

Appendix A – Green Garden Township Future Land Use Map

SECTION 1:

INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Map outlines a strategic framework for how land within Green Garden Township is intended to develop and be preserved over time. It assigns general land use categories to each parcel, reflecting the Township’s long-term vision. As an extension of the Township’s *Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, it offers guidance for development review, zoning amendments, and land use decisions.

Purpose of the Map

This Map complements the broader goals, policies, and actions outlined in the Township’s *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* by providing more detailed, parcel-specific guidance. It serves as a tool for property owners, residents, and elected and appointed officials by identifying desired land use patterns and general development priorities. The Future Land Use categories are intentionally broad to allow flexibility for context-sensitive, compatible uses aligned with the Township’s rural character.

What is a Future Land Use Map?

The Future Land Use Map provides a general framework for how land in Green Garden Township is intended to develop over time. Each parcel in the Township has been assigned one of seven general land use categories. These categories guide development review, coordination with Will County on land use decisions, and inform future zoning amendments necessary to implement the Future Land Use Map’s recommendations.

While these categories reflect the typical character and land use pattern envisioned for Green Garden Township, they are intentionally broad to allow for compatible and supporting uses, while allowing flexibility to accommodate innovative, context-sensitive approaches aligned with the Township’s rural character and long-term vision. This Map should be used in tandem with the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* to ensure that land use decisions reflect the Township’s goals.

Township Authority

In accordance with Illinois Statutes Chapter 60, Section 1/105-35, Green Garden Township has the authority to establish a Township Plan Commission to help guide land use and development within its boundaries. The five-member Commission is appointed by the Township Supervisor and plays a key advisory role in shaping the future of the Township. Its responsibilities include preparing and recommending a Future Land Use Map, reviewing development proposals, and advising on land use policies that reflect the character and long-term goals of Green Garden. The Plan Commission may also provide recommendations to Will County on zoning matters, such as special use permit approvals and map amendments, to help ensure that future growth aligns with the vision and values of the community.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Building on guidance from the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, Green Garden Township encourages ongoing coordination with nearby municipalities. To help preserve the Township's distinct rural character and support compact, thoughtful growth, the Map encourages neighboring communities to gradually transition development intensity near their shared boundaries and avoid annexing current Township property into municipalities.

History of Planning

Green Garden Township has demonstrated a proactive approach to land use planning, driven by its strong local identity and commitment to preserving its rural character. In 1989, in response to growing interest in guiding future development, the Township Board established the Special Committee for Planning, which conducted a community-wide survey to understand residents' priorities. The survey results informed a set of goals, policies, and a land use map, which were adopted unanimously as the first *Green Garden Township Land Use Plan* in October 1989.

As development pressures intensified, the Township created a *Comprehensive Land Use Plan*. This advisory plan became the primary document for communicating local concerns to Will County and surrounding municipalities. Over the years, the Township has issued updates to the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* to reflect regional growth and evolving community needs. Both the Plan emphasizes preserving the Township's rural and equestrian character and function in alignment with the *Will County Land Resource Management Plan*. While Will County holds the legal authority to make zoning and design decisions in unincorporated areas, county leaders encourage townships to share their goals and concerns. Green Garden Township uses its *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* to clearly express these local priorities within that broader framework.

Community Outreach

Community engagement plays an essential role in land use planning. Green Garden Township prioritized an inclusive and accessible outreach process to gather input from a broad range of community members including residents, business owners, Township staff, the Plan Commission, and property owners.

To reach as many people as possible, the Township hosted an in-person event and offered online engagement opportunities. The feedback gathered throughout the outreach process helped shape a Future Land Use Map that is responsive, equitable, and reflective of Green Garden's unique character and needs.

Outreach Opportunities

Green Garden Township offered a range of outreach opportunities to engage the community throughout the planning process. In-person workshops, interviews, and focus groups invited participants to identify key issues, suggest specific projects or actions, and share their vision for the future of Green Garden Township. To broaden participation, an online questionnaire provided a self-guided option for stakeholders to share input at their convenience. All input directly informed the development of the Future Land Use Map.

Community Open House

The Community Open House served as the primary outreach event for the Future Land Use Map. Over 70 community members attended the Open House, which featured a series of interactive exercises designed to gather input on community issues, opportunities, key strengths, and assets. Residents and stakeholders were invited to share their vision for the future of Green Garden Township through a variety of activities. These included interactive boards where participants could provide feedback on existing land use by highlighting areas they felt should remain the same or change. Additional boards were provided to share ideas, concerns, and goals for the Township's future.

Key Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

The Plan Commission invited key individuals with unique perspectives and experiences in Green Garden to participate in interviews as part of the planning process. These interviews were conducted in small groups, using a conversational format guided by a series of questions about the community. These interviews provided valuable firsthand insight into local issues, opportunities, and priorities.

Community Questionnaire

To supplement in-person events, the Township developed an online questionnaire that allowed individuals to participate conveniently. This increased accessibility and helped capture input from those unable or unlikely to attend the Community Open House. To promote the questionnaire, the Township mailed a postcard to residents encouraging participation. A total of 215 people responded. The online questionnaire featured several multiple-choice and open-ended questions regarding how various land uses might impact the community, their vision for the future of the Township, and issues and opportunities.

Township Board Working Meeting

The Green Garden Township Planning and Zoning Committee reviewed the draft Future Land Use Plan with the Township Board at their bi-weekly Workshop Meeting on August 25, 2025.

Planning and Zoning Committee Meeting

The Planning and Zoning Committee review the updated draft Future Land Use Plan at the October monthly meeting. During this meeting, the Committee went through the plan page by page to discuss Plan content in detail. Residents in attendance were allowed to provide their input and comments.

Draft Future Land Use Plan Open House

An Open House was held on December 1, 2025 at the Frankfort Fire District Training Center (24420 La Grange Road). The purpose of the Open House was to allow residents to review the Plans, ask questions, and provide comments.

Planning and Zoning Committee Public Hearing

Following the Open House, the Planning and Zoning Committee held a Public Hearing on December 1, 2025. During the meeting, the Committee reviewed the Plan, discussed minor changes, allowed for additional public comments, and voted to approve the final Future Land Use Plan.

SECTION 2:

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The vision statement presents an aspirational narrative rooted in community and stakeholder input, reflecting the collective desires for the Green Garden Township’s ideal future. The Vision Statement serves as an inspiring depiction of what the Township can achieve through implementation of the goals and policies set forth in its *Comprehensive Land Use Plan*.

The Future Land Use Map illustrates how land within the Township should be used and developed over time. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the Township’s *Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, which establishes the goals and policies that support the community’s long-term aspirations. Together, these documents provide guidance for decision-making and help ensure that future growth aligns with the Township’s values and priorities.

Vision Statement

Green Garden Township will remain a proud, distinct, and desirable rural community in Will County, defined by its expansive open landscapes, agricultural roots, and peaceful way of life. Residents will continue to choose Green Garden for its large residential lots, natural beauty, and country character, where homes sit among farmland, wildlife is abundant, and neighbors enjoy privacy without isolation. The Township’s identity as a place for quality homes, equestrian uses, and hobby farming will be preserved and celebrated, providing a safe, sustainable, and unique quality of life that stands apart from surrounding suburban areas.

Future growth in Green Garden will be intentional, limited, and aligned with the values of those who live here. New development will support the Township’s rural vision by preserving natural resources and concentrating limited commercial and industrial activity on designated corridors such as IL Route 45 and Monee-Manhattan Road. Small, community-oriented, neighborhood-scale commercial areas with locally owned shops, trails, and gathering spaces may offer additional opportunities for residents to connect, while ensuring the Township remains low-traffic, low-crime, and high in natural and scenic value. Through proactive planning, community input, and steadfast stewardship of its land, Green Garden Township will remain rural by design, welcoming families, farmers, and nature-lovers who seek a quieter, simpler, and enduring way of life.

SECTION 3:

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map provides a high-level framework to guide the type and location of future land uses throughout Green Garden Township. The Future Land Use Map is intended to be used alongside the *Comprehensive Land Use Plan* to support the development of the Township’s shared vision for the future. This Map serves as a tool for directing preservation, growth, and development in a way that reinforces the Township’s distinct identity. It supports a balanced and intentional approach that protects open landscapes, sustains agricultural uses, and preserves the character that defines life in Green Garden Township.

Land Use Designations

Parcels within the community have been assigned one of seven land use designations, reflecting the full range of Green Garden Township’s land use types. These designations serve as a policy foundation to guide future development decisions, inform county-level reviews and approvals, and support coordinated discussions about growth, infrastructure, and rural preservation. While the Township does not have its own zoning authority, the Future Land Use Map offers a clear framework to influence future zoning updates and development proposals, helping ensure that change aligns with the community’s vision and long-term goals.

1. Agriculture/Rural

Agricultural/rural land uses include properties used for agricultural production, such as crop cultivation, dairy operations, and raising livestock. This category allows for farmsteads, very low-density residential use on lots larger than five acres, limited agribusiness, farm support services, and other uses closely tied to modern agricultural practices. The agriculture/rural category can be found throughout the Township to preserve its rural and agricultural character.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Preservation of Rural Character (Page 7)
- Encroaching Development Intensity and Leapfrog Development (Page 8)
- Agricultural/Agribusiness (Page 21)

2. Rural Residential

Rural residential land use consists of single-family detached homes on moderately sized individual lots ranging from two to five acres. These uses are often found adjacent to existing agricultural and rural areas and sometimes includes scattered estate homes or land used for agricultural and equestrian activities. Future rural residential development should align with the patterns of existing neighborhoods and integrate natural features, protect open space, and support low-impact development practices that help manage stormwater, reduce environmental disturbance, and maintain the Township's rural character.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Preservation of Rural Character (Page 7)
- Encroaching Development Intensity and Leapfrog Development (Page 8)
- Water and Sewer Provisioning (Page 14)
- Residential Conservation Design Policy (Page 19)

3. Neighborhood Residential

Neighborhood Residential land uses consist of moderate-density areas with single-family detached homes on smaller lots, typically ranging from half an acre to two acres, which are smaller than those found in Rural Residential areas. These neighborhoods are typically served by public infrastructure such as water and sewer systems and are designed with a more defined street network. Neighborhood residential areas may include a variety of housing types, such as small-scale attached homes like townhomes and duplexes, as well as community amenities like parks, schools, or neighborhood-scale commercial uses. The Future Land Use Map identifies the Township's existing residential neighborhoods and limits the expansion of new neighborhoods to areas along arterial roadways such as Monee-Manhattan Road, Center Road, Bruns Road, and Harlem Avenue. As the Township grows, new residential development should reflect the patterns of existing neighborhoods.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Encroaching Development Intensity and Leapfrog Development (Page 8)
- Internet Access (Page 14)
- Water and Sewer Provisioning (Page 14)
- Preservation of Rural Character (Page 16)
- Residential Access Limitation (Page 18)
- Residential Conservation Design Policy (Page 19)

4. Commercial

Commercial land uses include service businesses, restaurants, entertainment, small-scale offices, and other similar uses. Commercial areas and nodes should be of a scale and intensity that is generally compatible with adjacent and nearby residential uses. Commercial nodes are concentrated hubs of activity, typically located at major intersections or along key roads, designed for easy access and to serve local to regional needs.

Primary Commercial Nodes

Primary commercial nodes are larger concentrated areas of commercial activity that will serve the local or regional market. Appropriate locations for primary commercial nodes are along LaGrange Road at the intersections of Steger Road, Monee-Manhattan Road, and Pauling Road.

Secondary Commercial Nodes

Secondary commercial nodes will provide smaller scale offering a mix of goods and services, including daily needs like grocery stores, restaurants, and personal care services. These should be located at the intersections of Harlem Avenue and Stuenkel Road and Monee-Manhattan Road and Center Road.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Transitional Model of Development (Page 9)
- Buffer Zones (Page 16)
- Commercial Development (Page 20)

5. Industrial

The Industrial land use designation includes areas intended for low-intensity manufacturing, processing, storage, commercial services, and the distribution of goods and materials. New industrial development should be directed along the IL Route 45 corridor between W. Steger Road and W. Offner Road. These uses can accommodate standalone facilities or clusters of buildings. They are intended to offer flexibility to attract diverse businesses and expand the Township's local employment base and tax revenue. Development in this area should be carefully designed to minimize impacts on nearby rural and residential uses while supporting the Township's long-term economic goals.

Will County Intensive Industrial (I3) District

Will County's Intensive Industrial (I3) District is intended to accommodate high-impact uses in locations where they will not negatively affect residential areas. Currently, no properties within the Township are zoned I3. While uses permitted in the County's Limited Industrial (I1) and General Industrial (I2) Districts may be appropriate in select locations, rezoning to I3 is not recommended.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Transitional Model of Development (Page 9)
- Buffer Zones (Page 16)
- Industrial Development (Page 20)

Solar Facilities and State Regulation

Green Garden Township does not view large-scale solar facilities as a desirable use. Community members expressed concerns regarding the potential impacts of solar facilities on farmland, scenic views, and the Township’s overall rural character. Public Act 102-1123 limits the ability of counties and townships to prohibit or restrict wind and solar energy projects. This plan provides guidance on the preferred siting, design, and location of any future solar facilities within the Township.

Preferred Design and Location

If large-scale solar development occurs in the Township, it should be strategically located and designed to minimize land use conflicts and environmental impacts. Solar facilities should be located in industrial areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map and discouraged near agricultural, rural, and residential areas. In particular, highly productive farmland is an important resource and should be protected; solar development in these areas should be avoided.

When possible, rooftop solar on commercial or industrial buildings is preferred over ground-mounted facilities.

Coordination with Will County

Given the Township’s limited authority, coordination with Will County is essential to ensure solar development aligns with the community’s goals. Green Garden Township encourages Will County to develop and adopt comprehensive guidelines for low-impact, well-designed solar installations, and to engage local stakeholders early in the review process to promote transparency.

Case Studies

As Green Garden Township considers how to respond to state regulations on solar energy development, it is important to understand best practices. The following case studies highlight national and professional guidance on low-impact solar development and planning approaches that balance potential renewable energy projects with community values.

Department of Energy InSPIRE Project – Short for Innovative Solar Practices Integrated with Rural Environments, InSPIRE is a national initiative led by the U.S. Department of Energy that provides actionable data on agrivoltaics and low-impact solar development, with an emphasis on region-specific benefits and trade-offs. The program focuses on improving the design and implementation of solar energy systems that support both ecosystems and agriculture. It explores dual-use land practices that allow farming beneath or between solar panels, develops best practices for protecting biodiversity and soil health near installations, and offers guidance on stakeholder engagement throughout the solar development process.

The American Planning Association Solar@Scale Government Guidebook – Solar@Scale is a partnership between the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the American Planning Association (APA) that offers strategies for planning and other local officials through eight modules covering planning, zoning, and decision-making, while emphasizing public participation to garner successful solar project implementation.

Agrioltaics –

Agrioltaics, also known as dual-use solar, combines solar panel systems with agricultural practices. This approach co-locates solar infrastructure with crop cultivation or livestock production, either beneath or adjacent to solar panels. Unlike traditional solar development, agrioltaics can support agricultural land use while preserving the area’s character.

6. Parks and Open Space

The Parks and Open Space land use designation includes areas managed by the Forest Preserve District of Will County and privately owned land used for recreation or conservation. These areas include open landscapes, wildlife habitats, natural features, and the Green Garden Country Club. While most open space is currently passive in nature, such as trails, natural areas, and habitat restoration sites, future growth should consider opportunities to expand access to parks, trails, and open space for residents. This designation supports the long-term conservation of land while maintaining the Township's rural setting.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

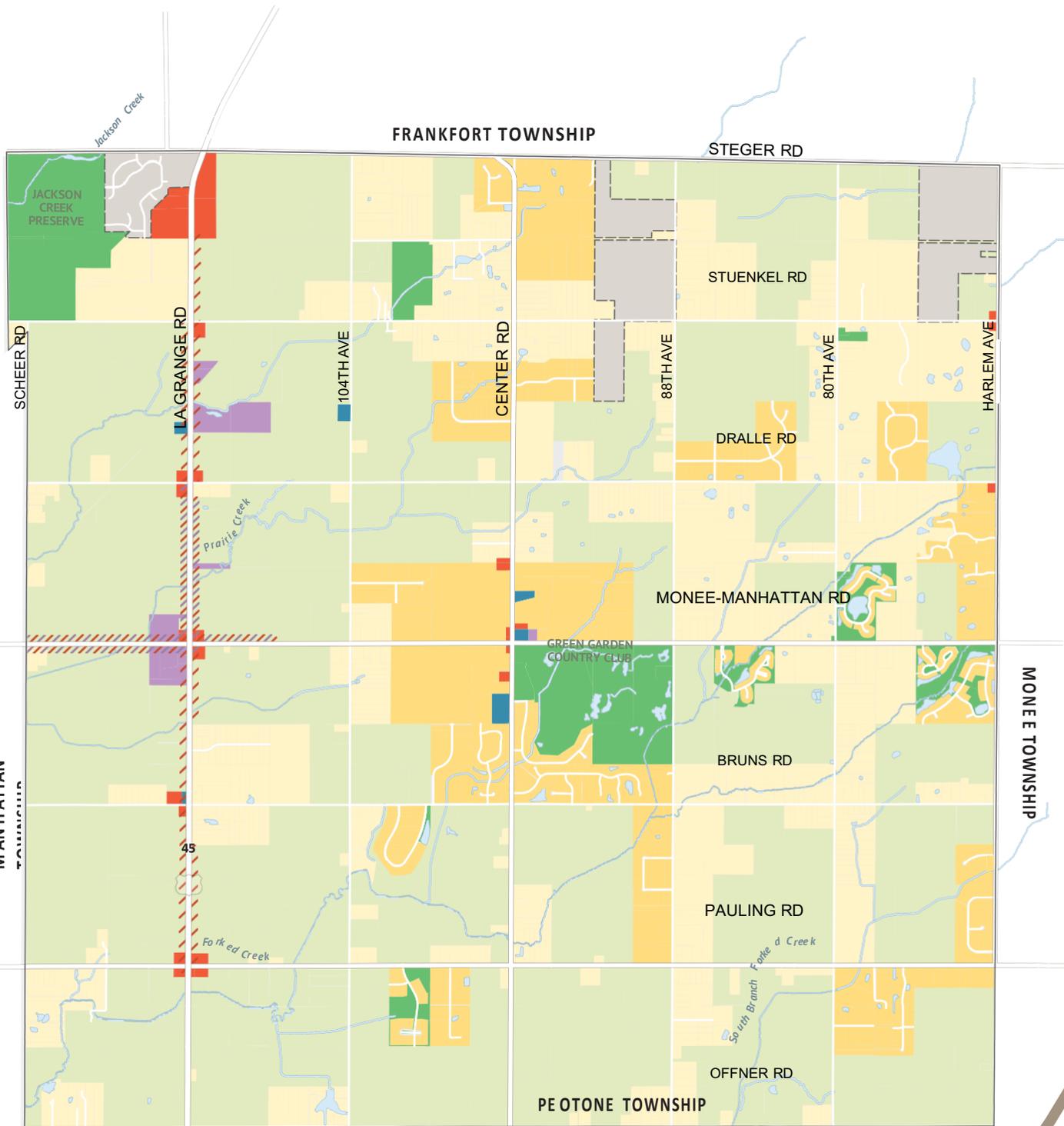
- Open/Green Space (Page 10)
- Trails within the Township (Page 10)
- Parks (Page 11)
- Environmental Impact (Page 12)
- Residential Conservation Design Policy (Page 19)

7. Public and Semi-Public

Public and semi-public land uses such as the Green Garden Township Hall, fire stations, public schools, and places of worship are established public and semi-public land uses. These land uses provide essential facilities and services to the community and are dispersed throughout the Township. Existing uses are likely to remain; new public and semi-public uses should be added in developing areas as the Township grows.

Related Comprehensive Land Use Plan Goals and Policies

- Historic Preservation (Page 8)
- Institutional Uses (Page 14 and 15)



FUTURE LAND USE

- Agriculture/Rural
- Rural Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks and Open Space

- Public and Semi-public
- Major Roadway Frontage Appropriate for Commercial
- Major Roadway Frontage Appropriate for Industrial
- Municipalities



Green Garden Township
Future Land Use Map