

PH0678112  
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MAY 8 1979  
DATE ENTERED

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Gary Land Company Building

AND/OR COMMON

Gary's First Town Hall

**LOCATION**

~~Gateway Park~~

STREET & NUMBER 4th Avenue and Pennsylvania Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Gary

\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Indiana

CODE

018

COUNTY

Lake

CODE

089

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: Abandoned

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Gary and Gary Historical Society (No address).  
*City of Gary per [signature]*

STREET & NUMBER

401 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Gary

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

Lake County Governmental Complex

CITY, TOWN

Crown Point

STATE

Indiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE

1972

\_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Indianapolis

STATE

Indiana

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>1909 &amp; 1956</u>

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Gary Land Company Building is located in Gateway Park north of downtown Gary and south of the Chicago, South Shore, and South Bend Railroad tracks. The one-and-a-half story building was constructed in 1906.

Of balloon frame construction, the structure is a rectangular mass with a cross gable roof with asphalt shingles. The building is about twenty feet in width and forty feet in length. There is a basement, and the first floor rests on a low foundation. A porch with a roof supported by four wooden pillars extends across the main (south) elevation. The main elevation features two bays on the first floor and second floor. The main entrance is in the left bay. The sides have three windows on the ground floor and a window in the gable end on the second floor. The north elevation has two bays over two bays. There is a rear entrance in the right ground floor bay. All of the doors and windows have been boarded up.

Originally, there was an outside stair to a door in the second story on the west side. When the structure was converted to a residence in 1909, the stair was removed and the door was converted to a window. This appears to be the only major alteration in the exterior of the building. It has not yet been possible to determine what interior alterations were made in 1909.

The Gary Land Company Building was one of the first structures erected on the sand dunes along Lake Michigan. The original site is located south of the South Shore Railroad and west of Broadway. In 1909 the structure was moved to allow for construction of a railway station. The building was located in a residential area four blocks south and two blocks west of the original site. In 1956, during the fifty year celebration of the City of Gary, the building was moved to its present location which is south of the railroad and three blocks east of the original site. This last move was undertaken by the Gary Historical Society so the building could be preserved and used as a museum. The third location is closer to the first site than was the second site. The open park area is also more like the original setting than the residential neighborhood.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1906, 1909, 1956

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gary Land Company Building is one of the most important structures in the history of Gary. No other building is more directly associated with the City's origins.

In 1906, Judge Elbert H. Gary, Chairman of the Board of Directors of United States Steel, chose a location in Northwest Indiana as the site of that corporation's main steel plant. In addition to the steel plant, United States Steel also planned to build a community to house its workers. In the early spring of that year, a vanguard of company personnel and workers arrived to begin transforming the land of sand dunes and scrub oaks into a modern community and steel producing center. That center was to be named Gary, Indiana, in honor of Judge Gary, the man who first envisioned its creation.

The Gary Land Company was formed by United States Steel as a real estate and city planning and engineering subsidiary to oversee development of the new community. The new subsidiary was entrusted with guiding the growth of Gary, Indiana, and supervising the construction of homes, streets, and sanitary facilities.

In April, 1906, the company built the first permanent structure -- a one-and-a-half story frame building to house its offices. The company occupied the second floor while the lower level was used as the City's first post office. The first Postmaster was Thomas E. Knotts, who became the first town board president and later the first mayor. Gary's first telephone was installed in the company offices.

On July 14, 1906, the Land Company Building was the site of an election to vote on incorporation as a town. Two weeks later, on July 28, the building was the site of the first town elections. When the new Town Board first met, the Land Office became the first Town Hall and served as such until October 12, 1907, when the town officials moved to other quarters. The first high school classes were held in the rear of the Land Company Office rooms.

By 1909 the construction of other buildings and the need for a railroad station at the Land Company Building site caused the company to sell the structure to Samuel Witwer, who moved it to 537 Jefferson Street. From 1909 to 1956 the building served as a private residence and later as a rooming house. In 1956 it was acquired by the Gary Historical Society and moved to its present location. From 1956 to 1966 it housed the Society's museum. Since 1966 it has been vacant.

Although the Gary Land Company Building has been moved a number of times, historically it is important to the City of Gary. In terms of its setting and physical location, the structure is now placed in an environment that is as close to the original setting as would be possible to find in downtown Gary. In addition to all of the City's "first events" associated with the structure, as the office of the Gary Land Company, it was the site where the City's planning and development were formulated and instituted. It also is a symbol of the role of the United States Steel Corporation in establishing Gary as a company town. In every sense of the word, the Gary Land Company Building was the birthplace of the City of Gary.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES** (Please see continuation sheet)

Gary Post-Tribune: June 4, 1931/<sup>P. 4</sup> September 1, 1943, P. 18; December 29, 1949, P.8; April 22, 1956, P.1; May 27, 1956, PP B12,B13, and C6; June 10, 1956, PP.A6 and B11; September 1, 1977 P.GCC5.  
 Howat, William Frederick. A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana, and the Calumet Region Lewis Publishing Company. Chicago & New York, 1915, PP 382-416  
 Moore, Powell A. The Calumet Region, Indiana's Last Frontier. Indiana Historical Bureau. Indianapolis, 1959, Indiana Historical Collections, Vol. XXXIX, PP 257-303.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/55th of an acre (800 square feet)

QUADRANGLE NAME Gary

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 6 | 4, 7, 2 | 2, 2, 0 | 4, 6 | 0, 5 | 6, 7, 0

B    |    |    |    |    |   

C    |    |    |    |    |   

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The Gary Land Company Building is located in Gary's Gateway Park and is bounded; On the north by the Chicago, South Shore and South Bend Railroad tracks; on the south by Fourth Avenue right-of-way line; on the east by the CSSSB Railroad tracks; on the west by the clubhouse of the Gary Lawn Bowling Club.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME/TITLE

Gus E. Gianikos, Assistant Executive Secretary to the Mayor

ORGANIZATION

Mayor's Office, City Hall, Room 204

DATE

November 23, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

401 Broadway

TELEPHONE

219/944-6551

CITY OR TOWN

Gary

STATE

Indiana 46402

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Joseph D. Cloud*

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 3/5/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Charles P. Starnes*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 ATTEST: *Julie B. Frankler*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 5-8-79

DATE 5-2-79

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**CONTINUATION SHEET**

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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Interview with Mr. Walter Pickart, Sr., Gary pioneer and former president of the Gary Historical Society.