

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Gateway Park
4th Avenue and Pennsylvania Street

CITY, TOWN

Gary

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Indiana

CODE

018

COUNTY

Lake

CODE

089

3 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

___COMMERCIAL

___EDUCATIONAL

___ENTERTAINMENT

___GOVERNMENT

___INDUSTRIAL

___MILITARY

___MUSEUM

___PARK

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___RELIGIOUS

___SCIENTIFIC

___TRANSPORTATION

☒ OTHER Abandoned

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Gary and Gary Historical Society (No address).

STREET & NUMBER
401 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Gary

VICINITY OF

STATE
Indiana

5 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

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☒ MOVED DATE 1909 & 1956

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"

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Please see continuation sheet)

Gary Post-Tribune: June 4, 1931/P⁴ 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 16 472220 4605670

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

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
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

TITLE Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

xm No 10-300a
(ev 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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