PREFACE

The *Dyer Town Code* is a codification of the general and permanent Ordinances and Resolutions of the Town enacted through Ordinance No. 94-25, passed December 13, 1994, and Resolution No. 94-1 adopted April 12, 1994.

Special Ordinances which relate to limited or special purposes, such as bond issues, specific zoning lot changes, salaries, budgets, appropriations, transfers and the levying of special assessments, are not included. Such special ordinances and resolutions are continued in full force and effect and are not affected by this codification.

The Ordinances contained in this *Code* were organized by subject matter classifications. Obsolete and conflicting provisions have been eliminated and the remaining laws, edited and revised where necessary. To facilitate usage, the *Code* Chapters are arranged by subject matter, and numbered consecutively. Each Chapter is preceded by a Chapter Table of Contents which designates the material included within the Chapter.

The Comparative Tables Chapter lists all ordinances and resolutions contained in this *Code* chronologically by ordinance number or resolution number, and identifies date of passage, the former ordinance Section or resolution Section and the new *Code* Section of this *Code*. Where appropriate, the Chapters have been subdivided into Articles, Divisions, and Sections. Catchlines describe the contents of each Section and appear in bold print as a further reference aid.

Footnotes are contained throughout the *Code* with reference to important State law citations. Historical information, where applicable, is at the end of each Section identifying in parenthesis the order or resolution number, section, and date of passage or adoption.

Hoosier Codification Service, Inc. wishes to express their appreciation for the cooperation and assistance of all of the Dyer Town Officials and employees during the preparation of the Dyer Codification, and especially: Maryann Brown, Clerk-Treasurer; Catherine A. Koschal, Council President; Edward Altgilbers, former Vice-President of the Town Council; Michael J. Kapitan, former Council Member; Jeffery Keilman, former Council Member; Dennis M. Hawrot, Vice-President; Steven M. Bodnar, Sr., Council Member; John N. Korfias, Council Member; Jacqueline A. Kennedy, Council Member; Glen Eberly, Town Council Coordinator; John Tweedle, former Town Attorney; John Sedia, Town Attorney and Rick Eberly, Zoning Administrator. General supervision in preparation of *Dyer Town Code* was by attorney Kathleen C. Farrand, Betty Lou Nimtz, Chief Editorial Assistant, Sherri Cochran, Productions and Graphics Assistant, Raelyn Harris, Senior Editorial Assistant, and Kimberly A. Clark, Editorial Assistant.

Hoosier Codification Service, Inc.
South Bend, Indiana
March 14, 1995
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We, the members of the Town Council, and Maryann Brown, Clerk-Treasurer, of the Town of Dyer, County of Lake, the State of Indiana, hereby certify that the general and permanent Ordinances and Resolutions of the Town of Dyer, Indiana, as revised, amended, restated, rearranged, renumbered, and recodified, and presented in 12 Chapters, are correct as printed, and constitute the Dyer Town Code.

Signed this __________ day of ____________________, 1995.

Dyer Town Council
By:

Catherine A. Koschal, Council President

Dennis M. Hawrot, Council Vice-President

Steven M. Bodnar, Sr., Council Member

John N. Korfias, Council Member

Jacqueline A. Kennedy, Council Member

Maryann Brown, Clerk-Treasurer

John Sedia, Town Attorney
Officials of the

Town of Dyer, Indiana

2012

Town Council
Jeff Dekker - President, Ward 2
Joseph Cinko - Vice President, Ward 1
Connee Trepton, Ward 3
Mary Tanis, Ward 4
Debbie Astor, Ward 5

Patricia Hawrot, Clerk-Treasurer
Richard Eberly, Zoning/Redevelopment Director
William Enslen, Town Attorney

Thad Stutler, Fire Chief
Today, the Town of Dyer, Indiana is located along the Illinois State line, fifteen miles south of Lake Michigan. The City of Chicago, Illinois is located thirty miles to the northwest. Today the town covers approximately 6 square miles.

In approximately 1830, the first permanent white settlers came to northwest Indiana, which was then occupied by Pottawatomie Indians under Chief Pokagan. By 1838 when the original State Line House was built facing the Sauk Trail, the trail named after the Sauk Indians, records begin to record the early beginnings of what is now known as Dyer, Indiana. The State Line House was used to house travelers going to Chicago, and became the overnight stopping place for Union soldiers during the Civil War.

The early settlers identified themselves as farmers from Prussia with a few carpenters, millers, saloon keepers shoemakers, masons and a doctor also being identified. In 1857, the Michigan Central Railroad established a station at Dyer, and built a grain elevator nearby. A few years later the Monon Railroad ran a north-south line through the town, and the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway, an east-west route, was built.

The original plat for the town is dated June 1, 1855, and has a notation which reads “No doubt a error in date of record”, but does not give a corrected date. The original plat shows Illinois, Indiana, Matteson, Calumet, Ross, Lake, East and West streets; the Joliet and Northern Indiana Railroads, and the State Line. A plat dated March 28, 1858 shows Hart and Joliet Streets.

John Streets built the first business in the area in 1856. Mr. Wolcott built the second store, with the third business being built by F. L. Keilman and Leonard Keilmann in 1858.

Aaron Norton Hart, a Philadelphia publisher helped shape the early history of the town. In 1857, he and his wife, Martha, whose maiden name was “Dyer” moved to the area and invested their money and their futures in the region. They had four children, three boys named West, Win and Malcolm, and one daughter named Flora. Mr. Hart purchased fifteen thousand acres of what was then described as “despised swamp lands” from the government for $0.75 to $1.25 per acre. Many German Catholic immigrants followed the Harts and helped settle the land, including the Pechels, Scheidts, Nondorfs, Hoffmans, Schultes, Berens, Millers and Hillbrichs.

In 1853, it is reported that the town was platted. District School No. 2 was established as part of the St. John Township School System. The first school was a log cabin, with it being replaced in 1862 with a school house being erected on Hart Street by John Sommer. The building cost $150 with an additional $15 being paid for the making of school benches. By 1875, they had outgrown the building and a one-story two-room building was built. Each room was heated by a large stove which burned wood or coal. From 1876 until 1898, two teachers taught in the Dyer School. The lower grades were taught by Catholic nuns and the upper grades by men. Both German and English were spoken and written.

Around 1860, the Harts built a fifteen room colonial style home which stood until a few years ago at 135 Joliet Street. He later built another home at Hartsdale on the Hart farm. At one point in time, Mr Hart owned fourteen yoke of oxen, two teams of horses, and three teams of mules. The road and ditch digging business for which he used these animals grew to such proportions that he had as many as forty men on his payroll at one time. Mr. Hart oversaw the
extensive ditch system to properly control the immense Cady Marsh and the large pond called Lake George. With the completion of the Hart Ditch, 20,000 acres of fertile land were made available for settlement and productivity in contrast to its former boggy condition.

In 1867, Reverend Jacob Schmitz moved to Dyer and became the first resident pastor. He purchased four acres where the first flame church building, St. Joseph’s, at the cost of $4,000 to $5,000, was erected. After the Christmas service held in 1902, the original church was destroyed by fire. Father Joseph Flach, who came to the area in 1878, along with the parishioners, began rebuilding the church. The present edifice was dedicated in 1903 and has a tower of over 100 feet. Father Flach retired in 1923.

A furniture store was established in 1867, and in 1870, a hardware store was established by Joseph Peschel. Medical doctors included Dr. Hoffman, A. Seidler and J. W. Johns. The population was listed at 400. By this date, five different railroads crossed Aaron Hart’s land, with each one being required to maintain adequate drainage along their right-of-ways. On January 12, 1883, Mr. Hart was killed while supervising the construction of a ditch when the left bank of a twelve foot high bank caved in without warning off a large bend in the Plum Creek.

In 1880, Mrs. F.N. Biggs and Mr. George Davis organized the Union Sunday School of Dyer. By 1891, the Dyer Union Protestant Church was established. It was the first Union Church in the county.

In 1887, the Franciscan Sisters of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Joliet, Illinois began one of their first missions in the area now known as Dyer. The first convent was built in 1901 simultaneously with the building of the first school. By 1905, they were instructing 87 pupils. Records reveal that St. Joseph’s has been a dominant factor in the development of Dyer, and “its imposing steeple reflects that dominance over the surrounding scene”.

By the early 1900’s, Jacob Schaeffer established a blacksmith shop, and there was a creamery on Fagen Street, a pickle and sauerkraut factory on Matteson Street, and a flour mill on Hart Street. The sauerkraut factory had eight tanks or vats, each holding 125 barrels of kraut. The brand name was “Hartman, Kallenberger and Gettler” and was sold throughout the middle west. The First National Bank was established in 1903 by John L. Keilman, William N. Gettler, John L. Kimmett, Henry L Keilman and August Stommel. There were also seven saloons and two grocery stores, with each saloon paying the town after its incorporation a fee of $150.00 for a town liquor license in addition to a state license for each. Each saloon had a watering trough for horses in the front. A nickel bought a schooner of beer, with a free lunch.

On January 24, 1910, citizens of Dyer decided by a vote of 57 to 35 to incorporate as a town under the laws of the State of Indiana. The Town of Dyer was formally incorporated on February 18, 1910. It helped address the housing needs in Lake County for its growing industrial region. The town was divided into three districts or wards so that a trustee might be elected from each of the wards. The original Wards were drawn as follows:

First Ward: All land within the Town of Dyer lying west of Hart Street.


Third Ward: All land within Dyer north of the Lincoln Highway and East of Hart Street.
The first Board of Trustees for the Town of Dyer consisted of Michael Fagen from the First Ward, Henry L. Keilman from the Second Ward, and Henry J. Schulte from the Third Ward. Their salaries, as established by ordinance, were $30.00 annually, payable each quarter. William N. Gettler was the first Clerk-Treasurer of the Town of Dyer and was paid $60.00 annually. He held this position until 1939. Eugene Stech was appointed Dyer's first Town Marshal and received a monthly salary of $25.00.

In 1915, the Municipal Water Utility was established, and the Fire Department was established shortly thereafter. The original Volunteer Fire Department consisted of Fire Chief John Burge, Assistant Chief Andrew Peschel, Ladder Captain Frank Beiriger, Hose Captain Leo Hoffman, and Secretary-Treasurer Nicholas Austgen. Since there was no place to house the fire hose carts, Town Marshal Eugene Stech donated the use of his barn, and Joseph Schaller donated the use of his horse shed behind the Dyer Hotel for storage of the ladder wagon. The first fire station was built in 1916 for $125.00.

The first Town Meeting was held on March 10, 1919 in a store building owned by Henry Schulte at 229 Joliet Street. The owner was paid $2.00 rent for each meeting held at his store.

National attention was focused on Dyer in the early 1920's when an experimental model highway was constructed stretching three miles from Dyer to Schererville. It was called the “Ideal Section of the Lincoln Highway”. This experiment, financed by the federal, state and county governments and United States Rubber Company, set the standards for highway construction throughout the United States.

Population of the town has steadily increased. In 1893, it is reported that the Town had a population of 250 people. In 1910, it had 500; and by 1950, it reached 1,556. With the development of the Plum Creek Addition and the Plum Creek Annexation, growth of the town by 1960 reached 3,993. The Schilling's Subdivision brought the count to 4,496 in a special census in 1968, and by 1970, there were 4,778 residents. By 1975, there were 7,396; the 1980 census the Town listed 9,555, and as of the 1990 census, there were 10,923 Dyer residents. The Town Council also changed from a three-member Board to a five-member Town Council.

Mail was delivered to homes in the Town of Dyer for the first time in October of 1954.

In 1971, the Dyer Park and Recreation Board was established. It oversees the Elmer Miller Park and the Northgate Park, with the latter being dedicated in 1974. The Dyer Park District is comprised of twelve parks totaling 76.5 acres.

The Town of Dyer is governed by a five-member Town Council, with each member serving four-year terms. A full-time Clerk-Treasurer, elected each four years, is in charge of the fiscal division of the Town. Additionally, there is a Metropolitan Police Commission, an Economic Development Commission, the Park and Recreation Board, a Stormwater Management Board, a Waterworks Board of Directors, a Board of Sanitary Commissioners, and a Redevelopment Commission. A 30-member Volunteer Fire Department operates from two stations in the town. Nine of the volunteers are certified Emergency Medical Technicians. The Dyer Police Department employs 17 full-time officers and has radio dispatch operators and clerks.
Our Lady of Mercy Hospital employs 975 people for its 265-bed facility. School aged children attend the Lake Central Schools for public education, kindergarten through 12th grade. It employs 157 individuals. The third largest employer is the Meridian Nursing Center with 152 employees, and Regency Place and Hadady Corporation each employ 150 individuals. The Dyer Public Library is a branch of the Lake County Public Library system.

Because of the hard-working civic and public officials, the Town of Dyer, Indiana continues to be a Town in step with the future which remembers its “echoes of the past”.

Hoosier Codification Service, Inc. wishes to thank Mr. Glen Eberly for his assistance in the preparation of this “Brief History of Dyer, Indiana”. It would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the use of the Town of Dyer Bicentennial Book - Our Town 1838-1976 in the preparation of this material as well as information supplied by the Dyer Chamber of Commerce.