



WINTER EDITION 2024

[www.GreenGardenTownship.com](http://www.GreenGardenTownship.com)



## *A Message from the Supervisor Don Murday*

Best laid plans. I had hoped that we would send a newsletter twice annually, but missed that mark last year. As this is the Winter 2024 edition, we will strive to send out a newsletter this summer as well. While this is a good method of communication, we also encourage residents to visit our website which is updated continually throughout the year. We have much information to share with the Community.

In this Winter Edition 2024, I asked certain people to provide information that is pertinent and relevant to the residents of Green Garden Township. The tax levy is a topic that is often convoluted and confusing. I asked Bill Wagner, one of our Trustees, to prepare an article explaining the levying process for Green Garden Township. Mark Sarkisian, Chair of the Green Garden Planning Commission, prepared a piece on the workings of the Planning Commission. Mark and his Commission have been very active in addressing potential developments in Green Garden, including proposed solar farms. We are also in the midst of a proposed Town Hall renovation, and the Town Hall Renovation Committee, chaired by Trustee Cheri Newton, drafted an article to further educate the residents on that initiative. Jane Bushong, our Township Assessor, has also provided much needed information. In the future, our Township attorney will contribute thoughts on legal issues pertinent to the residents of the Township. It will be entitled "Counsel's Corner".

### **I do want to take a moment to share with all of you some things that the Township has been doing for the residents:**

- The Township Planning Commission and Board of Trustees successfully defeated two proposed applications for solar farms in Green Garden Township. One of the proposed sites was on Stuenkel Road, while the other was situated near Kuse Road. Many thanks to the efforts of the Planning Commission and concerned residents who attended all of the hearings at the County level. These two proposed sites were not consistent with the Green Garden Township Comprehensive Plan, and were defeated accordingly. Please note that the Township will continue to see these types of applications, and we will address accordingly.
- The Township reached out to the new management of the Green Garden Country Club to help address the need to remove dead trees along 88th Avenue.
- The Township continues to reach out to neighboring communities to address areas of common interest (e.g., land use).
- The Township has instituted a Will Ride Program for seniors and encourages its use. Visit our website.
- The Township is reaching out to all appropriate authorities to explore potential options with regard to water issues plaguing the Township.
- The Township continues to develop policies and procedures to better govern.

This is just a small sample of what the Township is addressing on behalf of the residents. I invite all of you to join us at the Township meetings, held on the second Monday of every month at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall. If you want to know what is going on in the Township, please attend or call me at (708) 710-0504. The information shared on social media may not be entirely accurate. Come to the source.

# Planning & Zoning Commission

## DID YOU KNOW?

Green Garden Planning & Zoning Commission consists of 5 Members, including one Chair Person.

Our Commission Members are appointed and must be voted in by the GG Board.

We meet monthly; when there are applicant cases to review, or other special circumstances.

The Commission Members volunteer their time and effort for the greater good of our community.

Our primary responsibilities are to review and decide on proposed Zoning Map Amendments and Special Use Permits (SUP).

We abide by our Comprehensive Plan.

We adhere to the Will County and State of IL laws and ordinances.

### GG Planning Commission meeting details:

- Meet monthly; when there are applicant cases to review
- Meeting notices are published 2 weeks prior to the date, in the Vedette and on our website ([greengardentownship.com](http://greengardentownship.com))
- Meetings are open to the public so you can hear the case, and we can hear you
- Meetings are structured as follows:
  - Open at 7pm
  - Pledge of Allegiance
  - Agenda overview
  - Applicant presents his/her case
  - GG Committee Members discuss and ask Applicant questions
  - Open to public for comments questions
  - GG Commission Members take vote
  - Repeat for next case
  - Meeting adjourns

Our Commission then provides a written summary to Green Garden Board (Supervisor and 4 Trustees).

GG Board then review our recommendation at the next GG Board monthly meeting, where they vote to accept or reject the GG Planning/Zoning Commission recommendation.

GG Board then provides a written summary to Will County Planning / Zoning as to our position for each application.

# What is the Levy?

The tax levy is the paperwork we file with the County that, coupled with property assessments, sets our Green Garden property tax rates for the next year. By the end of December, we need to determine how much we will need to operate our Township for the next fiscal year (April 1st through March 31). The amount we levy is based on recurring expenditures from previous years, any planned projects, and an estimate of new tax revenues generated from new properties entering our tax rolls.

Illinois collar counties, including Will County, are subject to the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) which limits the growth of taxing districts to the lesser of 5% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the preceding tax year. So if inflation has raised our costs for goods and services for things like road materials by 7%, we will only raise our levy amount by, at most, 5%. Similarly, if inflation had been only 3%, then the most we will raise our levy amount is 3% (the lower of CPI or 5%). The law was enacted to prevent rapid growth of our property taxes and as such does not apply to new properties entering our tax rolls.

Because the Township needs to finalize and submit our Levy by year end, before the County Supervisor of Assessments has finalized Assessed Values and New Property Values, we need to use estimates for our Levy. We tend to estimate high only because we don't yet know specifically how much new property is going to impact the overall Assessed values. Even though we estimate high, PTELL is going to adjust our levy to exactly that which we are allowed. Also, because we estimate high, we are bound by law to publish a "Notice of Proposed Property Tax Increase." The prescribed wording of the notice is confusing. We are not increasing our tax rates at all. We are increasing our levy to include new properties added to the tax rolls.

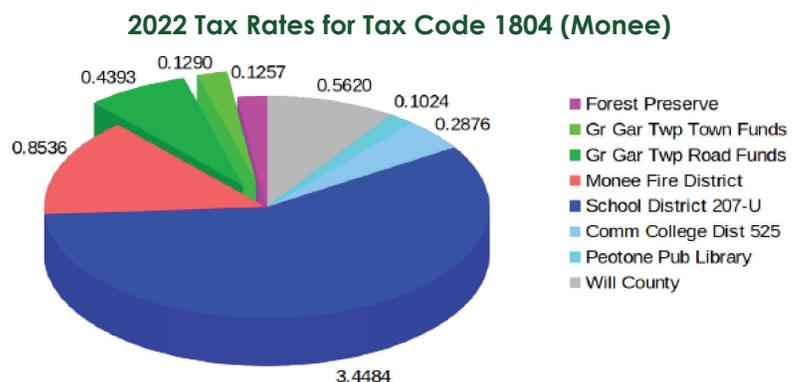
To determine our tax rate, we take our LevyAmounts (the amounts we need to operate the Township) and divide by the sum total of all AssessedValues in Green Garden. The AssessedValues used are after applying state and county equalization factors and any applicable exemptions. The result is also known as the limiting rate.

### The formula is:

**LevyAmount / AssessedValue = TaxRate aka. LimitingRate**

- For 2023 Town Funds this was: 254,801 / 197,897,631 = 0.1288
- For 2023 Road Funds this was: 867,868 / 197,897,631 = 0.4385

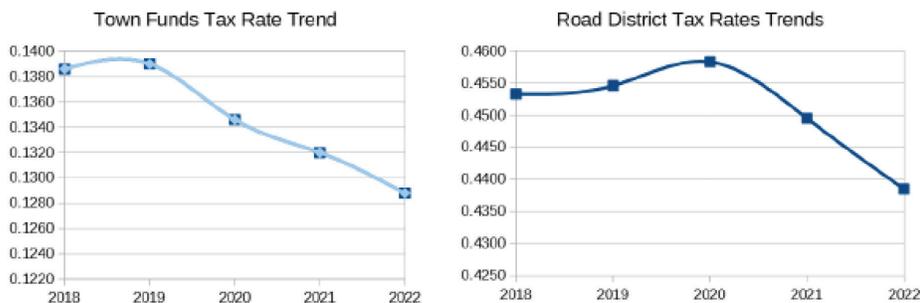
Just to confuse things a little more, Public Act 102-0519 adds a small amount to the limiting rate. Each governmental body determines its own TaxRate. For Green Garden there are two rates, the Town Funds (GR GAR TWP TOWN FUNDS) and the Road District Funds (GR GAR TWP ROAD FUNDS). The following chart is an illustration of the tax rates for 2022. Your breakdown may differ depending on which school, park, fire district, or village you live in. But in all cases, the Township Road and Town funds are the same.



### How does the levy affect your property tax bill?

Our property tax bills are the product of our AssessedValue x TaxRates = TaxBill. Again, the AssessedValue used is after equalization factors and exemptions are applied. The TaxRate for each individual taxing body is determined by their levy.

What makes your property tax bill go up? Since our tax bills are the product of AssessedValue x TaxRates, if your tax bill went up, it is because either your AssessedValue went up or the TaxRate went up or both. The following charts show that the trend of our two Green Garden tax rates has been going down.



So, once our levy has determined the tax rate which then establishes how much the Township is expected to receive in tax dollars, the next step is to set the budgets. Where the levy identifies, in broad terms, how the Township intends to spend tax dollars, the budget is much more specific. Like the levy, budget amounts are based on annual recurring expenses, specific projects and anticipated administrative expenses.

The general philosophy with the levies and the budgets is to continue to maintain and improve Township services and infrastructure without raising the tax rate. It is this philosophy that evolved us from when all of our roads were gravel to tar and chip roads and now moving to paved roads all while keeping our tax rate low. Interested in how our tax rate compares to other Townships in Will County? Take a look at: [www.willcountyclerk.gov/taxes-2/tax-extensions/tax-codes-and-rates-by-township](http://www.willcountyclerk.gov/taxes-2/tax-extensions/tax-codes-and-rates-by-township).

## 2024 Assessor Updates

### Exemptions save money! Do you have all of the possible exemptions which could save you money on your tax bill?

If you are not sure which exemptions you may qualify for, please visit the Will County Supervisor of Assessments website at [www.willcountysoa.com](http://www.willcountysoa.com). Review all possible exemptions, requirements and instructions. You can also check your tax bill (mailed via USPS or viewed on-line on the [www.willcountysoa.com](http://www.willcountysoa.com) website to verify that you are receiving all of the exemptions for which you qualify.

### Are you or do you know anyone 65 years (in 2024) or older?

If so, check your tax bill or contact the Assessor's office to ensure we have applied the Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption.

**GOOD NEWS!!** Starting in 2024 (applied to your 2023 assessment which is payable in 2024), there are new exemption increases which will help reduce your overall tax bill.

General Homestead Exemption was 6000 – now 8000 \*\*

Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption was 5000 – now 8000 \*\*

\*\* You do NOT need to apply for these increases, they will automatically be applied to your upcoming tax bills.

Be sure to stay current on assessment and taxing updates by visiting the Green Garden Township Assessor Bushong assessment information on the Green Garden Township website.

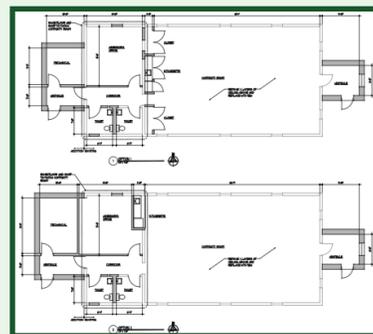
## Town Hall Renovations

The Town Hall Renovation Committee, chaired by Trustee Cherie Newton, has been very active recently. After receiving an initial \$58,000 grant from the federal government, Green Garden Township applied for, and was granted, an additional \$500,000 in federal monies to further this endeavor. The Township retained the services of TRIA Architecture, Inc. to assist in the planning and actual renovation of our Town Hall.

To begin the process, TRIA Architecture retained a company to conduct a Boundary and Topographic Survey of the Town Hall and surrounding property. Thereafter, TRIA Architecture conducted an Existing Facility Report, inspecting the current condition of the structure and its plumbing, heating and electrical systems. At that point, a Needs Assessment was conducted to determine what would be required for the optimal future use of the Town Hall.

Upon completion of the Needs Assessment, TRIA Architecture prepared preliminary drawings for the renovated Town Hall. In addition to creating a space for an Assessor's office, the plans also provide for renovating the current bathrooms, making the Town Hall ADA compliant and establishing a new parking area. Lastly, the plans contemplate a Green Garden Township electronic monument sign with accompanying lit flagpole.

While all of these studies/assessments/plans are available on the Green Garden Township website, below is the conceptual drawings for the Town Hall.



As you can imagine, we are very excited to begin this endeavor. Along those lines, the Township is continuing to seek additional funding from the federal and state governmental units in order to complete this renovation as quickly as possible.



**GREEN GARDEN TOWNSHIP**

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## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

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