

## Union claims casino took anti-data center signs

By Maya Wilkins  
POST-TRIBUNE

Local 150 of the International Union of Operating Engineers claims that members had an anti-Project Maize banner, used as “part of a lawful protest,” confiscated near Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City.

State officials say that the union was not authorized to protest near the casino.

“The Indiana State Police was not involved in removing signs or returning signs to the owners in the incident in question,” said an Indiana State Police statement. “The Indiana State Police has not granted permission to anyone to

place signs on state property. A trooper did speak with an individual at the location and explained the state statute regarding signage on state property.”

Indiana code prohibits unauthorized signs from being placed on state-owned properties and right-of-ways, including sidewalks and medians.

Local 150 members set up a sign that said, “Blue Chip Casino supports out-of-state contractors (and) workers at Project Maize” near the casino on Wednesday. David Fagan, the union’s financial secretary, said Local 150 became aware that the casino was allowing out-of-state contractors and workers to use their parking lot as a stag-

ing area.

“We looked at that as aiding and abetting the out-of-state workers that are, in our opinion, undermining the working conditions of various construction trades across Northwest Indiana,” Fagan said. “We contacted Blue Chip to ask them to support us, indicating to them that the people who come to your casino are not those who are using the parking lot. It is the people of Northwest Indiana, and many of those are small businesses that are being negatively impacted by the out-of-state workers.”

The union asked Blue Chip to stop using the property as a staging



Local 150’s “rat car” and inflatable rat are seen outside 402 Royal Road in Michigan City on Nov. 13. The fixtures are both symbols of the union protest recognized by the National Labor Relations Board, according to Local 150. **MAYA WILKINS/POST-TRIBUNE**

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Saul Alvarez, project engineer for Powers and Sons Construction, left, and student Sharaya, 12, point out locations at the job site of the Tolleston Opportunity Campus in Gary Wednesday, April 8, 2026. **JOHN SMIERCIAK/FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE**

## Glimpse of the future

### Boys & Girls Club members tour Tolleston Opportunity Campus site

By Doug Ross  
FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE

Construct Club members toured the Tolleston Opportunity Campus site under construction in Gary to get a glimpse of the future.

“There’s no better way to get the kids to have a sense of ownership,” Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Northwest Indiana President and CEO Mike Jessen said. “This will be their project forever. They will tell their kids and grand-kids.”

The \$80 million project includes the renovated Tolleston Boys & Girls Club, a new Crossroads YMCA, a Methodist Care First facility and a Wintrust bank branch. Space is set aside for a

future coffee shop as well. In all, it’s about an 80,000-square-foot complex, not counting outdoor areas like a track that is in frequent use by neighbors even during construction.

The Boys & Girls Club being renovated at Tolleston is a \$40 million project. Jessen said it would not have happened without the other nonprofits coming together. “It’s a great model for nonprofits to get together and do things cooperatively.”

Project engineer Saul Alvarez, with Powers & Sons Construction, has been leading the Construct Club for middle school kids to get a glimpse of opportunities in the



Andrea, 17, describes the construction on a video she is taking inside the new gym at the Tolleston Opportunity Campus.

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## Nick Loving is leaving Burns Harbor

Third clerk-treasurer in as many years

By Jim Woods  
FOR THE POST-TRIBUNE

For a third consecutive year, the person holding the clerk-treasurer’s job for the town of Burns Harbor is resigning in the month of May.

Nick Loving, the town’s current clerk-treasurer, announced at Wednesday’s Town Council meeting that he intends for May 15 to be his last day.

Loving, 44, admitted that he has treated the clerk-treasurer job as a part-time position as he still works a full-time job in private industry. The clerk-treasurer’s job, which is considered full-time, annually pays \$73,210.80.

In February, Loving told the Post-Tribune, and then the council, that he was willing to forgo half of his full-time salary this year and that he would stop accepting paychecks after June 30.

However, Loving said Wednesday he found under the Indiana Code that he wasn’t allowed to do that. He said he even consulted with State Sen. Rodney Pol Jr., D-Chesterton, who told him the legislature couldn’t address the issue until next year.

“I am going to be out for a significant amount of time in the summer. So it’s inappropriate to continue on in the role,” Loving told the council.

Loving said he still needs to turn in his official resignation letter to Porter County Clerk Jessica Bailey.

Democratic Party Chairman Don Craft will appoint Loving’s replacement. The last time, Craft consulted with the council members before making the appointment.

Loving, who was a council member, had been appointed to replace Nicole Migliorini, who resigned on May 7, 2025, citing a “toxic work environment.”

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## Gary Common Council OKs funds for infrastructure

By Maya Wilkins  
POST-TRIBUNE

At its Tuesday meeting, the Gary Common Council approved funds transfers to infrastructure projects in the city, including updates to streets and streetlights.

The council unanimously approved changes in a 9-0 vote Tuesday. Councilwoman Mary Brown, D-3rd, attended the meeting virtually.

William Allen, Gary city engineer, gave an overview of the changes.

“This ordinance established funds for infrastructure-related projects, including the resurfacing of our Community Crossing grant, which is an opportunity to replace concrete sidewalks throughout the

city,” Allen said. “This ordinance also includes improvements for traffic signals.”

Gary’s Community Crossings fund will receive about \$2 million, according to city documents. The Community Crossings Matching Grant Program is an Indiana Department of Transportation program that invests in local roads and bridges, according to its website, and the money will be used to fix city roads.

The city also allocated wheel tax funds, which had not been used for several years, former City Controller Celita Green said at a Ways and Means committee meeting. The city will use wheel tax funds to repair sidewalks.

Wheel taxes are local fees that

can be added to vehicle registration and are used to fund infrastructure projects, according to the Indiana Department of Motor Vehicles.

In total, Gary leadership expects to have about \$5.3 million in wheel tax funds, which Green said they did not allocate completely, in case of emergencies.

Allen told council members that updates will be focused on high-use roads included in a previous city feasibility study.

The city of Gary also received \$2 million from NIPSCO for streetlight replacement, which the city plans to use for traffic light repair.

In March, Gary announced that the city will undergo an LED streetlighting transition, according to Post-Tribune archives. Traffic signal

work began in the first quarter of 2026 and will continue through the spring, focusing on high traffic intersections before moving to the remainder of the city.

At the end of 2024, the Gary Common Council approved the use of \$3.45 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to fund the “Relight the City” initiative, managed by the Gary Public Works department, according to Post-Tribune archives.

The initiative replaced about 2,000 Gary streetlights with LED fixtures, which city officials said are more efficient, brighter than previous fixtures and should last 25 years. Streetlight replacement started on Jan. 6, 2025.

Traffic signals on state roads maintained by the Indiana Depart-

ment of Transportation will not be updated through the project, including on Broadway and 4th and 5th avenues.

Councilman Myles Tolliver, D-at large, said during Tuesday’s meeting that he’d like for the city to keep residents informed as they make updates.

“Transparency is key,” Tolliver said. “I think we should let our constituents know how the process of the roads being paved and what’s happening (is important) so they can ask those questions, and we can let them know what’s going on, the longevity and what happens when (storms) happen and how it deteriorates over time.”

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