Green Garden Township
Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Introduction

Green Garden Township is unique in having one of the strongest identities among townships in Illinois. In response to widespread concerns about development around the turn of the millennium, the Township took the unprecedented step of creating its own Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This original plan, written and issued in 2002, has become the guiding document by which Township concerns about land use and development have been voiced. The plan, though advisory in its power, assists Will County and surrounding municipalities including Frankfort, University Park, Monee, Peotone, and Manhattan, Illinois, in recognizing the wishes and concerns of Township residents. This 2017 document represents the second comprehensive plan issued by the township. It builds upon the progress made by the groundbreaking 2002 plan, and incorporates changes related to recent regional developments and current resident sentiments.

In formulating the Plan, the Township has attempted to incorporate the desires of the residents of the Township with a vision for its future in a manner which maintains the area’s rural historical characteristics while recognizing its needs and the reality of development pressure and infrastructure demands. The Township Plan is intended to be a document which will serve the Township into the future and, as such, is intended to be flexible and dynamic, rather than inflexible and static, all while serving the objectives and goals set forth herein.

The following Comprehensive Land Use Plan is the result of the efforts of the Green Garden Township Planning Commission (the Plan Commission), the Green Garden Township Board, and the electors of Green Garden Township, with help from Michael Fitz, master’s student in Urban/Regional Planning at the University of Illinois, supervised by Professor Mary Edwards, AICP. The basis for much of this plan came from the 2016 Survey of the Green Garden Township Electors (Appendix D). Much of the structure and organization of this document was adopted from comparable Comprehensive Plan documents, recommendations from the Will County Land Use Department, and frequently required elements of municipal plans by nearby states.

The township reserves the right to amend and revise this Township Plan as it deems appropriate, including following a revision or amendment to the County’s plan, or any land use plan adopted by the County as a replacement for the plan.

1 The Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Campton Township, Kane County [circa August 1, 2000]
2 The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Westport, Wisconsin [circa April 2004]
3 Green Garden Township Plan Update Powerpoint – Will County [March 9, 2015]

Updated: February 2017
# Table of Contents

- **Introduction** - 2
- **Table of Contents** - 3
- **Vision Statement** - 4
- **Demographics** - 4
- **Intergovernmental Cooperation** - 5
  - Will County Land Resource Management Plan
  - Cities
- **Organization** - 6
- **Issues and Opportunities** - 6
  - Identity and Governance
  - Township Center
- **Economic Development** - 7
- **Overall Land Use** - 7
  - Rural Character/preservation - 7
    - Preservation of rural character - 7
    - Historic Preservation - 8
  - Encroaching development intensity and leapfrog development - 8
  - Transitional Model of development - 8
  - Other General Policies - 9
- **Environment and Open Space** - 9
  - Open/Greenspace - 9
  - Trails within the Township - 10
  - Parks - 11
  - Environmental Impacts - 12
- **Infrastructure, Roadways, & Transportation** - 12
  - Township road Transportation – 12
  - Interstates – 13
  - Airports - 13
  - Internet Access - 13
  - Water and Sewer Provisioning - 14
- **Institutional uses** - 14
- **Zoning Classification goals/policies** - 15
  - General Goals - 16
  - Residential - 16
  - Commercial - 19
  - Industrial - 20
  - Agriculture/Agribusiness - 21
- **Appendices** – 22
  - Appendix A – Green Garden Township Future Land-Use Map – 22
  - Appendix B – Facility Planning Area (FPA) Map – 23
  - Appendix C – Definition of Terms – 24
  - Appendix D – 2016 Survey – 25
  - Appendix E – Will County Zoning Classifications - 25
  - Appendix F – Will County Zoning Map 2016 - 26
Vision Statement

Green Garden Township is a peaceful, rural community where the ideals of a community-driven and involved township government remain alive. Among Illinois townships, Green Garden has fostered its own unique identity, bolstered by resident activism and care for the place in which they live. Green Garden Township serves as a forum for resident activities and concerns and as a way to build their sense of community. The residents strongly support their unique, rural township identity, and strongly prefer that the township level of government remain intact in Illinois. This document, regardless, serves as their voice for the future, both legislatively and in spirit. Amongst historic farms and quiet residential areas, Green Garden residents will continue to work together to make their township a great place to live.

Demographics

Township-level demographic data for the makeup of Green Garden Township is lacking; however, 2016 survey data and 2015 data from Will County give some insight into the township as it relates to development pressure and rural character.

Compared to 2002, the length of time survey respondents have been living within the township has increased; suggesting that the population of the township is aging. Additionally, zero (0) respondents were renters. Mailings were done based on registered voters; thus, the data suggest that very few, if any, registered voters within the township rent, then consequently, very few residents overall are renters. Most respondents owned between 2 and 10 acres, though 23% owned less than 2 acres in 2016 (versus 8.5% in 2002) and 6% owned over 20 acres in 2016 (versus 14% in 2002) suggesting that average lot sizes have been shrinking. Whereas 38% of respondents in 2002 intended to own farm animals, including horses, on their land, that number fell to 33.1% in 2016, suggesting declining farm animal ownership. These demographic data suggest that accommodations for an aging, less rural population may be necessary. Rental property is also nearly nonexistent, and may see more demand as residents age and wish to remain in the area.

Will County predicts increasing population pressure in Green Garden Township. While the population stayed under 1,000 persons until the late 1970s, it has increased significantly since. The average growth rate over a previous census for 1990, 2000, and 2010 was 42%. The projected growth rate over a previous census for 2020, 2030, and 2040 is an average of 30%, a slight decline. The population of Green Garden more than doubled from 1990 to 2010, and will more than double from 2010 to 2040. Consequently, this plan must consider this additional growth to maintain relevant.
Intergovernmental Cooperation

Will County Land Resource Management Plan

Will County’s Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) is an award winning document. It was adopted by vote of the County Board on April 18, 2002, after 18 months of citizen input and professional consultation. As of 2017, it remains the general framework under which land resources are managed within the county. The plan exists in a three-part format: Policy Gateway; Forms and Concepts; and Open Space Element.

Township officials and interested citizens attended meetings and workshops during the planning process in 2002. The Township hosted one of the review meetings before the plan was adopted. Suggestions from Township residents were considered. Amendments to the plan were made to accommodate the request for “Rural” form and to document the inclusion of equestrian uses within agriculture and open space concepts. The Township continues to prefer the “rural” form designation today.

Green Garden Township accepts the Will County Land Resource Management Plan as the general framework within which the Green Garden Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan will function. Since the County views its role as providing guidance and oversight to various entities involved in the land use decision process, holds the legal right to make zoning and design decisions for unincorporated areas, and invites the townships to specify their priorities, Green Garden Township will state priorities and concerns.

Green Garden Township is in complete agreement with the County’s goal that growth and development should be managed so that the environmental integrity of the County is respected and preserved. Further agreement is expressed for the goal to respect and preserve each community’s unique character and “sense of place,” as well as for the vision that the open space system will preserve “overall rural character.” Green Garden also specifically supports the right-to-farm principle and an extension of the concept to include horse-keeping and related endeavors in order to protect the Township’s large horse population and related enterprises. The Township agrees with the County’s statement that in the Rural Development Form, “the challenge will be to balance the pressure for growth with a desire to maintain agriculture viability and a rural character.”

In light of the foregoing, the County’s Plan shall serve as the foundational document upon which the Township Plan is based. The Township Plan sets forth those areas where the LRMP needs emphasis or is at odds with the best interests of the Township. As such, except as otherwise stated, the Township Plan is intended as a supplement to the County’s plan, which is otherwise adopted as the Plan of the Township.

Municipal Cooperation

The Township wishes to recognize the presence of the surrounding municipalities of Frankfort, University Park, Monee, Peotone, and Manhattan. The Township asks these municipalities to be respectful of this plan wherever possible. In the interests of compact growth and development, and in recognition of the Township’s unique and strong identity, this Plan asks these municipalities to refrain from annexation of territory within the Township wherever alternatives exist. This plan also requests that neighboring developments within these municipalities appropriately step down their development intensity as they approach Green Garden Township, to avoid disparate land uses and
unwanted impacts upon Township residents. The Township commends those municipalities that have recognized the existence of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan and their efforts to take it into consideration in past developments. The Township looks forward to coordinating with these municipalities in the future, and hopes that appropriate compromises in land use matters can be found with ease and relative agreement.

Organization

The following sections, Issues & Opportunities, Overall Land Use, Environment & Open Space, Infrastructure, Roadways, & Transportation, and Zoning Classification Goals/Policies seek to set forth the Township’s vision for the future. The Goals subsections form the foundation for the associated Policy subsections. Together they provide the basis for which the Plan Commission will render decisions on zoning cases.

In the Issues & Opportunities section, general goals and policies related to perceived and upcoming issues are addressed. In the Environment & Open Space section, goals and policies which affect environmental, open space, or nature-related concerns are addressed. In the Infrastructure, Roadways, and Transportation section, issues related to infrastructure and transportation-related issues are addressed.

In the Overall Land Use section, general goals and policies that generally apply to any zoning changes in the Township are provided. In the Zoning Classification Goals/Policies section, goals and policies specific to residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural/agribusiness are provided. The end of the document contains appendices that were referenced within this document. Appendix A, the Future Land Use Map, sets forth a land use plan for future zoning decisions in light of the foregoing.

Issues & Opportunities

Identity and Governance

*Goal* – The Township wishes to foster an identity of rural values, rural land uses, and rural governance.

*Policy* – The Township will generally discourage annexations by neighboring communities and attempts to bring large-scale municipal development and services to the township. The Township will aim to maintain and encourage rural and residential land uses in accordance with this plan, with complementary commercial and industrial only where context-appropriate. The Township will also oppose the elimination of Township governments at the state level, in recognition of Green Garden’s unique and cohesive identity.

Township Center

*Goal* – It is hoped that someday the center of community involvement would include such things as a Town Hall, recreation and/or other activity centers, and perhaps some degree of park functions. In as much as the Township contains no hamlet or other central area conducive to such activities, there is no current geographical area destined to such a future. However, property adjacent to the Township highway department along Center Road just south of Bruns Road has been purchased from the Town Fund as a prospective future site for a town hall. The geographical center of the Township is the intersection of Manhattan-Monee and Center Roads. From there, the Township extends three miles in each direction. Notable features of the geographical center are the presence of the Green Garden
Elementary school, the town hall, and the Green Garden Country Club. The County’s 2030 plan designates Manhattan-Monee Road as a strategic arterial route most likely to be expanded to four lanes at some point in the future. Should a South Suburban Airport and/or any future Interstate Highway plans come to fruition, then it is most likely that Manhattan-Monee Road would be widened to support traffic for such projects. Increasing the width of Manhattan-Monee or Center Roads would leave insufficient property to continue with a town hall at that location.

**Policy** – It shall be the policy of the Township to maintain a focus on Center Road as the primary location for Township facilities.

### Economic Development

**Goal:** In pursuit of a financially sound, effective, and efficient Township government, the Township wishes to recognize appropriate economic development as a goal of the Township.

**Policy:** The Township will support the responsible, sensitive, and considerate placement of commercial and industrial development which is primarily locally-serving in nature, along with continued appropriate and high-quality residential development. This development, should it be considered, must attempt to locate itself such that sprawl is minimized, open space and property values are preserved, and nuisances are avoided. Development that chiefly aims to bring needed basic services to Township residents, or which aims to emphasize and encourage rural recreation and tourism, are supported over high-intensity or regionally-serving enterprises. Residential development shall be supported in instances where it provides high-quality design and respects the values of current Township residents.

### Overall Land Use

#### Rural Character/Preservation

**Preservation of Rural Character**

**Goal** - Will County’s Land Resource Management Plan and Green Garden Township’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan both emphasize the importance and high priority placed on preserving rural character. What is rural character? The following paraphrased comments are found in the responses to the Green Garden 2016 Planning Survey.

According to Green Garden electors, some of the qualities and features which are admired and/or should be preserved in the Township include: open spaces; large lots and properties that can support animals; low density and low population; pride in small, township government; peace and quiet; minimal commercial and industrial development; environment, nature, and wildlife; low taxes; low traffic; a sense of community; a small town atmosphere; isolation and privacy; safe neighborhoods; high subdivision and home quality; township roads; independence and individuality; slow growth; dark skies/lack of streetlights; no municipal regulations; beautiful landscapes.

In spite of more recent development pressure, it is the vision of the Township that it will retain its overall rural character well into the future. The Township believes the above qualities and features represent the rural character of Green Garden Township. A visitor to the Township should be impressed with areas of large lots, ample green space, preserved natural features, ubiquitous native plants and wildlife, as well as a vibrant agricultural environment which ties the Township of the modern era to its historical roots. Any changes coming to the Township should strive to enhance and
maximize public and private open space and to preserve natural features of the land while creating safe areas free from environmental and public health hazards.

**Policy** — Please see various development classifications in the Zoning Classification Goals/Policies section. In addition, trees and attractive landscaping are essential to rural character preservation. There shall be a preference for green vistas rather than for privacy fences, especially along roadways. Landscaping with native species is encouraged. Architectural design and materials shall be encouraged for their contribution to rural character preservation in all development. In line with Township resident preferences, Will County administration, and principles of good design, strip mall development shall be strongly discouraged for all new retail and office development in favor of context-sensitive structures, favoring rural themes over auto-oriented strip mall development.

**Historic Preservation**

**Goal** — Historic preservation is an important aspect of our culture. However, this plan does not attempt to identify those properties, buildings, or structures that are to be considered as candidates for historic preservation. Instead, the objective of this plan is to establish a policy that will fully support the efforts of those organizations deemed credible in the area of historic preservation.

**Policy** — Zoning cases that involve a structure that may be considered a candidate for historic preservation will be presented to an appropriate historic preservation organization. The Township will support all efforts of historic preservation organizations. The Township also wishes to emphasize that goals related to the efficient, compact growth of nearby municipalities and the desire to restrict commercial and industrial development to appropriately-scaled, locally-serving institutions is also intended to protect historic structures from untimely removal and replacement.

**Encroaching development intensity and leapfrog development**

**Goal** — The residents of Green Garden are very prideful of their rural identity, and frequently cite it as one of the most important reasons for why they chose to move there. In keeping with this theme, the township strongly desires any and all land-use mechanisms to preserve this aspect of its heritage. The township wishes to avoid the encroachment of high-intensity commercial and industrial uses which lower the value of land in the township for residential and agricultural use. The township proposes the following policies to avoid deleterious leapfrogging of intensive land uses, and to implement a transitional model for new land uses.

**Policy** — The following policies are meant to address two primary concerns — developmental intensity, and leapfrog development. The township proposes a transitional model based on an urban transect form. An urban transect represents development intensity as a sliding scale from natural zone to urban core, and all intensities in-between. The township aims to maintain its development intensity as far toward the “natural zone” side of the transect as possible. The township intends to address potential new land uses by their relationship to the intensity of the land uses abutting them.

**Transitional Model of development**

Under this policy, as one crosses the border into Green Garden Township, the development intensity of industrial and commercial uses should only decrease parcel-by-parcel. A parcel should not be rezoned to a higher intensity (commercial or industrial) use within the township if parcels closer to the township border are of a lower intensity. Industrial development should only come parcel-by-
parcel from outside the township. Industrial development should therefore not locate inland from any residential or agricultural uses. This does not preclude the location of light-industrial uses directly along major roads (US45/La Grange Road, Manhattan-Monee Road, and Center Road), as these are allowed uses under the Plan.

Other General Policies

In recognition of the powers of municipalities to annex county/township territories, Green Garden recognizes the future land-use plan of Frankfort in the northeast region of the township, specifically north of Manhattan-Monee Road and east of 80th Avenue, extending to I57. While maintaining its intention to remain independent of incorporation wherever possible, the Township recognizes that the future land-use plan of Frankfort shows foresight, with a transitional model of zoning that concurs with Township sentiments to protect its residential development. Green Garden Township hopes that Frankfort utilizes their powers of annexation fairly and judiciously to ensure that such gradual decreases in development intensity between Interstate 57 and the Township occur and do not threaten the independence or tranquility enjoyed by Township residents.

Environment & Open Space

Open/Green Space

Goal - The heart of Green Garden Township’s rural character is based on its abundance of perceived open space. It is one of the most frequently emphasized descriptors of the Township’s identity and firmly establishes its rural character and “sense of place.” It is a very common reason why most people who live here came here. In the Green Garden 2016 Planning Survey, respondents overwhelmingly listed open spaces as one of the most important features admired about living in the Township. As such, preservation of open space ranks high in priority for future planning of the Township. Preserving open space may include, but is not limited to, preservation of riparian corridors, environmentally sensitive resources, and areas of active and passive agricultural and equestrian land use that contributes to the overall character.

The Open Space Element of Will County’s Land Resource Management Plan establishes policies and strategies designed to establish and maintain a permanently protected network of open spaces. The Township passionately supports the fundamentals of The Open Space Element. Building upon this plan, the vision of the Township includes an Open/Green Space Policy that creates a balanced pattern of land use conducive to the preservation of open and green space. The goals and policies herein are

4 Open Space defined in the Appendix C
intended to help the County achieve their goals for permanent preservation of open space. These mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, conservation type residential developments, agricultural & conservation easements, private landowner conservation, and public acquisition.

Policy – For the purpose of this document, “Open Space” is defined as: that land which is permanently conserved from development. Mechanisms for declaration of perpetuity shall include, but are not limited to: 1) protected areas within conservation design developments; 2) conservation easements established for private owners; and 3) agricultural easements established through government programs.

Developers will establish dormant Special Service Areas (SSAs) for common open space whereby the SSA can be activated should the primary maintenance responsibility by the Homeowner’s Association fail to provide adequate maintenance.

The vision of the Township incorporates guidelines to direct future development for sensible growth patterns, with high priority on enhancing the open spaces and biodiversity that characterize our community. The ultimate goal is to create a balanced environment with agricultural uses, nature, wildlife, and future growth.

The following initiatives are recommended to preserve open and green space in support of the Township’s goal:

a) Identify and protect lands along creek systems, floodplains, and wetlands in the Township for potential open space. These systems include, but are not limited to, Jackson Creek, Prairie Creek, Forked Creek, and South Branch Forked Creek.

b) Establish riparian buffers around all creek systems to protect water quality and prevent erosion.

c) Protect environmentally sensitive lands and ecosystems. These may include, but are not limited to, upland and floodplain forests, established wooded areas, fine textured soil and sand savanna, and marshes and fens.

Trials within the Township – Since the 2002 Comprehensive Plan, the Township voted down a Trails plan that would provide trails throughout the Township. Owing to fiscal realities, maintenance costs, liability, and the difficulty of obtaining land, the Township does not intend to pursue a Township-owned/maintained multi-use trail network throughout the Township. The Township feels that trails are an extremely important regional asset, but that it is more appropriate for county or private actors to provide for their implementation.

Goal - Green Garden strongly values the enjoyment of its natural resources by the public. Multi-use trails are a crucial aspect of ensuring that open space, rural scenery, and wildlife within the Township are enjoyed by all. The Township wishes to utilize trails and connected natural features and parklands to increase resident enjoyment and appreciation of Green Garden’s rural landscape. These trails would be limited to non-motorized traffic and constructed only upon consent of the landowner in question, including both public and private ownership. Eminent domain shall not be used. The Township hopes to eventually have a system of interconnected trails, regardless of trail ownership.

Policy - The Township highly encourages trails to be included in all new subdivision developments, particularly in concert with conservation design subdivisions. The Township expects these trails to be maintained by the homeowner’s associations of their respective subdivisions. Such trails, when built, should connect to neighboring subdivision trails wherever possible.
The Township further supports all efforts of the Will County Forest Preserve to acquire land within the Township for permanent preservation and inclusion in their own trail and park networks. Such park lands would serve a dual purpose of providing open space and achieving environmental goals of the township regarding the preservation of the natural, rural landscape. Of particular interest is in acquiring land along waterways within the township, providing both enjoyment and riparian buffer functions.

The Township encourages any entities involved in trail planning or implementation to consider the following possible avenues toward increasing trail proliferation.

- Establish, enhance, and expand trails
- Develop a contiguous multi-use trail
- Develop connections to nearby public sites and recreation areas
- Establish regional partnerships with Federal, State, and County entities
- Establish regional partnerships with neighboring municipalities
- Establish partnerships with utility companies
- Establish partnerships with local, regional, and national interest groups
- Encourage the creation and usage of land trusts within the County which will provide oversight to trails and conservation areas in open space and greenways

Parks

**Goal** – Parks are valued for their natural beauty and their recreational uses. Additionally, parks within subdivisions are amenities which bolster property values and contribute to open space. Larger centralized parks, conducive to organized sports, were a frequently requested feature in the 2016 Township Survey. The Township has purchased land on the west side of Center Road north of Pauling Road with park donation funds from developments. Additional purchases are anticipated as funds accumulate. The Township anticipates citizens’ desire for programs and recreational space beyond the reserved private open space, the greenways, and trails. It is expected that to administer athletic fields, various programs, schedules and personnel, a Township park district, created by referendum, will be needed.

**Policy** – Parks shall be located so that there is an ideal balance of connectivity, resident access, natural amenities, and neighboring land uses compatible with parkland uses.

To administer athletic fields, various programs, schedules and personnel, a Township park district is recommended.

Park donations from developers are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. A developer may propose to the Township an offer of park property in lieu of a cash donation. If the proposed park property is conducive to supporting organized sports or wider public use, then the Township may opt to accept the proposal. If the proposed park property functions more as an amenity to the subdivision it is attached to, the Township shall still require the usual cash donation to the park fee.

The LRMP Open space Element recommends that the Park Donation Ordinance be amended to divert park donation funds from townships to the County. The Township opposes any amendment to the Park Donation Ordinance that would divert park donation funds from the township to the County. The Township firmly believes it should retain the right to receive and disburse these funds for the purchase of park property as necessary within the Township. Further, the Township believes the County should increase the amount of the required donations.
Environmental Impact

Goal – Environmentally sensitive areas shall be preserved, either through public ownership, or through sensitive incorporation and permanent protection of sensitive areas in private developments. Additionally, enhancing the habitat and the preservation of riparian corridors, environmentally sensitive resources, and areas of active agricultural use that contribute to the overall rural character are important to the long-term success of the open space network in Green Garden Township.

Policy – The preservation of open space should be coordinated with environmental preservation; environmentally sensitive features, such as stream corridors, will also serve as part of the open space network. Riparian buffers should be established along all stream corridors to protect water quality and prevent stream-bank erosion. Environmentally sensitive lands and ecosystems should be protected. An appropriate agency shall be used for determining the appropriateness of restoration activities with regards to environmentally sensitive lands. Streetlights will be discouraged along all roadways due to the desire to reduce light pollution and maintain a rural nighttime landscape.

Infrastructure, Roadways, & Transportation

Township Road Transportation

Goal – The Township wishes to maintain its excellent reputation for low traffic, among its many rural characteristics. Prudent expansion of the transportation network within the Township is a high priority for the Township and its residents. A focus on network accessibility, safety, and quality, rather than increasing average daily traffic or speed, shall be the primary concerns of the Township.

Policy – The Township shall continue to strive to maintain its roads in a fiscally prudent manner. The Township holds that not every rural road needs to be paved – the relative number of residents served and the type of uses conducted along a road shall be a significant determining factor. Further, the Township notes that roads with light traffic intensity often serve adequately for a multitude of roadway users on their own. Avoiding high concentrations of traffic being directed onto Township roads due to high-intensity land uses or dead-end subdivision designs shall keep rural Township roads scenic, lightly traveled, and safe for multiple road users.

For County and State-owned roads, the Township recognizes the needs of a multitude of road users on these higher-capacity thoroughfares. In keeping with good principles of accessibility, and the desires of a significant minority of residents in the 2016 Township Survey, the Township requests that County and State-owned roads be given shoulders of at least five feet in width when they are repaved. Shoulder treatments will provide significantly enhanced safety for pedestrians, cyclists, the disabled, and drivers by separating incompatible uses. Such treatments, however, are minimal in their visual impact and avoid the usage of far more intensive urban-style infrastructure, such as sidewalks, which would be far more difficult to maintain than regularly-evaluated road surfaces. The Township prefers typical rural road designs (curb-less with ditches) without streetlights, rather than curbs and gutters, as these are not conducive to rural form and induce unwanted light pollution.

In the interests of traffic efficiency, maintenance, emergency response personnel, and remaining true to rural transportation patterns, the Township expects new subdivisions to avoid dead-end roadways.
(of either public or private ownership) wherever possible. Internal connections between neighborhoods will help prevent historic mile-grid roads from becoming multi-lane thoroughfares.

**Interstates**

*Goal* – In the interest of maintaining its rural heritage, Green Garden Township wishes to avoid additional traffic and development incurred as a result of interstate construction or enhancement. The Township prides itself in its excellent location, and feels that accessibility to primary destinations, including the City of Chicago, are already adequate. The Township also feels that interstate construction in northeastern Illinois frequently contributes to urban sprawl, noise, air pollution, and unnecessary destruction of fertile agricultural land, and is not a long-term solution to improving accessibility in the region.

*Policy* – The Township shall have a policy of opposing all additional interstates through or near Green Garden Township, and view any such potential construction as a threat to its rural values. The Township feels that any interstate construction in its vicinity will irreparably harm the peaceful character of the region and serve as a detriment, not a benefit, to Green Garden Township and its neighboring communities.

**Airports**

*Goal* – In the interest of maintaining its rural heritage, Green Garden Township wishes to avoid additional traffic and development incurred as a result of interstate construction or enhancement. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has maintained the possibility of a South Suburban Airport as an addition to the far south suburbs of the Chicago area. Such a development, if constructed, would most likely occur south of Monee and University Park on the east side of Interstate 57. Regardless of placement, it is the position of the Township that additional noise, congestion, urban sprawl, and loss of farmland will result if an additional international airport is added to the region.

*Policy* – The Township shall have a policy of opposing all international airport construction in southeastern Will County, and view any such potential construction as a threat to its rural values. The Township feels that any airport construction beyond small hobbyist air facilities will irreparably harm the peaceful character of the region and serve as a detriment, not a benefit, to Green Garden Township and its neighboring communities.

**Internet Access**

*Goal* – While Green Garden Township prides itself in its rural heritage, it recognizes the need for modern conveniences to maintain its high levels of resident satisfaction. The Township thus recognizes a goal of every resident being able to access high-speed internet services.

*Policy* - The Township shall encourage all future developers to include fiber and other high-speed internet infrastructure in their construction, and the retrofit of this infrastructure in existing subdivisions whenever possible. The Township encourages private internet service companies to provide access to high-speed internet service to every parcel in the Township.

**Water and Sewer Provisioning**
Goal – Facility Planning Areas (FPAs) are established by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) for the purpose of designating which organization is authorized to provide public sewer. We recognize that the areas designated as being within a FPA could have different growth potentials and characteristics than those areas that are not supported with a FPA. Appendix B contains a map of the designated FPAs, to date, within the Township.

Areas within a FPA could experience a higher density of growth. Areas outside of a designated FPA have less density. Specific densities supported by this plan are designated in the Zoning Classification Goals/Policies section.

Policy – Where sewer and water is available, R1, R2, R2A, and Estate zoning classifications shall be acceptable contingent on specific policies set forth later in this plan. While sewer and water allow for smaller lot sizes, these are the only zoning districts with minimum lot sizes large enough to conform to the Township’s Comprehensive Plan.

Where conventional septic field and well is the intended or only available infrastructure, A1, E1, and E2 are the only acceptable zoning classifications contingent on specific policies set forth later in this plan. These are the only zones for which minimum lot sizes are large enough to safely utilize septic fields and wells. Sewer/septic and water services on other classifications shall be at the discretion of the Will County Health Department.

Because the Township cannot obtain Chicago water, due to being outside the Great Lakes watershed, the Township shall vigorously oppose any incoming industries which pollute or otherwise threaten the quality of Green Garden Township’s groundwater - the source by which all drinking water, including utility-provided water, ultimately originates from in the township.

Institutional Uses

Schools

Goal – Will County, Peotone School District 207U services Green Garden Township. Many feel that this school district has been doing well overall. The philosophy of the district leadership is to create small schools in multiple sites, as necessary, rather than create a very large school complex in a single or a few sites.

As the district experiences residential development, the schools face tremendous pressure to accommodate new students. If additional revenue from development covers instructional expenditure, there still are the operating costs plus capital expenditures, such as new schools or additions, to recover through property taxes. A school district often loses money for years, sometimes more than a decade, after a subdivision is built until tax revenues catch up.

Area schools cannot continue to provide high quality education in the face of uncontrolled growth, particularly without repeated tax increases. Educational concerns and the inability of the schools to handle a continuing influx of students while maintaining traditionally high standards must, therefore, be a paramount concern in any development and land use decision.

Policy – K-8 schools and high schools shall be acceptable within all residential zoning classifications. Surrounding commercial zonings are acceptable for high school locations. Industrial locations are not acceptable.
**Hospitals**

*Goal* – Hospitals shall be located in commercial or industrial locations. They shall not be acceptable in estate, residential, or agricultural areas destined for estate or residential zoning districts.

*Policy* – Hospitals are acceptable within commercial or industrial locations. Agricultural zoning districts not destined for estate or residential zoning districts where utilities are available are also acceptable. They are discouraged within residential zoning classification.

**Immediate Care Centers**

*Goal* – Immediate care centers shall be located in commercial or industrial locations. They shall not be located in estate, residential, or agricultural areas destined for estate or residential zoning districts.

*Policy* – Immediate Care Centers are acceptable following the same guidelines as commercial zoning districts.

**Primary Care Centers**

*Goal* – Primary Care Centers shall be located in commercial or industrial locations. They shall not be located in estate, residential, or agricultural areas destined for estate or residential zoning districts.

*Policy* – Primary Care Centers are acceptable following the same guidelines as commercial zoning districts.

**Fire Stations**

*Goal* – Fire stations will be reviewed on a case by case basis. In order to minimize disruption of residents’ living, it is preferred that fire stations be located in commercial or industrial locations.

*Policy* – All zoning classifications are compatible with fire stations. As much as practical, they shall not be located in estate, residential, or those agricultural areas destined for estate or residential zoning districts.

**Churches**

Churches may be located in commercial, residential, estate, or agricultural zoning districts. However, a sizable church that will significantly impact traffic should be located on a main thoroughfare.

**Zoning Classification Goals/Policies**

**General**

**Buffer Zones**

*Goal* – Buffering around different zoning classifications helps preserve the rural character as well as segregate different land uses.
Policy – It is recommended that all creeks shall have a riparian buffer on each side. Uses within the buffer may include trails, walk bridges, gazebos, and park benches, but should not include permanent structures such as buildings and fences.

All commercial or industrial zoning areas shall provide berming and/or landscape plantings as a buffer between the commercial or industrial zoning and existing adjoining residential or estate areas. Likewise, a developer shall provide berming and/or landscape plantings as a buffer between developing residential/estate land and existing commercial or industrial zoning.

A conservation design subdivision shall include a minimum perimeter buffer, totally outside lot lines, of 25 feet for single family lots and 50 feet for multifamily lots.

Residential

Preservation of rural character

Goal – Many of Green Garden Township’s residents are equestrians and virtually all residents wish to maintain the rural atmosphere. For the most part, folks choose to live in Green Garden Township for two reasons: either the upscale rural atmosphere or the ability to own animals, primarily horses, in their backyards.

Open space plays a significant role in preserving rural character and is addressed with the following policies. Also included is the architecture of commercial buildings, their parking provisions, and their landscaping.

Policy – In order to support the goal of maintaining a rural nature within residential subdivisions, the following policies are set forth. “Open space” is defined in appendix C to include perpetuity.

a) Minimum open space percentages will be required for conservation design subdivisions served by public sewer and water. For residential densities greater than those discussed, the requirements for open space will increase.

R1, R2, and R2A residential zoning districts will be acceptable with a minimum of 10% open space.

R3 residential zoning districts will only be acceptable as Conservation Design subdivisions with the following conditions:
- The development must be on a major road (e.g. Center, Manhattan-Monee, or US45/LaGrange Road)
- The Conservation Design must at minimum follow conservation design as defined by Will County Land Use and adopted by the Will County Board in 2009.
- Public sewer and water must be available and implemented in the subdivision.
- Open space must be a minimum of 10%
- There must be a minimum 50’ buffer along roadways and adjacent properties so that subdivisions more closely exhibit a rural character; this buffer is not included in the lot size. Driveways must have access from subdivision roads only.
- Either sidewalks or trails must be provided for pedestrian travel. If trails, then they must be marked according to the guidelines of the pertaining fire district.
b) Conservation design or PUDs as explained under the Conservation Design section (below) with a mix of single family and multifamily units are acceptable anywhere in the Township, along major roadways (e.g. Center, Manhattan-Monee, or US45/LaGrange Road) and served by public sewer and water with the following conditions:

- No more than the % (see below table) of the units in the development may be multifamily units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Classification</th>
<th>% Multifamily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2A</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Minimum lot size for lots containing multifamily units shall be 7,500 sq.ft. per unit. The difference between this minimum lot size for a single family unit (15,000 sq.ft.) shall be devoted to open space within the development.
- The preferred number of units that may be attached is two. (A unit consists of one residence)
- The maximum unit height accepted is two stories above ground level. This maximum height must be in accordance with the current Will County regulations.
- See section 2 below (Buffer Zones) below for buffering concerns on lots with multifamily units.
- If the development earns all of the bonuses as spelled out by the Will County Conservation Design ordinance in order to meet their 25% bonus – then in Green Garden the bonus will be limited only up to a 20% bonus. However, if the earned amount is less than 20%, then it is limited in Green Garden to the percentage earned.

c) On parcels not served by public water and sewer, estate zoning is encouraged in the Township. Where natural features need to be protected, those portions may be held as open space.

E1 and E2 estate zoning classifications will be acceptable with one of the following conditions:

- Straight estate zoning is acceptable
- E1-PUD/Conservation Design shall provide a minimum lot size of 1.0 acres with 10% open space.
- E1-PUD/Conservation Design should provide lots so that the accessory agriculture uses permitted in the E1 district shall be viable on at least some of the individual lots based on size; that is, at least some of the lots within the PUD or Conservation Design subdivision will be a minimum 5.0 acres with the remainder of the parcel in smaller lots and open space.
- E2/PUD Conservation Design shall provide a minimum lot size of 1.0 acres with 10% open space.
- E2/PUD Conservation Design shall provide lots so that the accessory agriculture uses permitted in the E2 district shall be viable on at least some of the individual lots based on size; that is, at least some of the lots within the PUD or Conservation Design subdivision will be a minimum of 2.5 acres with the remainder in smaller lots and open space.

The township encourages continued expansion of accessory agricultural uses in estate developments, as such expansion is consistent with Township character and future vision.
d) The minimum parcel size for development of a residential conservation design subdivision shall be 10 acres unless the subject property is adjacent to an existing subdivision and consistent contiguous growth is demonstrated.

e) Floodways will be preserved as open space and may contain trails. Trails can be located in areas inappropriate for development, such as in floodways, flood fringes, wetland fringes, hydric soils, and existing public open spaces.

f) Stream channels will only be altered to enhance aquatic habitat and not be impounded or modified to restrict movement of aquatic life. Ideally, all stream banks will include some open space, with the areas closest to the bank utilizing deep-rooted native plantings.

g) The minimum lot size in a conservation design residential subdivision serviced by public water and sewer (see section A) shall be 15,000 square feet with no less than a 100-foot frontage. Exceptions due to road radius, such as cul-de-sacs, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

h) Open space consisting of surface water per developed parcel shall not exceed 50% of the total open space on that parcel.

i) All new subdivisions shall contain road stubs connecting to undeveloped adjacent land unless circumstances, such as waterways and pipelines, warrant otherwise.

j) Development impacts on floodplains or wetlands must be understood and accounted for before rezoning is granted.

k) Designated open space and its uses shall be specified and granted to oversight by a third party in perpetuity.

l) In any subdivision or PUD, the costs of necessary repairs on any commonly held property or on property owned by the Homeowners’ Association shall be shared and paid by those property owners. Should there be a default by the Homeowner’s Association, the SSA shall be enacted.

m) Mosquito control/management on private property shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

Residential Access Limitations

**Goal** – Maintain scenic roadways and safe ingress/egress from subdivisions onto mile-by-mile roads.

**Policy** – Entrances to subdivisions shall be limited. Lots should be created such that driveways are within new subdivision roads and not on existing mile roads. This policy shall not be in conflict with Transportation section provisions designed to ensure adequate connectivity within and between subdivisions.

Residential Conservation Design Policy

**Goal** – The Township aims to further its open space amenities, in part, through the usage of Conservation Design neighborhoods in residential areas. The township recognizes that these subdivisions fulfill multiple objectives, including providing for shared spaces, stormwater management, and in some cases the provision for smaller lots for residents who do not wish to maintain a full 2.5 or more acres on their own.

**Policy** – The Township believes a Conservation Design ordinance at the County level would establish consistency and clarity in the implementation of Conservation Design subdivisions, as the existing LRMP lacks such an ordinance. As part of a Conservation Design ordinance for the rural form, the Township will urge continued, rather than curtailed, estate or estate type zoning. The township feels that Estate zoning is valuable within the township, and with its desire to retain its rural character, because of its related agricultural privileges such as horsekeeping, and because it is compatible with
numerous already established uses in the Township. Development plans for parcels should reserve permanent open space features, such as greenways, trail and creek buffers, while allowing individual lots large enough for estate privileges. Buffers in new developments along adjacent established estate/agricultural uses should be included in designs. Such provisions would serve to transition between existing and new development.

**Conservation Design –Diagram from Will County Land Resource Management Plan**

**Commercial**

*Goal* - Green Garden Township expects to exercise care in the placing of commercial uses within the Township. All along U.S. Route 45 is the most likely area for heavily concentrated commercial development including Agri-business/Agri-Commercial in the Township. Likewise, the area along Manhattan-Monee Road extending from U.S. Route 45 to Center Road is also a likely area to expand commercial development.

Other areas near residential developments, including major crossroads where some commercial zoning has already been granted, should be limited so as to preserve the rural character. An example is the southwest corner of Harlem and Manhattan-Monee roads and the northwest corner of Center and Bruns roads. Intersections such as these should be limited and geared to providing services to the nearby local residents.

**Policy**

1. Neighborhood commercial (C1) shopping areas will be located along collector or arterial streets
2. Commercial zoning is expected along U.S. Route 45 and on Manhattan-Monee between Center and U.S. Route 45. Elsewhere in the township it is discouraged, except for “Neighborhood commercial” which providing services for proximal residents. Establishment of a Neighborhood commercial zoning district shall not constitute a precedent for adjoining properties.

Neighborhood commercial zonings shall be limited to maintain the rural character. In an area outside of the designated future commercial areas, only one out of four corners at an intersection may be considered for commercial zoning.
3. Landscaping shall provide adequate buffering to neighboring properties. Sites shall provide landscaping with plenty of native plant landscaping on site. There shall be a minimum of 15 feet of landscape buffering between any developed property including driveways, parking lots, buildings, storage, and lanes, and neighboring properties or easements. A 50 foot buffer is required between commercial property and residential or estate properties. Additional buffering may be required, as determined at the time the zoning case is heard.

4. Stream channels will only be altered to enhance aquatic habitat and not be impounded or modified to restrict movement of aquatic life. Ideally, all stream banks will include some open space, with the areas closest to the bank utilizing deep-rooted native plantings.

5. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regard to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationship to streets.

6. Connections to alternate transportation such as sidewalks and links to any local or regional trail systems shall be supported by the commercial development as may be required.

7. Access should be limited to minimize impacts on surrounding residential areas.

8. Sign design should be consistent with a rural nature as well as the architecture of the commercial building. In general, signage should not be overbearing and should not obstruct, within reason, views of neighboring properties.

9. Any outside lighting, including lights for signs, parking lots, and egress/ingress shall not be obtrusive to neighboring properties.

10. Mosquito control/management on private property shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

**Industrial**

**Goal** – Green Garden is not expected to develop an infrastructure to support Intensive (I-3) industrial uses. Light industrial developments are expected to contend with commercial developments along U.S. Route 45. Since U.S. Route 45 is a major throughway between Frankfort and towns south of Green Garden Township, every attempt should be made to maintain a degree of orderly development along U.S. route 45.

**Policy**

1. Limited (I-1) industrial uses that integrate well with commercial developments along U.S. Route 45 may be considered. Uses should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.

2. General (I-2) industrial uses are incompatible with the rural forms and concepts of Green Garden Township and should only be considered if it is consistent, continuous growth from existing general industrial zoning.

3. Any industrial uses more intensive than general (I-2) are not desired.

4. Concern should be given for industrial use that emits noxious odors, noise, lighting, storm water run-off, traffic, and the impact they may have on nearby areas.

5. There shall be a minimum 50 foot buffer between the industrial zoning and residential or estate properties.

6. Sites shall provide landscaping with plenty of native plant landscaping on site. There shall be a minimum of 15 feet of landscape between any parking lot and any boundary line or easement line. Landscaping shall be provided for adequate buffering to neighboring properties.

7. Stream channels will only be altered to enhance aquatic habitat and not be impounded or modified to restrict movement of aquatic life. Ideally, all stream banks will include some open space, with the areas closest to the bank utilizing deep-rooted native plantings.
8. Freestanding industries and offices should be located within easy access to an arterial roadway such as U.S. Route 45 and Manhattan-Monee roads.

9. Sign design should be consistent with a rural nature as well as the architecture of the commercial building. In general, signage should not be overbearing and should not obstruct, within reason, views of neighboring properties.

10. Any outside lighting, including lights for signs, parking lots, and egress/ingress shall not be obtrusive to neighboring properties.

11. Mosquito control/management on private property shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

**Agricultural/Agribusiness**

*Goal –* Agriculture and various agribusiness enterprises are very important features of Green Garden Township. The assessor’s estimate of the amount of farmed land in the Township, based on the Will County 2016 Final Abstract\(^6\), is 18,498 acres. This is approximately 80% of the total 23,040 acres in the Township, and a decrease from 20,085 acres (87%) as of August 2004. The township is home to numerous horse properties with related equestrian enterprises as well. Continued agriculture and expansion of agribusiness will contribute greatly to preservation of rural character. Areas of the township with prime farmland shall be encouraged to remain as viable agricultural land.

*Policy –* Impact on existing agricultural pursuits shall be minimized through adequate buffers in new development which abuts existing agricultural and/or equestrian properties; through the respect of right to farm principles; and through encouraging hay production on some of the open space created with new residential development.

Conserve agricultural areas that are most suitable and desirable for prime farmland. Specific soil series as designated by Will-South Cook Soil and Water must be considered as a basis for protecting farmland from development over the long term. Alternate means of property transfer, such as transfer of development rights, conservation easements, or farmland trusts, should be made available to Will County landowners to diversify their land holding and profit options.

Mosquito control/management on private property shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

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\(^6\) Source: Deputy Supervisor of Assessments, Will County Supervisor of Assessments Office – February 2017
Appendix B – Facility Planning Area (FPA) Map

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) FPA Boundary Map
Green Garden Township outlined in Red
Appendix C Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for specific contextual use within this document.

**Conservation Easement**
A conservation easement is the legal instrument by which a landowner (a) limits, without relinquishing ownership, the development potential of property which has significant natural resource, open space, or habitat value, and (b) grants the right to conserve those values. A conservation easement runs with the land – that is, the original owner and all subsequent owners are bound by the restrictions of the easement. The executed document is recorded at the County Recorder’s Office. This enables all future owners and lenders to learn about the restrictions when they obtain title reports.

Conservations easements are allowed by Illinois Statute (39 Ill. Rev. Statutes 401). Either a unit of local government with conservation interests or a not-for-profit conservation organization may hold conservation easements.

**Arterial Street** In general arterial streets are those that provide continuity between major cities, villages, hamlets, or the like. For example, Manhattan-Monee is an arterial street between Monee and Manhattan. Likewise, both U.S. Route 45 and Center are arterial streets between Green Garden and Frankfort.

**Collector Street** In general collector streets are those “mile long” streets that receive traffic from smaller subdivisions.

**Natural Watercourse** Those stream channels, grased waterways and swales formed by the existing surface topography of the earth prior to changes made by unnatural causes. A natural stream tends to follow a meandering path, and its floodplain is not constrained by levees of any dimension. Swales and floodplains are not tiled and drained. The area near the bank and within the floodplain has not been mowed or cultivated, and plants indigenous to the area are growing under occasional seasonal burns. The stream flows over soil and geologic materials with no alteration of the course or cross-section of the stream caused by filling or excavating. Pools and riffles are evident along the stream course.

Creek banks generally have low slopes and creek bottoms are not unnaturally incised into the landscape. Natural watercourses are very rare in the Midwest. In Jackson, Forked and Prairie Creeks many, but usually not all, of the characteristics of a natural stream can be found in their headwater reaches high up in the watershed and in their lower reaches before they enter the DesPlaines or Kankakee rivers.

**Open Space** For the purposes of this document, Open Space is defined as that land which is permanently conserved from development. Mechanisms for declaration of perpetuity shall include, but are not limited to, 1) protected areas within conservation design development, 2) conservation easements established for private owners, and 3) agricultural easements established through government programs.

**Recreation Area** Recreation areas are designated to accommodate a wide variety of development and associated educational and recreational activities by individuals and organized groups. These areas shall include all or portions of preserves with open spaces generally characterized by early successional or highly disturbed vegetation such as old fields, pastures, farmland, or mowed turf that can accommodate such activities and that do not contain any unique or rare natural or cultural resource that would be negatively impacted.

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7 The Standards and Practices Guidebook – An Operating Manual for Land Trusts published by the Land Trust Alliance, 1993
**Restored Natural Watercourse**  A watercourse which has been restored to replicate as many conditions as possible found in natural watercourses.

**Riparian Buffers**  Natural vegetation buffer strips adjoining both banks of a stream, creek, or swale which carries intermittent stormwater flows. These buffer strips provide pollution control by allowing vegetation to filter sediments and contaminants from surface runoff which enters water bodies. Depending on the root length and density of the vegetation utilized, the buffer strip also stabilizes erosion of a natural drainageway and streambank; and it enhances the infiltration of rainfall and surface drainage into the soil, lessening the amount and intensity of stormwater otherwise conveyed into the stream system. Riparian buffer strips also provide continuous wildlife habitat and scenic beauty. The more a riparian buffer achieves the characteristics found in a natural watercourse, the more effective it is in controlling pollution, erosion, flooding, and the degradation of natural watercourse integrity downstream.

**Urban Transect**  An urban/regional planning model representing a series of zones transitioning from rural to urban.

**Appendix D – 2016 Survey**

The 2016 Survey is posted on the Green Garden Web Site [www.greengardentownship.org](http://www.greengardentownship.org) under the Planning Commission section.

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**Appendix E – Will County Zoning Classifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Min Area</th>
<th>Min Frontage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-1 Single-Family Rural Estate Residence District</td>
<td>5 acres</td>
<td>300 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-2 Single-Family Estate Residence District</td>
<td>2.5 acres</td>
<td>180 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>60,000 sq ft</td>
<td>165 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2 Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>1 acre</td>
<td>150 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2A Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>30,000 sq ft</td>
<td>120 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3 Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>20,000 sq ft</td>
<td>90 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-4 Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>12,500 sq ft</td>
<td>70 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-5 Single-Family Residence District</td>
<td>10,000 sq ft</td>
<td>70 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-6 Multi-Family Residence District</td>
<td>12 units/acre</td>
<td>60 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-1 Local Shopping District</td>
<td>12,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-2 Community Shopping District</td>
<td>12,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-3 General Business District</td>
<td>12,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-4 Highway Commercial District</td>
<td>20,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-5 Office and Research Park District</td>
<td>20,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-6 Commercial Recreational District</td>
<td>20,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-1 Limited Industrial District</td>
<td>10,000 sq ft</td>
<td>60 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-2 General Industrial District</td>
<td>10,000 sq ft</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-3 Intensive Industrial District</td>
<td>40,000 sq ft</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-1 Agricultural district</td>
<td>10 acres</td>
<td>300 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2 Rural Residence District</td>
<td>2.5 acres</td>
<td>300 ft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Will County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 155 (Zoning Code)*