained.

Holladay Properties' 10-year plan for the Portage development includes light industry, distribution centers, restaurants, hotels and office space. In 2000, when ground was broken for the site, it was estimated that the development could create 4,000 jobs.

Currently, 14 acres of the park has been commercially developed and 160 acres now have industrial development. Still available for development are 85 acres in the commercial portion and 130 acres in the industrial section.

Portage officials have been very cooperative and encouraging in pursuit of businesses for Northwest Indiana, said Kevin Tobin, president of TCB Development of Chicago, whose company has built a half-million square foot distribution building in the AmeriPlex at the Port. Midpoint USA is located at 6515 Ameriplex Dr. and is available for immediate leasing.

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“Mayor Olga Velazquez is committed to economic development in the city and in Northwest Indiana,” Tobin said. Portage is a business-friendly city.”

The location of AmeriPlex at the Port is ideal for warehouses and distribution centers, Tobin said. And a number of businesses have set up shop there, including the Walgreens Return Center, Bass Pro Shop, DaimlerChrysler, Aventis Pharmaceuticals, Tri-State Hospital Supply and Hilton Hotels. In addition, the Sheet Metal Workers Local 20 is headquartered in the park.