

Truck City deserves praise for dedication

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Truck City of Gary Inc. has deep roots in the Steel City. The company, which sells, leases and repairs Freightliner trucks, has been in Gary for 61 years,

providing jobs and boosting the local economy.

Located in the footprint of the Gary/Chicago International Airport expansion, Truck City was the first business to leave as the airport prepares to expand its runway. Truck City isn't leaving Gary for the suburbs, though.

"We feel we have a responsibility to stay here," said co-owner Gerri Davis, whose grandfather, Paul G. Davis, founded the business with Jack Erickson in 1946 as Gary White Sales & Service.

Bolstered by a gift of land from the city at 25th Avenue and Taft Street, Truck City is constructing a \$5.5 million facility that will include a body shop, service center and new-truck sales center, where it will showcase a new, fuel-efficient truck.

Airport officials praised Truck City for its professional and positive approach during the sale of its 15-acre parcel off Cline Avenue, for which the airport paid \$820,000.

Truck City employs about 75 workers and hopes to hire 20 more in the next five years. It had gross sales of more than \$20 million in 2005.

The opportunity is there for an even stronger relationship with the city. Gary citizens need jobs, and Gerri Davis said the company needs qualified diesel technicians. The jobs pay from \$42,000 to \$58,000 per year.

The city should begin working with Truck City to establish a training program for diesel technicians. Or, it could call upon Ivy Tech Community College to start a program.

Truck City is to be commended for its longtime faith in the city, and we hope its prosperity continues at the new location.