Thematic Context Study of German, Irish, and French Settlement Patterns and Nineteenth Century Vernacular Architecture in Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

BURNS McDONNELL

PANTHER GROVE 2 LLC

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
Christine Leggio

AUTHORS:
Christine Leggio, Benjamin DiBiase, Brandy Harris, and Jessica Kepka

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Cover Image: Bill, Frank. 1940. "Aero #43, Livingston County, El Paso, Illinois, 1940." McLean County Museum of History: Pantagraph Negative Collection, 1940-1945 (Illinois Digital Archives),1940-06-27,

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term/Phrase/Name
AAA	Agricultural Adjustment Act
APE	Area of Potential Effects
Burns & McDonnell	Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc.
IL HRPA	Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MW	megawatt
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
Panther Grove 2	Panther Grove 2 LLC
Project	Panther Grove 2 Wind Development Project
SHPO	Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer
SOI	Secretary of the Interior
Study Area	APE for Panther Grove 2 Wind Development Project
TP&W	Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad

Executive Summary

Panther Grove 2 LLC (Panther Grove 2), a subsidiary of Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, is proposing to construct the Panther Grove 2 Wind Development Project (Project), a commercial wind farm facility in Livingston, Woodford, and McLean Counties, Illinois. The proposed Project includes construction of a new 468-megawatt (MW) wind farm consisting of up to 104 wind turbines in Livingston County and three wind turbines and 11.5 miles of transmission lines in Woodford County along with associated access roads and other appurtenant facilities (Appendix A: Figures A-1 through A-3).

The Project is not subject to Federal permitting or oversight, and as a result, compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is not required. However, the Project proponent is seeking a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit for Construction Activity from the State of Illinois. As a result, the Project is subject to compliance with the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (IL HRPA). Panther Grove 2 contracted Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc. (Burns & McDonnell) to complete IL HRPA compliant surveys associated with the construction of the Project.

A total of 1,389 historic-age architectural resources on 470 properties were recorded within the Project's Non-Physical Area of Potential Effects (APE). One of these properties (Resource JK22) was previously determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and an additional 10 resources were recommended for NRHP inclusion. The resources include three agricultural outbuildings (Resources KB01, KB03, and KB27), St. Petri's Church and Cemetery complex (Resource KB11), three individual dwellings (Resources KB81, KB324, and JK25), a portion of historic US Route 66 (Resource KB254), and two historic railroad segments (Resources KB255 and JK63). None of the remaining individual resources recorded during the survey meet the criteria for NRHP inclusion due to a lack of significance and/or architectural integrity.

Based on further consultation and Project design changes, it was determined that a total of six above-ground historic resources would be adversely visually affected by the proposed Project:

- Resource KB81: 2461 E. 1700 North Rd., Flanagan (Residence),
- Resource KB191: 15161 N. 400 East Rd., Flanagan (Mid-Century Building),
- Resource KB203: 14120 N. 300 East Rd., Flanagan (Residence),
- Resource JK22: 3019 County Rd. 1600 N., Minonk (Residence),
- Resource KB238: 5975 E. 1250 North Rd., Gridley (Clay Tile Barn), and
- Resource JK28: 654 E. 1400 North Rd., Flanagan (Gambrel Roof Dairy Barn).

The Illinois State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with this eligibility and effect determination in May 2024 (Appendix B). In September 2024, SHPO selected "a comprehensive thematic narrative and photographic report (Report) describing mid-nineteenth century German, Irish, and French immigration covering topics of churches, schools, social organizations, multi-generational farmsteads, and broad regional patterns, highlighting extant properties in the project area and vicinities, and identify vernacular architecture trends associated with specific ethnic groups in the area" as mitigation of visual affects to the aboveground historic resources. To facilitate construction of the Project and account for adverse effects to the NRHP-eligible resources, Panther Grove 2 coordinated with the SHPO to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Project (Appendix C). The MOA summarizes the measures Burns & McDonnell and

other responsible parties will undertake as part of the Project to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to historic (NRHP-eligible) resources.

This study examines the presence and influence of German, Irish, and French immigrants on vernacular architecture and settlement patterns in Livingston County, Illinois during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The analysis finds that while these groups were significant in the county's demographic development, there is no evidence of direct replication of traditional European dwelling or outbuilding types. Instead, immigrant builders used standard Midwestern vernacular forms typical of the period. Ethnic influence is most visible in modifications and cultural expressions within these common forms. Farmstead arrangements show variation, with Irish settlers tending to place outbuildings near the main dwelling and German settlers distributing them more widely across the farmstead. Ethnic heritage is also documented in symbolic and decorative contexts, including iconography on gravestones, inscriptions, and stained-glass and design features in church buildings. These findings suggest that ethnic identity in Livingston County was expressed primarily through spatial organization and cultural markers within otherwise standardized architectural contexts.

1.0 Introduction

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[1] The Physical APE for the Project was established to include the construction footprint of the proposed turbines plus a buffer to allow for small design or construction impact modifications, as provided by Panther Grove 2. The Non-Physical APE encompasses a 2.0-mile evaluation area around the Physical APE to account for the Project's potential non-physical or visual effects on historic-age architectural resources, including buildings, structures, objects, districts, etc. In total, the APE for physical and visual Project effects comprises approximately 95,000 acres (Figures A-1 to A-3).

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The MOA was executed in May of 2025, and the following report was prepared to satisfy Stipulation II. This MOA stipulation mandates the completion of a study of vernacular architecture and its ethnic associations within the Project area.

1.1 Study Purpose

To satisfy the MOA stipulations, this study seeks to identify and contextualize mid-nineteenth century vernacular architecture, including churches, schools, social organizations, and multi-generational farmsteads associated with German, Irish, and French settlement. The study will establish representative vernacular types and stylistic influences on such architecture in the mid-to-late nineteenth century and will seek to identify traditional ethnic influences evident in the design and construction of such resources during the prescribed periods.

1.2 Study Area

The assigned Study Area for this study is limited to the APE for the Panther Grove 2 Wind Development Project (Appendix A: Figure A-1). This includes the entirety of Waldo Township, as well as parts of Pike, Nebraska, and Rooks Creek Townships, in Livingston County, parts of Gridley and Chenoa Townships in McLean County, and part of Minonk and Panola Townships in Woodford County.

2.0 Methodology

The following section outlines the methodology utilized for completing the Panther Grove 2 mitigation, as outlined in the MOA. Per the MOA, the mitigation includes the following tasks:

- Task I: Research Design
- Task II: Fieldwork and Report Writing
    - Task II(a): Fieldwork
    - Task II(b): Report Writing

Task I was completed in May of 2025. Task II(a), fieldwork, was completed the week of June 23 – 27, 2025 by Burns & McDonnell Cultural Resource Specialists Jessica Kepka and Christine Leggio. This document satisfies the requirements of Task II(b) and documents the results of, and conclusions drawn from, the research and field survey proposed in Task I.

2.1 Researcher Qualifications

Christine Leggio serves as the Principal Investigator for the mitigation report. Ms. Leggio meets the qualifications for Architectural Historian as set forth by the Secretary of the Interior (SOI). Additional authors include Benjamin DiBiase, Brandy Harris, and Jessica Kepka, all of whom meet SOI qualifications as Architectural Historians.

2.2 Study Objectives

This study seeks to facilitate a better understanding of vernacular architecture trends in the Study Area. It establishes representative types of vernacular construction, stylistic influences for specified time periods, and the influence of ethnic traditions in the design and construction of vernacular buildings within the Study Area. The period of interest for this study is ca. 1840, the approximate beginning of settlement, and ca. 1900, after which time the rate of European immigration to the Study Area decreased and architecture became more homogenous as a result of mechanization and the wide availability of milled lumber and other building materials.

The primary objectives of the study are to (1) establish a historic context for vernacular architecture in the region, with particular emphasis on the building traditions of nineteenth century Irish, French, and German immigrants; (2) identify and record representative historic-age vernacular architectural resources within the established Study Area that are characteristic of the period and place; and (3) conduct limited documentation of such resources. The results are documented in the following report, which includes contextual, physical, and locational data about the historic vernacular architecture identified within the Study Area.

2.3 Methods

To accomplish the study objectives, Burns & McDonnell utilized background research and limited field survey to collect data on historical architecture within the Study Area.

2.3.1 Field Sampling Strategy

Burns & McDonnell historians reviewed existing documentation of the Study Area, including the previously completed Historic-Age Architectural Resource Survey (Harris et al. 2025), in conjunction with new research from sources gathered at local repositories to identify extant historic-age resources that meet the study's objectives in terms of date of construction, form, character, and historic association.

Following the identification of potentially relevant historic resources, a team of two Burns & McDonnell SOI-qualified architectural historians were deployed to the Survey Area to document the identified resources. Each resource and associated feature, including outbuildings, landscape, and other key elements, was documented from the public right-of-way through photography and descriptive information. Fieldwork was completed between June 23 and June 27, 2025 and focused on the recordation of representative resource types with an emphasis on elements and design features characteristic of the vernacular types or ethnic iconography identified through background research.

2.3.2 Archival Research

Two SOI-qualified historians/architectural historians visited local repositories within the Study Area. The historians reviewed and collected data, scanned documents, and reviewed other materials pertinent to the study from the following repositories:

- McLean County Museum of History
- Pontiac Public Library
- Gridley Public Library
- Flanagan Public Library

Resources consulted included local centennial histories, family histories, county and township histories, historic photographs, historic newspaper articles, general topic files, local directories, and historic maps. Additional sources available online consulted for this study include census records, newspapers, historic photographs, and written histories of the Survey Area, regional immigration, and ethnic building traditions. All sources are listed in Chapter 7.0.

3.0 Historic Context

3.1 Introduction

Burns & McDonnell historians developed the following historic context based on primary and secondary source research. This context establishes the history of the Study Area as it relates to nineteenth century European immigration and vernacular architecture. The purpose of the context is to identify historic-age buildings or features associated with groups who immigrated to the Study Area and constructed dwellings and agricultural buildings from the period of earliest Euroamerican settlement (ca. 1840) through the turn of the twentieth century (ca. 1900).

The Project covers level or gently rolling upland plains in a rural landscape that comprises primarily actively cultivated farm fields interspersed with scattered farm complexes and rural residences and small communities. At the time of Euroamerican settlement, this area was covered in prairie except for forested areas along stream valleys, floodplains, and prairie groves (Schwegman et al. 1973). Historically dominant agricultural crops in the Study Area included corn, wheat, oats and other small grains, and, beginning in the twentieth century, soybeans (Bogue 1963; Hurt 2002).

The natural environment of central Illinois in the mid-nineteenth century was a major factor in drawing Euroamerican settlers pursuing agricultural opportunities. The region was dominated by tallgrass prairie, interspersed with oak-hickory woodlands along river corridors. While early travelers and surveyors initially viewed the prairie as barren due to its treelessness, its deep, fertile loam soils eventually proved to be among the most agriculturally productive in North America (Hart 1986; Angle 1968).

The following historical overview provides essential context for understanding the more specific focus of this study: immigration and its influence on vernacular architecture in the Study Area between ca. 1840 and 1900. While the narrative spans Indigenous occupation through the late twentieth century, its purpose is to situate the formative period of Euroamerican settlement and immigrant arrival within the broader patterns of land use, agriculture, transportation, and community development. By tracing the evolution of the Study Area from early subsistence farming to a commercially integrated agricultural economy, the discussion highlights the social and economic conditions that shaped immigrant settlement and the construction of dwellings, farmsteads, and community buildings that defined the vernacular landscape of the nineteenth century.

3.2 Historical and Agricultural Context of the Study Area

Prior to the period of interest for this study (ca. 1840 – ca. 1900), the Study Area was occupied by the Illinois Confederation (or Illiniwek), who controlled present-day central and north-central Illinois by the late-seventeenth century, and the Potawatomi, who established a strong presence in northeastern Illinois during the same period (Bauxar 1978; Johnson 1981; Tanner 1987). By 1815, the Kickapoo gained control over much of present-day central Illinois. Following the 1832 Black Hawk War, both the Kickapoo and Illiniwek were forced to formally cede their Illinois lands to the US government (Temple 1966).

Illinois achieved statehood in 1818, but significant Euroamerican settlement of the interior prairies lagged behind other regions. The three Study Area counties were established in the 1830s:

- **Livingston County** (1837) from portions of McLean, LaSalle, and Iroquois Counties.

- **McLean County** (1830) from portions of Crawford, Clark, Fayette, Sangamon, Tazewell, and Vermillion Counties.
- **Woodford County** (1841) from parts of neighboring Tazewell and McLean Counties.

3.2.1 Early Agricultural Practices (1820s to 1840s)

The Study Area remained sparsely settled until the arrival of the railroads in the mid-to-late nineteenth century (Bateman and Selby 1909). Prior to its arrival, early nineteenth century settlers practiced subsistence farming, cultivating grains and raising livestock. While the prairie's rich soils were attractive to early settlers, the dense sod of the prairie proved challenging. Its deep root structure resisted traditional wood or iron plows, creating difficulty in working the land. The development of the steel moldboard plow by John Deere in the 1830s enabled farmers to turn the prairie soil efficiently, allowing settlers to farm large tracts of land with unprecedented productivity, especially for corn and small grains (Hurt 2002; Bogue 1963).

Access to timber, however, was needed for building and fuel. Early farmsteads tended to cluster near groves, along river bottoms, or along the edges of timber belts before spreading out across the open prairie as railroads improved access to lumber by the mid-1850s (Malone and Roark 1984).

In the 1840s, early settlers in the Study Area practiced subsistence farming on the newly broken prairie. Agricultural production was limited in scale, with farmers growing food primarily for household use. Settlers raised livestock in small numbers, including hogs, cattle, and chickens, often letting them roam freely. Corn thrived in the fertile prairie soil and was the dominant crop. Farms also grew wheat, potatoes, and garden vegetables, and sometimes small quantities of flax and tobacco. Surpluses were limited and sold locally (Bogue 1963; Gates 1936).

3.2.2 Transportation and Market Expansion

By the 1850s, the growing transportation system of roads and railroads allowed farmers to ship grain to larger markets. By 1860, Livingston County was well integrated into Illinois's broader grain economy. Corn remained the dominant crop, and production both for feeding livestock and for market sale increased. Wheat, oats, and hay, including timothy and clover, were raised for domestic use and also supported local milling. Livestock, especially cattle and hogs, continued to be raised for subsistence, but numbers raised for market increased (Gates 1932).

The area was served by three early railroads. The Chicago & Alton Railroad was the first to reach Livingston County in 1854, running north and south through the county seat of Pontiac. It connected Chicago to St. Louis and provided a critical route for early agricultural development. Its presence stimulated the rapid growth of Pontiac and nearby towns by facilitating grain shipment and increasing access to goods and markets (Bateman and Selby 1909, 364; Livingston County Historical Society 1981).

The Peoria & Oquawka Railroad, chartered in 1855, was completed through the southern part of Livingston County by 1857, forming an east–west link between Peoria and the Indiana state line. It later became part of the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad (TP&W). The line allowed further development, providing access to farmers seeking markets in Peoria and the broader Midwest (Bateman and Selby 1909; Livingston County Historical Society 1981).

The Kankakee & Southwestern Railroad (later operated by the Illinois Central) was completed through Flanagan by the early 1880s. Like the previous railroads established in the area, it provided a critical shipping outlet for grain and livestock from the surrounding farms (Grant 1996; Drury 1955). The arrival of the railroad

was central to Flanagan's growth, as it allowed direct access to larger markets and facilitated the village's incorporation in 1882.

3.2.3 Migration and Immigration

Early settlers to Livingston County came in the 1830s, primarily from Indiana and Ohio, as well as from "the older and more populous counties" of Illinois, including La Salle, Bureau, Peoria, Knox, Fulton, Tazewell and Woodford. Such settlers were attracted to the area for its affordable land and better agricultural opportunities than those available to them in their longer settled homelands (Graham et al. 1878). The first Euroamerican settlers in McLean County arrived in the 1820s, primarily from southern states like Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia, often traveling along overland routes such as the Fort Clark Trail (Bateman and Selby 1908). Likewise, in Woodford County, the earliest Euroamerican settlers began arriving in the 1820s and 1830s, primarily from Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York (Bogue 1963).

Between the 1840s and 1880s, Livingston County attracted a diverse stream of European immigrants, including significant numbers of Germans, Irish, and French (especially from Alsace, a French border province with a German-speaking majority), with smaller groups of Bohemians (Czechs), Scandinavians, and Swiss. These groups were drawn to Central Illinois by cheap prairieland and access to expanding railroads and market towns like Pontiac and Fairbury. Many also sought religious freedom during this early period (Bateman and Selby 1909; Bogue 1963).

3.2.4 Commercial Agriculture and Rural Development (1860s to 1900s)

By the late 1860s, the shift toward commercial farming was underway as large farms grew in number and cash crop production displaced older mixed subsistence patterns (Bogue 1963). The 1870s and 1880s saw the rise of market-oriented, diversified farming, spurred by rail connections and population growth. Farm size and productivity increased. Corn remained the staple and largest acreage crop. Wheat, oats, and hay continued to be important, although wheat acreage fluctuated based on price and soil conditions. Livestock production, particularly beef cattle and hogs, became a major economic driver, and farmers increasingly invested in improved breeds such as Shorthorn cattle and Berkshire hogs, and participated in county fairs and breeding associations. Some farmers also produced butter, cheese, wool, and eggs for local and regional sale (Gates 1932).

In the late nineteenth century, agriculture and industry thrived. Livingston County constructed drainage canals, which drained swampland and protected crops from drought (Massie, Massie and Associated 2005). While agriculture remained the dominant industry, underground coal mining developed in the nineteenth century and continued into the early twentieth century, providing coal for both fuel consumption as well as export (Massie, Massie and Associated 2005). Expanded railroad networks after the 1880s allowed farmers to ship grain and livestock to Chicago and beyond. Elevators and rural stations became central to local economies. Grain marketing was increasingly managed through cooperative elevators or large grain companies like Archer Daniels Midland (Hamilton 1999). Railroad expansion allowed nearly every township to connect with market towns like Pontiac, Fairbury, Forrest, and Dwight. These towns boomed as grain elevators, hardware stores, lumber yards, and implement dealers appeared to support farming operations (Bateman and Selby 1909).

In the 1890s mechanical innovations such as steam tractors, improved steel plows, disk harrows, mechanical corn planters, and later, gasoline-powered tractors, significantly increased farm productivity. This period saw farmers adopting more efficient tools to manage larger acreages and decreasing reliance on

manual labor (Hurt 2002). Farmsteads were modernized with balloon-framed houses, windmills, barns, and concrete silos. Rural churches and one-room schoolhouses were constructed throughout the countryside (Kniffen and Glassie 1966). Corn remained the dominant crop, but farmers increasingly recognized the effects of soil depletion from single-crop farming and adopted crop rotation systems involving corn, oats, and hay (especially clover or alfalfa) to preserve soil fertility. Wheat production declined due to disease and competition from western states and remained secondary (Bogue 1963).

Towns saw the construction of Queen Anne, Italianate, and later Craftsman-style houses and built brick business districts, public schools, banks, and social halls, reflecting growing prosperity and availability of building materials. European immigrant communities continued to shape the county's cultural landscape. Ethnic churches (Lutheran, Catholic, Czech Free Thought), schools, and social halls helped sustain cultural traditions and mutual aid societies (Rippley 1985).

3.2.5 Diversification and Twentieth Century Development

At the turn of the twentieth century, crop rotation with corn, oats, and hay increased in popularity even as corn remained the dominant crop (Gates 1936). Refinements in livestock raising in the 1900s included further investment in improved breeds, including Poland China hogs, and dairying and butter production grew modestly. The University of Illinois began promoting scientific agriculture through its extension services, including the use of fertilizers, hybrid seeds, and soil testing (Hurt 2002).

In the 1910s, high prices as a result of increased demands of World War I led to increased corn acreage, with some expansion of soybeans and rye (Danbom 1995). Hog and cattle output surged to meet wartime demand. During this period, livestock was increasingly bred for uniformity and market weight. Gasoline tractors were introduced and began to appear on larger farms, replacing horses for plowing. Federal programs encouraged expanded production, and Livingston County's farm economy peaked with strong commodity prices (Hurt 2002).

The 1920s were marked by overproduction as prices for corn and oats, the dominant crops in the region, fell as European farms recovered and demand fell in the years following the end of World War I. Farmers, continuing to produce at wartime levels, faced overproduction, soil exhaustion, and declining profits (Bogue 1963). Livestock herds shrank as prices dipped, and some farmers shifted focus to dairying or poultry to diversify. Mechanization continued to increase as tractors, combines, and corn pickers became more common, reducing labor needs and increasing scale, but resulting in high loan and equipment costs as commodity prices fell (Hamilton 1999). As prices fell and profits shrank, many small farmers could no longer cover their mortgages, taxes, or machinery costs. Some defaulted, while others sold out, leading to a steady shift toward fewer, larger farms (Danbom 1995). By the late 1920s, farmland became a commodity, with outside investors and larger landowners renting to tenant farmers, accelerating absentee ownership and consolidation (Gates 1936).

Road networks were developed and began to supplant the railroads as the primary method of transportation as they were improved in the early-twentieth century. Further early-to-mid twentieth century growth in southwestern Livingston County occurred in response to construction of US Highway 66 (US Route 66), an early automobile highway established in 1927 as part of the new US Highway system connecting Chicago, Illinois to Los Angeles, California. The new route primarily utilized existing roads to minimize construction time and costs. When completed, it extended nearly 2,400 miles through eight states. In Illinois, the proposed US Route 66 alignment overlapped the route of State Highway No. 4 (IL-4) and the earlier 1911 Pontiac Trail and represented the earliest completed portion of Route 66 (NPS 2021; Livingston County

Historical Society 2013). Part of the Illinois portion of US Route 66 extended diagonally through Livingston County from northeast to southwest through Dwight and Pontiac. Promoted as the "Mother Road" and the "shortest, best, and most scenic route from Chicago through St. Louis to Los Angeles," US Route 66 spurred significant business development along its alignment from the 1930s through the 1950s (NPS 2021). During the Second World War, military traffic increased along US Route 66, already the busiest highway in Illinois, leading to the rapid deterioration of the roadway and much needed repairs in the late 1940s. After the war, with the rise in automobile ownership, Route 66 in Illinois became a major throughfare for tourists traveling west on vacation (National Park Service [NPS] 2021).

By the 1930s, the long decline in farm prices and rising debt resulted in a full-scale agricultural crisis during the Great Depression. In Livingston County, and across the rural Midwest, low crop prices, rising foreclosures, and falling land values forced thousands of farmers off their land. Many farm families abandoned marginal acreage, while others consolidated holdings to remain solvent. The federal government intervened with New Deal programs like the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), which paid farmers to reduce production in order to raise prices and restore soil health (Hurt 2002). Programs also offered refinancing options and conservation incentives that helped some stabilize operations. By the end of the decade, agriculture had become more regulated, capital-intensive, and reliant on federal support, laying the groundwork for the industrialized farm systems of the postwar era (Danbom 1995; Hamilton 1999).

The development of the transportation network, including Route 66, played a key role in shaping land use and settlement patterns in the Study Area. By improving regional connectivity, existing agricultural markets were strengthened. The network also encouraged economic development and diversification, spurring the development of a commercial corridor within the largely agricultural area. In Livingston County, Pontiac experienced economic growth as the highway facilitated the establishment of businesses serving travelers on the road, including gas stations, diners, and motels. In McLean County, communities including Bloomington and Normal experienced similar growth. While Woodford County did not directly benefit from the development of Route 66 in the same way, the predominantly agricultural county benefited from improved regional connectivity, which facilitated the transportation of goods in the region (Davila 2015; Rails to Trails Conservancy 2024).

The US Route 66 corridor remained the primary thoroughfare for automobile traffic between St. Louis and Chicago until the construction of I-55 in the 1970s. The I-55 route through Livingston County bypassed the towns of Dwight and Pontiac in Livingston County, and Chenoa in McLean County, but the Route 66 corridor remained open through these towns as a business loop reclassified as Old Route 66. The more direct interstate route diverted much of the highway traffic from these towns, however, and many roadside businesses that catered to US Route 66 traffic did not survive (NPS 2021).

By the late twentieth century, agriculture in Livingston County and the surrounding region had shifted from the diversified, labor-intensive operations of the early 1900s to highly mechanized, large-scale enterprises. Early-twentieth-century farmsteads typically combined crop cultivation with livestock production and relied on seasonal labor, smaller equipment, and local service infrastructure such as blacksmiths, grain elevators, and implement dealers (Kniffen and Glassie 1966; Massie, Massie and Associated 2005). By contrast, post-war improvements in machinery, hybrid seed varieties, chemical fertilizers, and drainage technology increased yields while reducing labor demands, leading to farm consolidation and the decline of smaller operations (Massie, Massie and Associated 2005). These changes, combined with shifts in transportation, including from rail to truck shipping and the rerouting of highway traffic by I-55, altered the distribution of agricultural markets and support services. While agriculture remained the dominant land use, its economic

footprint was increasingly tied to fewer, larger farms and regional rather than local service hubs (Davila 2015; NPS 2021; Rippley 1985).

3.3 European Immigration (ca. 1840 – ca. 1900)

Between 1840 and 1900, Livingston County experienced sustained European immigration, reflecting larger demographic and economic trends that reshaped the rural Midwest. Immigration to the US surged during this period, peaking nationally in the 1880s, when over 5 million Europeans arrived (Daniels 2002:100–102). Many of Livingston County's settlers were part of this wave, including Germans, Irish, and Alsatian-French, who were drawn by the availability of fertile land, expanding railroads, and the promise of religious and political freedom.

German immigrants were the most numerous, arriving in Illinois in waves beginning in the 1840s. Many came from Prussia, Bavaria, and Hesse, often fleeing political unrest, military conscription, or economic hardship. They established tight-knit rural communities, built Lutheran and Catholic churches, and often practiced mixed farming, contributing to the area's agricultural success (Conzen 1980; Rippley 1985). At the same time, immigrants from the French border provinces of Alsace and Lorraine were driven to the US between the nineteenth century by rapid population growth and land scarcity (Veve 1992; Laybourn 1990s). Others left in pursuit of religious freedom. Later in the nineteenth century, the presence of these communities attracted others, especially Mennonites, to the Study Area (Niswander 1990).

Irish immigrants came to the US in large numbers during and in the immediate aftermath of the Great Famine (1845–1852). Many arrived with virtually no resources and minimal human capital as compared to German and French arrivals. Many were forced into the most arduous labor roles as a result, including digging drainage ditches, laying railroad tracks, working on canals, or living as tenant farmers in frequently unfavorable arrangements (Ó Gráda 1999; Ferriter 2005; O Gráda 2019). Their lack of resources and substandard conditions prompted slow growth in economic status across generations (Ó Gráda 2019).

By 1900, although new arrivals within the Study Area had begun to wane (**Figure 3-1**), immigrants and their children made up a substantial portion of Livingston County's rural population, shaping the county's ethnic geography that persisted into the twentieth century. While these immigrants brought distinct cultural and religious traditions that influenced local community life, they generally adopted the prevailing agricultural methods and vernacular architecture of the region. Farmhouses, barns, and outbuildings were largely built in styles common across central Illinois, such as balloon-frame construction and American vernacular forms, though subtle similarities in floorplans or decorative details occasionally reflected their European origins.

The following analysis is based on a review of census data from Nebraska, Pike, Rooks Grove, and Waldo Townships for the years spanning 1850 through 1900. Although this review is not comprehensive it provides an accounting of the demographics for the majority of the Study Area and provides background information on the demographics of the Study Area population.

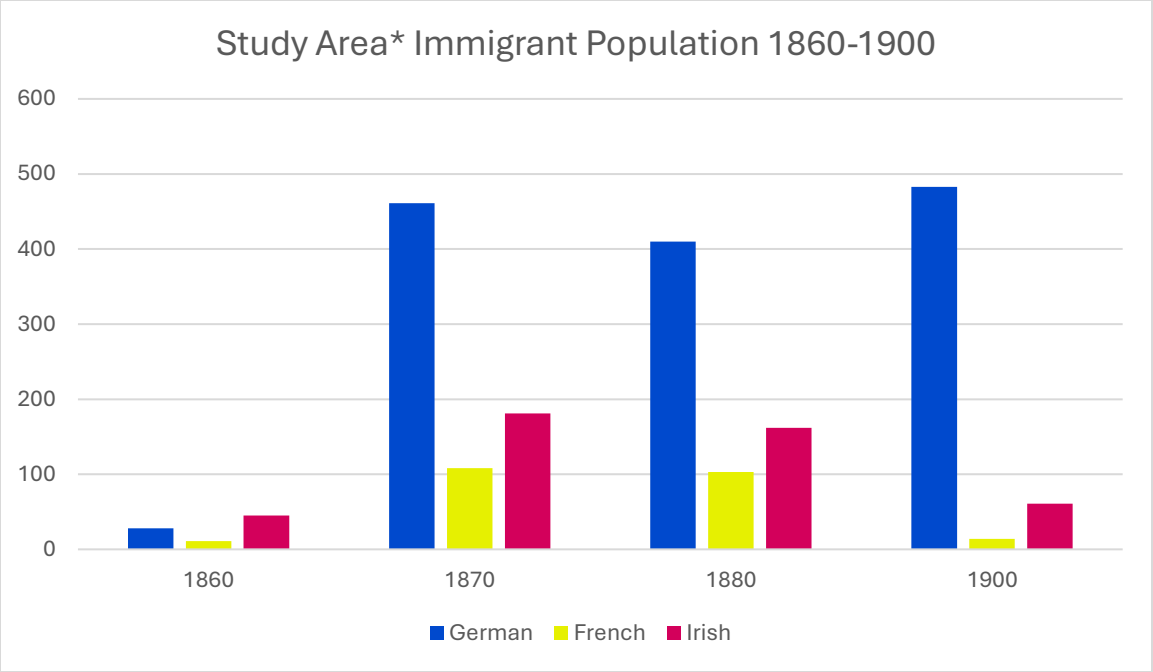

Figure 3-1: German, Alsatian-French, and Irish Immigrant per census data in the sample area, for census years 1860 through 1900.

Livingston County remained sparsely populated in the year 1850, and census returns for that year show few foreign immigrants. Those who were enumerated in that year reported England as their place of birth (US Census Bureau 1850). As the county's population grew, demographics began to diversify. For the year 1860, most Study Area residents (85 percent) were born in other US states, with most settlers coming from Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania (US Census Bureau 1860) (**Figure 3-2** and **Figure 3-3**). The remaining 15 percent of Study Area residents were born in foreign nations. The Study Area's foreign-born population as reported in 1860 was primarily English (68 residents), Irish (45), Canadian (29), and German (28) (US Census Bureau 1860) (**Figure 3-4**).

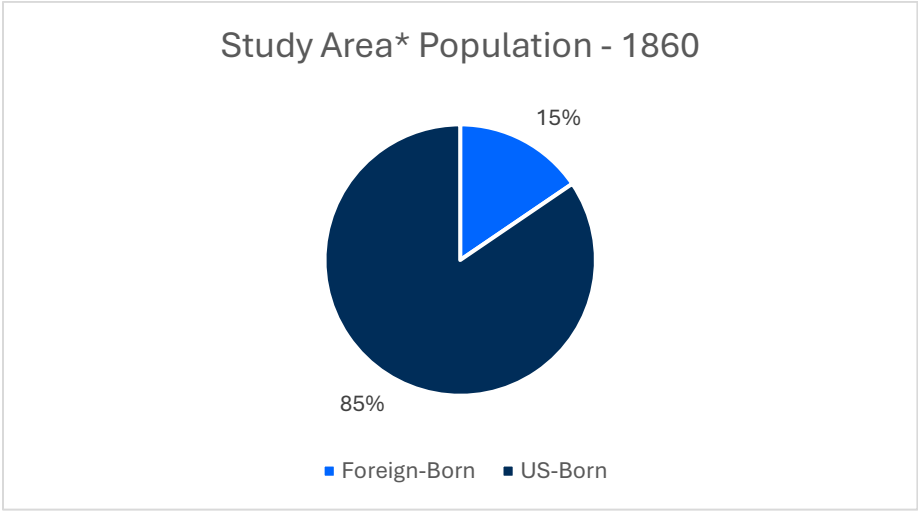

Figure 3-2: Percentage of US-Born vs Foreign-Born residents of the Study Area for 1860.

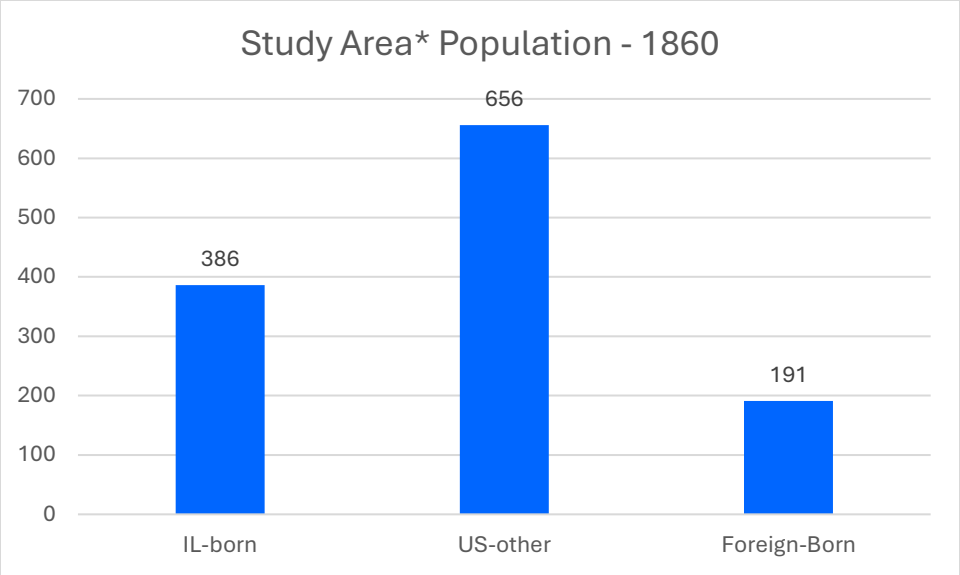

Figure 3-3: Study Area demographics, showing place of birth per the 1860 census.

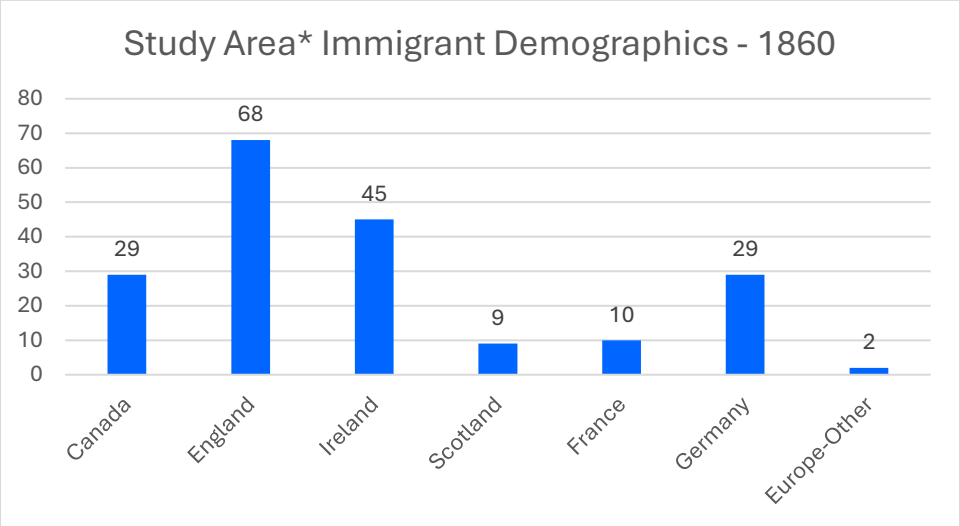

Figure 3-4: Study Area demographics showing place of birth of foreign-born residents per the 1860 census.

During the mid-nineteenth century, settlers of English descent were among the earliest Euroamericans to establish permanent agricultural communities, and in the census year 1860, they were the largest foreign-born group present in Livingston County (**Figure 3-4**). Often migrating from the Upland South, the Mid-Atlantic, or New England by way of Ohio and Indiana, these settlers brought with them general Anglo-American land-use traditions that emphasized dispersed farmsteads on rectilinear parcels laid out according to the Public Land Survey System. This approach favored quarter-section family farms with integrated field patterns, livestock rotation, and proximity to emergent towns situated on railroad lines or section corners (Hudson 1985; Meyer 2000). While their influence was significant in shaping the agricultural and civic infrastructure of the county, it was largely expressed through mainstream American conventions that became normalized over time and are therefore less easily distinguished as ethnically "English."

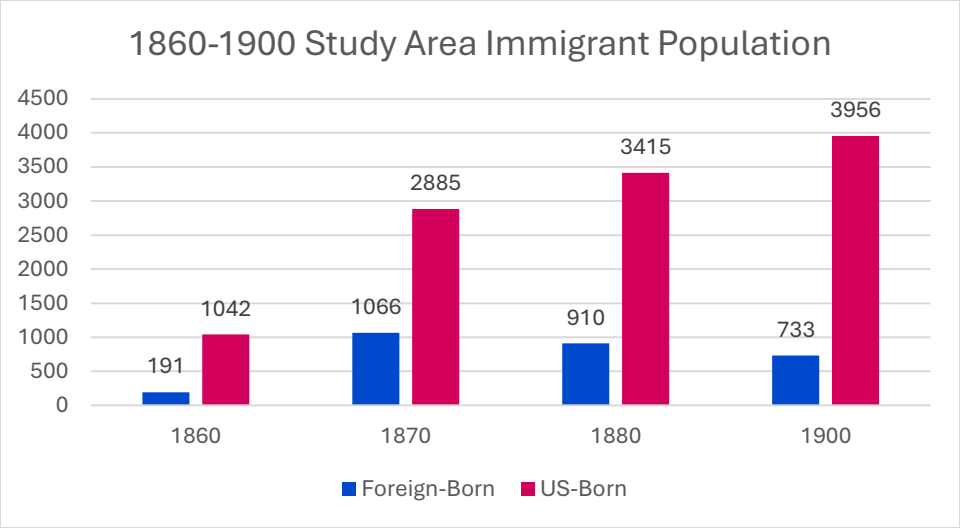

Figure 3-5: Study Area demographics: foreign-born vs US-born residents in 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1900.

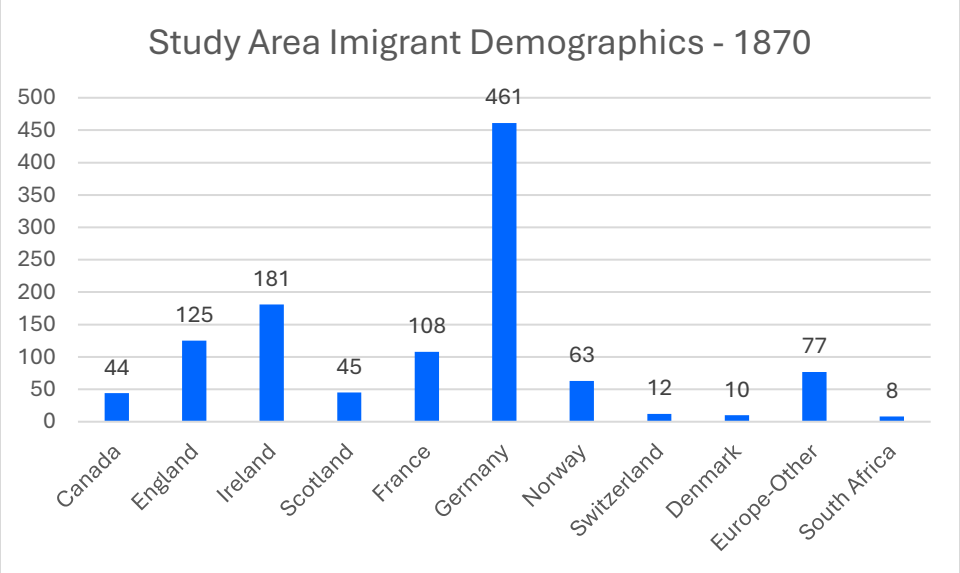

Figure 3-6: Countries of origin for foreign-born Study Area residents per the 1870 census.

A spike in foreign immigration to the Study Area occurred between 1860 and 1870, when the area's foreign-born population exploded from 191 in 1860 to 1,066 in 1870 (US Census Bureau 1860; 1870a) (**Figure 3-5**). In that census year, immigrants from Germany and Ireland far outpaced immigration from England (**Figure 3-6**). The following sections describe immigration from the largest groups: Germans, Irish, and French.

3.3.1 French

Census returns from four townships in Livingston County (Nebraska, Rooks Creek, Pike, and Waldo) indicate that by 1870, German-born residents vastly outnumbered French immigrants, most of whom were from the Alsace-Lorraine region, with 461 Germans compared to 108 French – a ratio of roughly 4:1. This disparity persisted into 1880 (410 Germans, 103 Alsatians) and 1900 (483 Germans, 14 Alsatians) (**Figure 3-7**). Given the number of German-born residents in the Study Area and the fact that many Alsatians shared language, religion, and cultural practices with Germans, it is likely that Alsatian immigrants in Livingston County largely

assimilated into local German-speaking communities rather than forming a distinct ethnic enclave (Ekberg 1998; Alvord and Carter 1926).

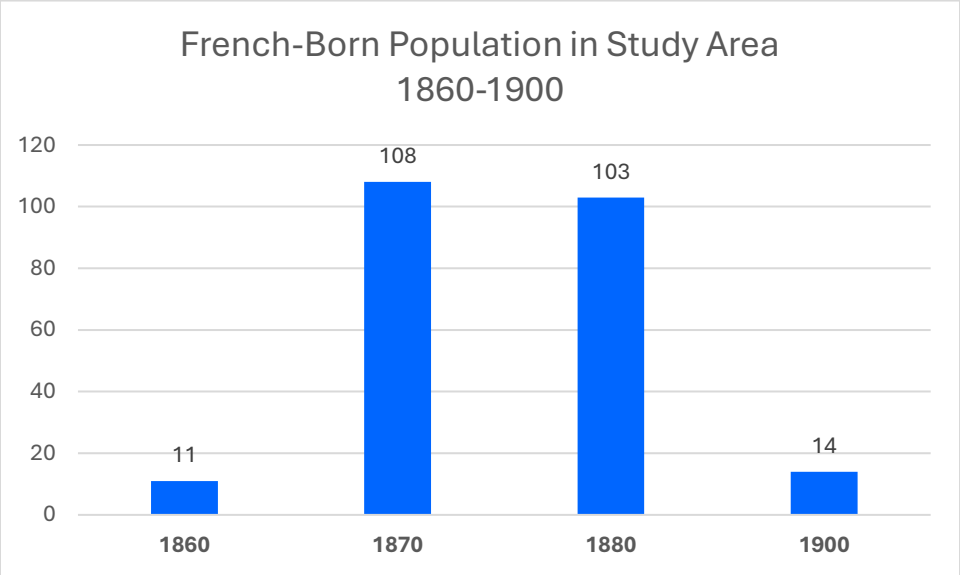

Figure 3-7: Study sample area data on immigrants from France, Alsace, and Lorraine, as recorded by the 1860 – 1900 US population censuses.

Alsatian migration to the US, including Illinois, accelerated in the nineteenth century, particularly after the economic distress and political changes following 1848 and the Franco-Prussian War. In Illinois, Alsatians often assimilated into either French-speaking or German-speaking communities (depending on religion and language), so they frequently appear in local records simply as "French," "German," or by town of origin rather than as a distinct "Alsatian" group (Ekberg 1998; Alvord and Carter 1926).

Alsatian migrants arrived with memories of half-timbered houses, steep roofs, and enclosed farmyards from Alsace, but when they settled in Illinois, they rarely built exact copies of those Old-World forms. Like many other new arrivals in the Midwest, they instead adapted to American materials, climates, and construction practices and generally assimilated into the broader German American and Midwest vernacular (Ekberg 1998; Kniffen and Glassie 1966). Studies of ethnic building traditions in Illinois show regional vernacular expressions that blend multiple European influences rather than preserve a single homeland prototype; researchers find German-style barn plans, balloon-frame farmhouses, and occasional decorative motifs that reflect continental origins, but not a cohesive "Alsatian" package (Coggeshall 1988; Noble 1984a).

3.3.2 German

German immigration to central Illinois occurred within a broader context of political turmoil, economic hardship, and agricultural opportunity that shaped waves of German settlement across the US during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the nineteenth century, the German states experienced a complex mix of political upheaval, economic hardship, and social change that spurred significant immigration to the US. Regions such as Baden and Württemberg in southwestern Germany were deeply affected by the revolutions of 1848, which exposed widespread demands for political reform and greater civil liberties. Baden, known for its liberal tendencies, saw many residents flee in the aftermath of failed revolutions, driven by political repression and poor economic conditions (Bittlingmayer and Waldenrath

1975). Similarly, Württemberg faced pressures from population growth and land shortages, motivating farmers and laborers to seek new opportunities abroad.

In southeastern Bavaria, conservative social structures and slow industrial development limited economic mobility, pushing rural populations toward immigration in search of improved livelihoods (Luebke 1990). Northern regions such as Hanover and Mecklenburg endured political disruptions—Hanover's annexation by Prussia in 1866 brought political suppression, while Mecklenburg's poor soils and rigid social hierarchy restricted agricultural success, both contributing to outward migration (Luebke 1990). Prussia, the dominant German power of the era, rapidly industrialized and militarized, but its rural areas faced consolidation of farms and agricultural modernization that displaced many smallholders and laborers. These economic transformations combined with political centralization to drive many Prussians to seek farmland and stability overseas (Bittlingmayer and Waldenrath 1975). Hesse-Darmstadt, a largely agrarian state in central Germany, suffered from economic stagnation and the ripple effects of the 1848 revolutions, including political uncertainty and overpopulation, which encouraged immigration (Luebke 1990). Lastly, the Kingdom of Saxony (Saxe), while a hub of early industrialization, experienced political unrest and economic displacement among its working classes, leading many to immigrate to escape repression and hardship (Bittlingmayer and Waldenrath 1975).

Together, these diverse political and economic challenges across German states fueled waves of immigration throughout the nineteenth century, as families and individuals left their homes seeking political freedom, economic opportunity, and agricultural land, particularly in the US.

These immigrants, predominantly Lutherans, Reformed, and Roman Catholics from the Palatinate, Württemberg, Switzerland, and adjacent regions, made their way down the Rhine, through Holland, and onward to major entry points such as Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, and later New Orleans. Many opted to settle in areas already inhabited by pioneers whose less intensive farming practices had depleted the soil. The Germans, skilled agrarians hardened by neo-feudal restrictions and frequent warfare, rapidly prospered by applying their labor-intensive, diversified farming methods, emphasizing soil fertility and animal husbandry (Bittlingmayer and Waldenrath 1975). Upon settling, German immigrants placed early priority on building large, well-planned barns designed to house livestock, protect feed, and facilitate manure collection. These barns, initially of rough logs and later stone, became characteristic of German settlements in the new world. The so-called "Swisser barns" introduced by German settlers became models even for neighboring English and Scotch-Irish farmers, shaping the rural landscape in Pennsylvania and beyond (Bittlingmayer and Waldenrath 1975).

The wave of German immigration intensified in the 1840s, as famine, economic problems, and the revolutions of 1848 compelled many to immigrate. Many Germans entered the US through New Orleans and traveled upriver via steamboat to burgeoning midwestern cities like St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Milwaukee before settling inland in states including Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin (Bowers 1984; Luebke 1990).

In Livingston and McLean counties, German settlers reflected this broader pattern. Much like their Pennsylvania predecessors, immigrants to central Illinois chose wooded or river-adjacent lands available at affordable prices, often purchasing plots that had been initially cleared or cultivated by earlier settlers. Their farms typically involved intensive agriculture on manageable parcels, where they used thorough clearing methods and practiced diversified farming that combined crop cultivation with substantial livestock rearing (Bowers 1984).

Within the Study Area, initial settlement into what would become Nebraska Township (Livingston County) occurred in the late 1850s as groups of largely Irish and German immigrants purchased land and began moving to the area. Many of the German immigrants settled west of Flanagan and established a small community there, known initially as "Windtown," where they established a church, later known as St. Petri's, school, and wind-powered gristmill. The mill was built by George Saur and operated at the site until 1879 when it was moved to Gridley (Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981).

By 1860, Germans constituted a significant demographic presence in the US, numbering over 1.2 million immigrants, roughly 4 percent of the total population (Luebke 1990). Concentrated largely in the Mid-Atlantic and North Central states, including Illinois, they often settled in communities among their own ethnic and religious groups, a tendency common to many immigrant populations. Approximately 65 percent lived in cities and towns, but a strong affinity for agriculture endured; by 1900, about one-quarter of German Americans worked in farming, with an especially strong representation in dairy farming (Luebke 1990).

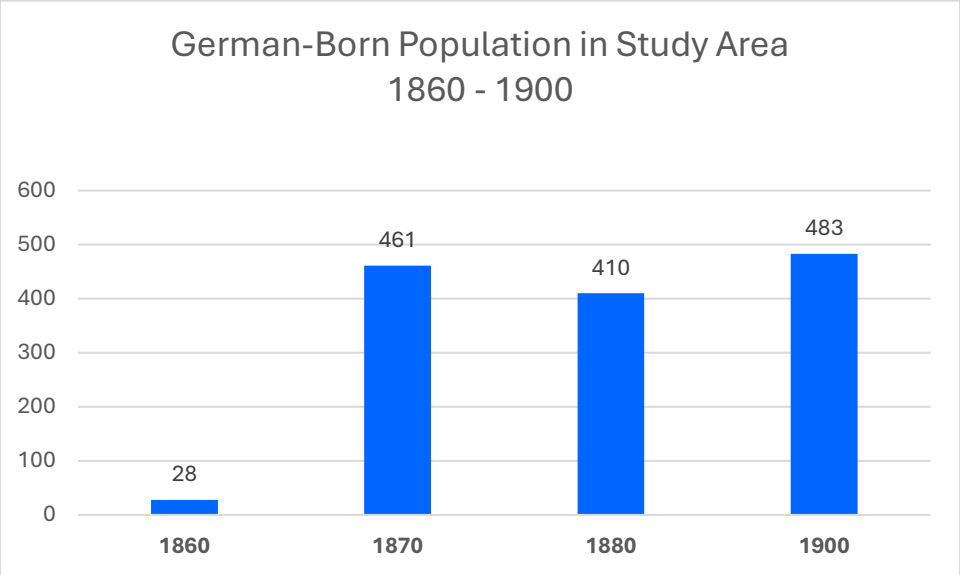

Figure 3-8: German-Born immigrants in the Study Area for Census years 1860, 1870, 1880 and 1900.

Within the Study Area, most of the foreign-born population had come from England and Ireland in the 1860 census year. German immigration surpassed arrivals from all other nations in the 1870 returns for Nebraska, Pike, Rooks Creek, and Waldo Townships (US Census Bureau 1870a) **(Figure 3-8**). After the failed German Revolution of 1848, many Germans sought refuge in Illinois, establishing communities where they could practice their cultural traditions freely. German immigration to the Study Area in the decade spanning 1860 to 1870 came from different regions of the German Confederation (**Figure 3-9**). The majority (29 percent) reported Hanover as their place of origin, while many others immigrated from Bavaria (24 percent), Prussia (16 percent), Wurttemberg (9 percent), and Baden (8 percent) (US Census Bureau 1870a).

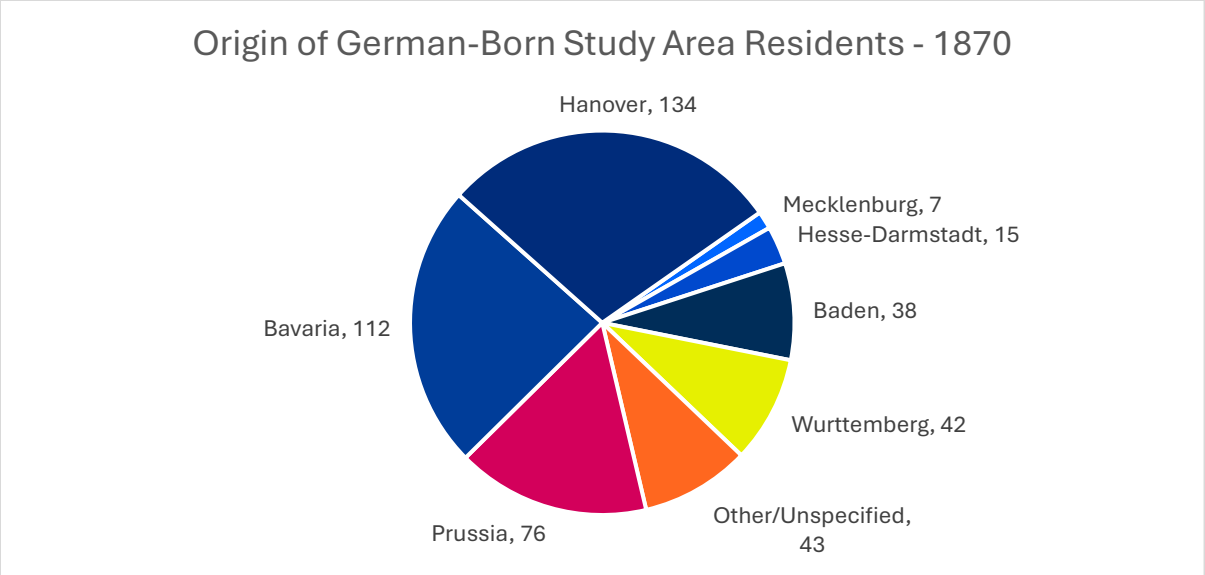

Figure 3-9: Origins of German-born residents of the Study Area per the 1870 census.

While many German immigrants settled across the Midwest during the nineteenth century, bringing diverse religious and cultural traditions, a significant subset were Mennonites: German-speaking Anabaptists known for their strong community ties, pacifism, and agricultural expertise. Mennonites are a Protestant Anabaptist group founded in the early sixteenth century in the German-speaking regions of Europe, particularly in the Rhineland and later in parts of Switzerland, the Palatinate, and later in Prussia and Russia. Known for their commitment to pacifism, adult baptism, and a simple, community-oriented lifestyle, Mennonites faced periodic persecution in Europe, which motivated many to seek religious freedom and economic opportunity abroad (Hostetler 1993; Nolt 2015). Unlike some immigrant groups who moved quickly to urban areas, Mennonites tended to form tightly-knit rural congregations, often settling together on frontier lands where they could maintain their religious practices and farming traditions. In central Illinois, these Mennonite settlers established congregations such as those in Waldo and Salem, where they adapted to the challenges of prairie life while preserving their distinct faith and cultural identity.

Many Mennonite immigrants to North America initially settled in Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century, attracted by William Penn's policy of religious tolerance and the availability of fertile farmland. From Pennsylvania, Mennonite families and communities gradually moved westward throughout the nineteenth century into Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. This westward migration was driven by population growth, the desire for more land, and the continuing search for communities where they could maintain their religious and cultural traditions (Hostetler 1993).

The Mennonite communities in Livingston County were founded by German-speaking settlers who arrived in the late 1850s and early 1860s, primarily from nearby counties such as Tazewell, McLean, and Woodford. They settled the Gridley Prairie, a challenging environment with hard sod, few trees, and limited infrastructure. Land was available cheaply from railroads and the government, attracting these farmers despite the hardships (Weber 1931).

The Waldo Mennonite Church was originally known as the Waldo Amish-Mennonite Church and formed as settlers moved onto the open prairie. Over time, after a statewide Mennonite reorganization, the Amish name was dropped, although it is still sometimes used informally. The congregation maintained traditional German language services and farming practices, adapting gradually to prairie life (Weber 1931).

From the original Waldo congregation, several groups separated due to differing religious views. One of these was the Salem Defenseless Mennonite Church, influenced by the Egly movement, a revivalist group that emphasized personal spiritual experience and change of heart. This influence came through Joseph Rediger, an early minister who experienced the movement during the Civil War. The Salem congregation formally established itself near Gridley with its first church building in 1875 on land donated by John Ehresman. The name "Salem" (meaning "City of Peace") was adopted officially in 1898 (Weber 1931).

The Salem church constructed a larger building in 1893, largely with donated labor, and supported German language religious education through Sunday Schools and lessons held in a dedicated schoolhouse built in the early 1900s. The old church building was repurposed for education, prayer meetings, and community events before eventually being dismantled, with parts of it reused locally, including at the Salem Orphanage (Weber 1931).

The Salem Orphanage was founded in the late 1890s by members of the Defenseless Mennonite Church, including Daniel and Mrs. King of Flanagan, to care for homeless children in the region. It opened in 1900 and expanded quickly, with community support funding the buildings and operations. The orphanage also published German and English newspapers, *Heils-Bote* and *Zion's Call*, to support its mission and the wider church community (Weber 1931).

Later, cooperation between the Central Conference Mennonites and Defenseless Mennonites led to the establishment of the Mennonite Old People's Home at Meadows, Illinois. Initiated in the early 1900s and built in the 1920s, this home provided care for elderly church members. Fundraising efforts and community labor helped build and expand the facility, which opened in 1923 with a capacity that quickly filled (Weber 1931).

The Waldo and Salem congregations shared burial grounds and maintained close social and geographic ties, reflecting a broader Mennonite community characterized by both unity and diversity in religious practice. The Salem congregation's revivalist emphasis and establishment of institutions like the orphanage and old people's home highlight its active role in community care, while Waldo retained more traditional Mennonite forms. Together, these congregations illustrate how German-speaking Mennonites in central Illinois adapted to their new environment while preserving religious and cultural traditions.

3.3.3 Irish

Like the other groups covered in this study, Irish immigration to central Illinois in the nineteenth century was driven by a combination of hardship in Ireland and opportunity in the Midwest. The Great Famine of the late 1840s, coupled with chronic rural poverty and limited prospects for tenant farmers, pushed thousands to leave Ireland (Kenny 2003; Wyman 2000). Chain migration quickly took hold, as early arrivals sent news and resources home, guiding relatives to areas where work and housing were attainable. By the time the Illinois Central Railroad was completed through McLean and Livingston Counties in the 1850s, Irish laborers, many with prior railroad experience in the East, were a ready workforce for grading and track-laying. Railroad-linked towns such as Chenoa, Gridley, and Flanagan became key entry points for Irish settlement (Gjerde 1985).

The census record for a sample of four townships in the Study Area show that in 1870, Irish-born residents accounted for about one-quarter of the combined Irish–German–Alsatian foreign-born population, a share they maintained into 1880 despite a modest drop in absolute numbers (**Figure 3-10**) (US Bureau Census 1870, 1880). This stability occurred even as German immigration surged, highlighting the Irish community's ability to hold its demographic position during a period of competitive in-migration. Much of this endurance can be attributed to the dual strategy of remaining in established rail towns and gradually acquiring nearby

farmland, a path made possible by the relative affordability and availability of land in central Illinois compared to the eastern states (Cronon 1991).

Religious and social networks reinforced these patterns. Catholic parishes, often founded soon after the railroad arrived, anchored Irish communities, offering not only spiritual life but also practical assistance in employment, housing, and credit (Doyle 1999). Even as large-scale new arrivals from Ireland slowed after the 1880s, these networks maintained the cohesion and visibility of Irish communities in McLean and Livingston Counties. In this way, the Irish navigated the competitive, multi-ethnic landscape of the central Illinois countryside, transitioning from a migrant labor force into a stable, if proportionally smaller, rural population.

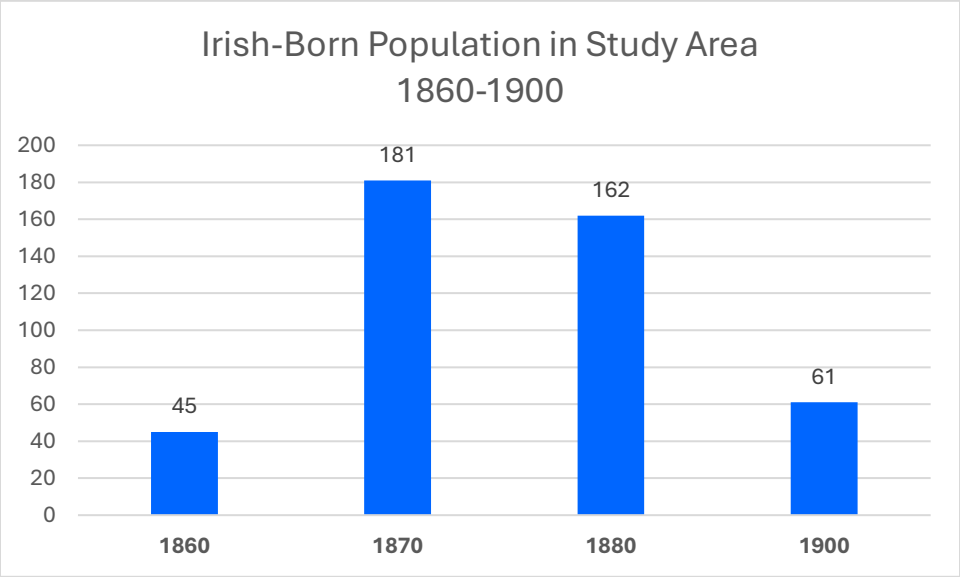

Figure 3-10: Irish-Born immigrants in the Study Area for Census years 1860, 1870, 1880, and 1900.

Unlike the predominantly agrarian Germans and Alsatians who settled rural areas, many Irish immigrants came with diverse occupational backgrounds, including skilled laborers, artisans, and urban workers, although a substantial number also pursued farming. Early Irish settlers often concentrated in urban centers like Chicago, but over time, Irish farming communities established themselves in counties such as Livingston and McLean (Akenson 1993; Miller 1985).

The majority of Irish immigrants were Catholic, and their religious and cultural identity played a central role in shaping their communities. Irish farmers adapted their traditional mixed farming techniques to the fertile Illinois prairie, incorporating staple crops such as corn and wheat, while maintaining practices like livestock husbandry that were common in Ireland (Diner 2001). Their farms tended to be smaller and more diversified compared to the large-scale grain operations typical of some German settlers. Irish agricultural practices reflected a blend of old-world methods and new environmental realities, such as adapting to the vast, open prairies and embracing mechanization as it became available (Miller 1985; Akenson 1993).

Irish immigrant farmers in central Illinois combined traditional farming methods from Ireland with practical adaptations suited to the Midwestern prairie. In Ireland, many small-scale farmers practiced mixed farming, raising crops and livestock primarily for family use with some surplus for market sale. Upon settling in Illinois, they initially maintained this approach, cultivating staple crops such as corn and wheat while keeping cattle and pigs. Over time, they gradually shifted toward more market-oriented grain production common in the region but continued to emphasize diversified livestock for both sustenance and income (Diner 2001).

Accustomed to working intensively on relatively small plots of land in Ireland's challenging terrain, Irish settlers brought a strong ethic of careful land use and labor-intensive cultivation to Illinois. They focused on clearing the tough prairie sod with hand tools and draft animals, enabling them to establish productive farms even with limited acreage initially (Akenson 1993). Their traditional understanding of soil fertility and crop rotation also influenced their farming practices. They adapted these techniques to prairie conditions by rotating wheat and corn crops and utilizing livestock manure to maintain soil health (Miller 1985).

Beyond agriculture, Irish immigrants were integral to the building and industrial trades in Illinois, especially in the growing cities and railroad construction. Their labor helped fuel the state's rapid development during the nineteenth century, while Irish cultural institutions, including Catholic parishes and social organizations, provided vital support networks and preserved ethnic identity (Diner 2001).

In the mid-nineteenth century, Irish immigrants played a significant role in shaping communities in the Study Area, including Chenoa, Gridley, Meadows, and Flanagan. Irish settlers arrived in McLean County as early as the 1850s, primarily working on railroad construction, and many came during the Great Famine exodus (McLean County Historical Society 2023). Gridley, founded in 1869, attracted Irish settlers who were instrumental in its early development, aided by its location along the Illinois Central Railroad, which provided access to broader markets and resources (McLean County Historical Society 2023). Meadows, an unincorporated community west of Chenoa, was platted in 1877 by Charles Parker and developed around the TP&W Railroad, facilitating transportation and commerce (McLean County Historical Society 2023). Similarly, Flanagan in western Livingston County grew around the Illinois Central Railroad, which made it an attractive location for Irish immigrants seeking employment and community (McLean County Historical Society 2023). The contributions of these immigrants were later commemorated through monuments recognizing Irish railroad workers who helped shape regional infrastructure and settlement patterns (McLean County Historical Society 2023).

The village of Flanagan in Livingston County was established by three Irish brothers: Patrick, Edward, and Peter Flanagan, who settled in Nebraska Township around 1855. The Flanagans immigrated to the US with their mother, Judith (née Carrol) Flanagan, in 1848, eventually migrating to this part of Illinois (Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981). Edward Flanagan purchased 120 acres in Section 29 by late 1855, marking the family's early land acquisitions in the area (US General Land Office 1855). By 1860, all three brothers were recorded as farmers and landowners in Nebraska Township, collectively holding real estate valued at nearly $4,000 (US Census 1860).

Before the Flanagans' settlement, a small community known as "Nebraska" existed nearby in Section 11 (Post Office Department 1880). The brothers laid out and platted a new village in 1880 along a branch of the Illinois Central Railroad—a vital transportation link connecting Pontiac and Minonk and a key factor in attracting settlers, many of whom had worked on building the railroad itself (Pierce 2016; Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981). The settlement was soon renamed Flanagan in their honor. An early agreement with the railroad company ensured that no other towns would be established within 5 miles, safeguarding Flanagan's development amidst nearby towns Graymont and Minonk (Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981).

The village's initial layout expanded from Section 22's center, stretching approximately 1,200 feet east and 800 feet north and south, with further additions over the following decades as the population grew. Flanagan was officially incorporated on August 3, 1882 (Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981). Notably, as late as 1911, large tracts in Section 22 remained under the ownership of the Flanagan estate.

Early commerce included the first dry goods store built by local farmer James Gilman, who also served as postmaster. The village's first post office application, filed in July 1880, stated that the office was positioned just southwest of the railroad depot to serve about 500 residents at the time (Post Office Department 1880).

Through the twentieth century, Flanagan experienced modest growth, with the grain elevator cooperative and light manufacturing forming its economic backbone. As of 2020, the village population stood at 1,010, up from 672 in 1950 (US Census Bureau 1950, 2024). Strategically located along Illinois Route 116, Flanagan continues to serve as a key regional connector between Interstate 39 and Interstate 55 in central Livingston County.

4.0 Architectural Development (ca. 1840–1900)

The built environment of Livingston and McLean Counties between ca. 1840 and ca. 1900 reflected the transition from utilitarian frontier construction to stylistically sophisticated, nationally influenced forms as availability of materials and techniques increased. Early settlers in the 1830s–1850s constructed dwellings and agricultural buildings that prioritized expediency and available resources over ornamentation. Initial housing stock frequently consisted of log structures in timber-rich areas and modest timber-frame or balloon-frame forms elsewhere.

A quote in the 1909 *History of Livingston County* summarized the construction of the early pioneer farmstead:

> When the pioneer farmer and home-seeker arrived in this county to "spy out the land" and select a place to make his future home, his first thought was to provide a shelter for his family and his team. He found along the streams an abundance of good hardwood timber, such as black and white walnut, white, red and burr oak, ash, elm, hickory, hackberry, wild cherry, etc., but no sawmill to convert this timber into lumber for building purposes. The early settler, however, usually came prepared to meet just such an emergency and was equal to the occasion. A hand-ax, a broad-ax, a cross-cut saw, hand-saw, an auger, adze, draw-shave, a frow and two or three iron wedges were the tools necessary for the construction of a comfortable log cabin. [...] Stables for the horses were built of logs, as were the cabins, but with roofs thatched with slough grass. This slough grass grew six to seven feet high, and made a splendid roof for stables, cribs and sheds, as well as for "topping" off grain and hay stacks (Bateman and Selby 1909).

In the predominantly rural Study Area, several vernacular forms, including the one-and-a-half-story hall-and-parlor house, single-pen dwellings, and the two-story I-house, became prevalent as agricultural prosperity increased. Materials were locally sourced, with fieldstone, hand-hewn timbers, and brick from nearby kilns forming the basis of construction in permanent structures. Stylistic elements were minimal, with Greek Revival detailing, such as cornice returns and transomed entries, appearing in more prosperous rural residences (McAlester 2015; Illinois Department of Transportation 2014a).

German and Irish immigrants contributed distinctive adaptations to this early building landscape. Irish settlers, particularly those arriving during the mid-century famine migrations, often favored modest one- to one-and-a-half-story frame cottages with gable-end chimneys, a form reminiscent of rural Irish vernacular traditions but adapted to Midwestern balloon-frame techniques. In farmstead layouts, Irish agriculturalists frequently clustered functional buildings, including barns, corncribs, and sheds, close to the dwelling, echoing patterns from smallholdings in Ireland (Glassie 2000). German immigrants, by contrast, often employed more dispersed layouts and incorporated durable materials like brick or limestone in both dwellings and barns, reflecting building traditions from central Europe. In barn construction, German influence is evident in the use of bank barns and forebays, forms adapted to the Illinois landscape but derived from Pennsylvania German precedents (Ensminger 1992).

The arrival and expansion of the Illinois Central and other regional rail lines from the 1850s to the 1870s fundamentally altered architectural development. Railroads facilitated the availability of milled lumber, pressed brick, metal roofing, and prefabricated architectural elements that were popularized through the dissemination of national pattern books and style manuals. As a result, towns along the lines, including Pontiac, Gridley, Chenoa, and Flanagan, witnessed the proliferation of residences and commercial

architecture with high-style influence. The Italianate style, with its characteristic bracketed cornices, low-pitched roofs, and tall narrow windows, dominated from the 1860s through the 1880s. Gothic Revival and, later, Queen Anne designs emerged in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. German craftsmen, often trained in masonry and carpentry, played a notable role in executing these stylistically ambitious designs, introducing precision brick bonding patterns, segmental arches, and finely tooled stonework. Irish builders, frequently employed in railroad construction, also transferred their skills to local architecture, contributing to the rapid expansion of frame housing in railroad towns (McAlester 2015; Jordan 1985).

Like domestic architecture, agricultural architecture underwent significant transformation during the study period. In the pre-railroad decades, the English three-bay barn was a dominant type, characterized by a central threshing floor flanked by mows or livestock bays, framed with heavy timber joinery. Smaller gable-roof corncribs, smokehouses, and springhouses were built using vernacular techniques adapted to local needs (Stratton and Mansberger 2002). German farmers, drawing on Old World precedents, often modified these barns with forebays or integrated livestock shelters, while Irish farmers adapted them with smaller, multifunctional outbuildings suited to mixed farming operations.

By the 1870s and 1880s, advances in farming technology and access to factory-produced components facilitated the construction of transverse-frame barns and, where topography permitted, bank barns. The gambrel-roof barn, which maximized hay storage volume, began appearing in the late nineteenth century and foreshadowed the adoption of even more specialized structures in the early twentieth century, such as round barns and concrete stave silos. Agricultural experiment stations and land-grant colleges, notably the University of Illinois, promoted these newer forms through published plans and extension programs, leading to increasing standardization in farmstead design (J Price 1996; Illinois Department of Transportation 2014a).

By 1900, the architectural character of Livingston and McLean Counties had shifted from localized, resource-driven building traditions to a hybridized landscape in which vernacular forms coexisted with stylistically sophisticated, mass-produced elements. This transformation mirrored broader trends in the American Midwest, where transportation networks, ethnic building traditions, and agricultural modernization reshaped both town and rural environments (McAlester 2015; C Price 1996; Glassie 2000). The table below summarizes the common forms and their key features for key periods between 1840 and 1900 (**Table 4-1**).

Table 4-1: Representative Architectural Forms and Cultural Influences, Livingston & McLean Counties, ca. 1840–1900

PERIOD & CONTEXT	FORM/TYPE	KEY FEATURES	CULTURAL/ETHNIC INFLUENCES
Frontier Era (1840–1855)	Single-Pen Log House	Hand-hewn logs, chinking, stone chimney	Irish: gable-end chimneys; German: occasional use of half-timber framing
	Hall-and-Parlor House	1.5-story, side-gable roof, minimal ornament	Irish compact plan layouts; German preference for masonry if available
	I-House	Two-story, symmetrical façade	Anglo-American dominant, but adopted by both Irish & German settlers

Railroad Expansion (1855–1880)	Italianate Residence	Bracketed cornice, tall narrow windows	German masons' brickwork; Irish carpenters in framing and millwork
	Gothic Revival Cottage	Steep gable, decorative vergeboards	Pattern-book adoption by mixed ethnic groups
	Brick Commercial Block	Segmental arches, cast-iron storefronts	German precision masonry techniques
Late 19th Century (1880–1900)	Queen Anne House	Asymmetry, wraparound porch, spindlework	Adopted broadly; German builders excelled in complex roof forms
	Transverse-Frame Barn	Central drive, side bays	Adapted from English barn but modified by German forebay tradition
	Gambrel-Roof Barn	Maximized hay storage	Widespread; German and Irish farmers adopted for dairying
	Clustered Outbuilding Farmstead	Buildings grouped close to house	Irish smallholding tradition

4.1 Ethnic Influence on Domestic and Agricultural Architecture in Central Illinois

The following sections summarize specific ethnic influences apparently in architecture within the Study Area.

4.1.1 English Architectural Influence

During the mid-nineteenth century, settlers of English descent were among the earliest Euroamericans to establish permanent agricultural communities in the Study Area. In terms of architecture, English-descended settlers introduced vernacular house types common throughout the Midwest, including I-houses, upright-and-wing forms, and gabled-ell plans. These dwellings were typically constructed using balloon framing and featured symmetrical façades with restrained ornamentation, reflecting the Protestant values of simplicity and function associated with Anglo-American culture (McAlester 2015; Noble 1984a). Unlike the more visibly ethnic building forms introduced by German, Scandinavian, or Eastern European immigrants later in the century, such as bank barns, traditional log structures, or masonry cottages, English-influenced architecture left fewer stylistic markers. Nonetheless, the cultural landscapes shaped by these settlers, including town grids, schoolhouses, and Protestant churches (especially Methodist and Congregationalist), established the foundation of the region's built-environment and were instrumental in defining what would become the dominant rural vernacular in central Illinois (Upton 1986; Glassie 2000).

4.1.2 German Architectural Influence

In the mid-nineteenth century, German immigrants brought a distinctive architectural heritage to rural America, especially influencing the landscapes of Pennsylvania, Texas, and the Midwest. Their traditional farmhouses and barns, rooted in centuries-old European building practices, were adapted to local materials, climates, and social conditions in the US. In Germany around the 1840s, the Low German house, or Fachhallenhaus, was a common farmhouse type characterized by timber framing with a large central hall (diehl) flanked by bays for livestock and storage, and living spaces arranged at one end. This multifunctional structure reflected the integration of domestic and agricultural life typical of northern Germany and emphasized efficiency and community values (Clark 1986; Noble 1984b).

German immigrants first settled in Pennsylvania, where they modified their building traditions to the local environment. The Pennsylvania German house often featured an asymmetrical façade, an off-center roof-ridge chimney, and a distinctive "roof kick" or flared eave, which provided protection from the elements and originated from their European heritage (PHMC 2024; Glassie 1975). The hallmark "two-door" farmhouse, with paired entrances leading to distinct interior spaces, symbolized a spatial organization aligned with German customs, including the kammer, or private chamber, which was used for sleeping or storage (PHMC 2024; Morrison and Reed 2002). The German bank barn, known also as the "Switzer" barn, was adapted to Pennsylvania's hilly topography by building into hillsides, allowing ground-level access to both upper and lower floors, thus facilitating the efficient management of livestock and crops (PHMC 2024; Glassie 1975).

As German immigrants migrated westward into the American Midwest, especially Ohio and Indiana, they transported these architectural forms, adapting them to new environmental and cultural contexts. Settlers from northern Germany constructed barns similar to Saxon or North German plain barns, characterized by large open interiors with timber framing and prominent gable ends (**Figure 4-1**). Unlike the integrated housebarns common in Germany, these Midwestern barns often separated living quarters from agricultural functions, reflecting adaptations to American farming practices (Morrison and Reed 2002; Noble 1984b).

Figure 4-1: Barn and barn yard, central Illinois, 1951 (Goodrich 1951). This barn, although not located within the Study Area, shares common features with the North German or Saxon plain barns including the prominent gable ends.

The bank barn form also spread across the hilly areas of the Midwest, retaining its practical features and timber construction, illustrating the durability and flexibility of German building traditions (Glassie 1975). None were observed in the Study Area.

Cantilevered porches, another distinct architectural feature, projected beyond the main frame of houses or barns and were supported by embedded beams. These porches provided sheltered outdoor space that functioned as semi-public areas for socializing and work, reflecting the communal life of German immigrant communities and their negotiation between old-world traditions and new-world realities (**Figure 4-2**) (Morrison and Reed 2002).

Figure 4-2: Resource KB39, a ca. 1880 barn constructed by J.H. Park (Geo. A. Ogle & Co. 1893). The barn features cantilevered porches typical of German immigrant-built barns from the study period.

Through these forms (farmhouses with two doors and kammer rooms, bank barns, Saxon barns, and cantilevered porches), German immigrants preserved their vernacular architecture while adapting it to the American frontier. This legacy has become a vital part of the rural architectural heritage in Pennsylvania and the Midwest, underscoring the enduring influence of German craftsmanship and cultural identity on the American built environment (Noble 1984b; Morrison and Reed 2002; PHMC 2024).

In McLean and Livingston Counties, German settlers favored more conventional separate farm buildings, shaped by the availability of materials like timber and stone and influenced by regional farming practices. Their architecture did not include housebarns but instead followed vernacular trends common among many immigrant groups: building barns and houses as distinct buildings suited to the demands of intensive agriculture and seasonal climates. This pattern parallels the experience of the Study Area's French-descended settlers, who similarly adapted their building traditions to local conditions rather than replicating European prototypes exactly. Together, these examples illustrate how German immigrants in central Illinois

negotiated the balance between cultural heritage and practical adaptation, creating built environments uniquely suited to their new American context.

Although new arrivals did not reproduce Old World forms, German farmsteads in central Illinois still echoed their origins architecturally and culturally. Large barns with wide doors suitable for wagons, simple but sturdy houses, and occasional medieval features such as half-timbered (fachwerk) walls and steep roofs signaled continuity of tradition and adaptation to new environments. Barn construction often preceded permanent homes, emphasizing the primacy of livestock management in their agricultural economy, with a common German philosophy stating that a "good barn will pay for a good house" but not vice versa (Bowers 1984).

4.1.3 Irish Architectural Influence

While no extant examples of definitively traditional Irish dwellings have been identified in the Study Area, documentary evidence of settlement patterns and building practices suggests that Irish immigrants to the region may have adapted elements of their native vernacular architecture to local Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century, like their German counterparts, tended to adopt prevailing regional building forms. These included log houses, frame I-houses, or other common variations constructed from local timber, rather than the stone typical of their homeland. Even so, elements of their traditional architectural customs persisted—particularly the placement of barns and outbuildings close to, or adjoining, dwellings in some early farmsteads (Jordan 1985; Noble 1984b).

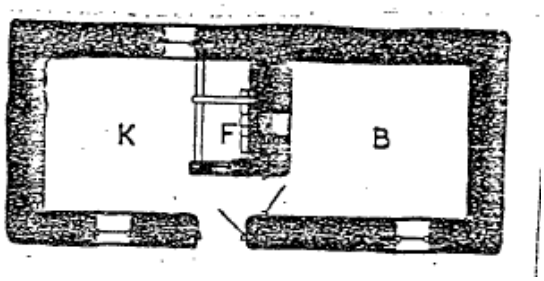

Figure 4-4: Floorplan of a small house in County Kildare. The K denotes the kitchen/living area, F denotes the hearth, and B denotes the bedroom. The jamb wall separates the hearth from the entryway (Kennedy 1987).

In Ireland, the characteristic rural dwelling of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the single-story, rectangular, whitewashed, thatched cottage. As described by Kennedy, such cottages were typically constructed with thick stone or clay walls, a steeply pitched thatched roof, fenestration confined primarily to the long walls, and an open hearth positioned along the main axis of the structure (Kennedy 1987). Regional variations included the lobby-entry plan common in the Irish lowlands, which featured a partition wall or "jamb wall" that was positioned to shelter the hearth from direct drafts through the door (**Figure 4-4**). The direct-entry form, in which the jamb wall was absent, and the hearth positioned perpendicular to the door, was more prevalent in mountainous and coastal areas (O'Reily and Murray 2007). These forms were responses to environmental and material constraints, including the widespread deforestation of Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which necessitated reliance on stone and earthen building materials and thatch (Kennedy 1987).

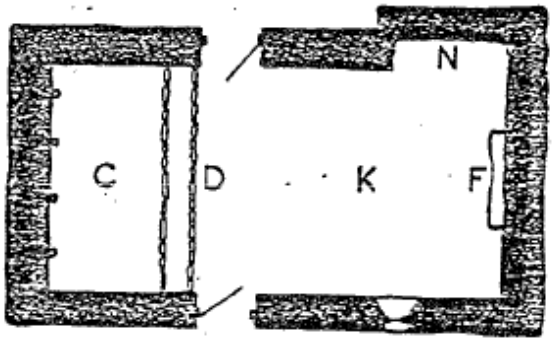

Figure 4-3: Floorplan of a byre dwelling in County Cork. The K denotes the kitchen/living area, F denotes the hearth, C denotes an area for livestock, D denotes an open drain, and N denotes a bed-alcove (Kennedy 1987).

Traditional Irish farmhouses and outbuildings were closely integrated in function. In some cases, livestock

were housed within the same structure as the family dwelling, a practice that continued in rural Ireland well into the nineteenth century. Like the German housebarn, the traditional Irish byre dwelling was a vernacular house type in which people and livestock shared the same building, with the human living quarters at one end and the animal byre at the other (**Figure 4-3**). The byre itself was a cowshed or animal stall, typically accommodating cattle but sometimes also sheep or goats, constructed to shelter valuable livestock and, in this arrangement, to share the warmth they produced with the household (Danaher 1975; Evans 1981). Byre dwellings were generally long, narrow, and one room wide, built of locally available materials such as rubble stone, turf, or mud, and roofed with thatch. Opposed doorways at each gable end allowed ventilation, facilitated animal movement, and aided in cleaning (Danaher 1975:28–30; Evans 1981:52–53). Like the German housebarn, there is little evidence that these forms and practices were continued in the Midwest, although elements of the byre tradition persisted in the placement of barns close to or adjoining dwellings in some early farmsteads (Jordan 1985; Noble 1984b).

Like the dwellings, traditional Irish outbuildings, including byres, stables, potato houses, and turf sheds, were typically built of stone or clay, with roofs of thatch, slate, or later corrugated iron. Many incorporated lofts for fodder storage or niches for pigeons, the latter serving both dietary and agricultural purposes. These utilitarian forms reflected a self-sufficient, small-scale farming economy in which buildings were adapted to multiple uses and constructed with locally available materials (O'Reily and Murray 2007).

In the Illinois context, Irish immigrants arriving in the mid-nineteenth century encountered an architectural landscape shaped by timber-frame and balloon-frame construction, I-house forms, and later, stylistic influences disseminated via railroads and pattern books. While there is no physical evidence that Irish settlers reproduced traditional thatched cottages in the Midwest, certain cultural preferences, such as simple, elongated rectangular plans, hearth-centered interiors, and multifunctional agricultural outbuildings, may have informed their adaptation of American vernacular forms. For example, the presence of elongated, narrow farmhouses with kitchen-centered layouts in some rural Irish-American communities parallels the longitudinal emphasis of Irish cottages, although built of sawn lumber with shingled or metal roofs (O'Reily and Murray 2007).

While Irish farms in Ireland typically featured stone walls and small enclosed fields, immigrants adjusted to the open landscape of the American prairie by adopting locally common fencing styles, such as rail fences. Nevertheless, they retained a careful approach to field management rooted in their Irish farming heritage (O'Reily and Murray 2007). Overall, Irish immigrant farmers successfully blended their experience-based knowledge from Ireland with innovations suited to the Midwest environment, creating resilient and productive farms that supported their communities amid economic and environmental challenges.

Irish cultural influence can also be seen in the architecture of religious buildings such as Irish-Catholic Churches. With many Irish immigrants working in trades, Irish iconography in stained glass windows in churches with immigrant congregations was common. In turn-of-the-twentieth-century Irish Catholic churches in the US, stained glass iconography often blended traditional Catholic symbols with motifs rooted in Irish identity and agrarian life. The harp, long associated with the biblical figure of David and his role as psalmist, also functioned as a symbol of Irish nationalism and spiritual resilience. In stained glass, its appearance alongside items such as a pilgrim's hat or crown invoked themes of spiritual journey and missionary identity, particularly resonant with Irish immigrant congregations (CatholicTradition.org 2025; Enninger 1982). The inclusion of tools such as pincers, hammer, and nails represented the Arma Christi, or Instruments of the Passion, used in Christ's crucifixion. These symbols served as reminders of suffering, sacrifice, and redemption, key tenets of Catholic theology and deeply meaningful to immigrant communities

who identified with Christ's endurance (Stokstad 2005). The wheat sheaf, commonly found in Eucharistic imagery, symbolized the Bread of Life and the resurrection, while the rake or other agricultural implements emphasized the sanctity of manual labor and the moral harvest of a well-lived life (Wheatcroft 2009; Taphophilia 2024). Together, these motifs reflected the values and identity of Irish-American Catholics: a community that viewed faith, work, and heritage as inseparable aspects of religious life and visual expression.

5.0 Building Typology and Study Area Examples

5.1 Resource Types and Common Forms

While few, if any, buildings with features directly attributable to Irish, German, or French building traditions have been identified within the Study Area, buildings constructed and used by such groups during the second half of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century are numerous. The following section summarizes common forms identified within the Study Area as well as their origins and ethnic associations.

5.1.1 Dwellings

5.1.1.1 Vernacular Log and Frame Construction (ca. 1830s–1850s)

In the initial settlement period, dwellings and outbuildings were constructed with immediate utility in mind and were constructed as quicky as possible using timber from nearby groves. Log buildings typically employed hewn or round logs joined by saddle or V-notches, with chinking of clay, lime mortar, or straw-and-mud mixtures (Noble 1984a). Although no buildings of obvious log construction were observed within the Study Area, these buildings may be present and enclosed within modern siding or by larger, later additions. Timber-framed structures, assembled with mortise-and-tenon joinery, were common for barns and substantial houses. Balloon-frame construction, introduced in the 1830s, saw limited rural application until milled lumber became widely available via rail in the 1850s (McAlester 2015).

Figure 5-1: This single-pen, log dwelling was constructed ca. 1850 in White County, Illinois. Though not located within the Study Area, similar buildings would have been common during the settlement era.

Ethnic associations: Log construction was used by settlers of all origins, but German farmers, familiar with squared-log and half-timber traditions, often produced well-finished frames (Noble 1984b). Irish immigrants, accustomed to stone or earth-walled cottages, readily adapted to timber methods due to speed of construction and the abundance of wood (Noble 1984b).

5.1.1.2 Hall-and-Parlor and Single-Pen Houses (ca. 1830s–1860s)

These one- to one-and-a-half-story, gable-roof dwellings provided a compact, adaptable form, usually with two main rooms and sometimes a central chimney (Stratton and Mansberger 2002). Construction ranged from log to frame, and in areas where it was common, to locally fired brick. Although no dwellings dating to this period were identified within the Study Area, the subject immigrant groups would have been familiar with these common types and adapted them to their particular needs.

Ethnic associations: The form's economy and adaptability made it common across ethnic groups. Irish immigrants built hall-and-parlor houses reminiscent of rural cottages in Ireland (Noble 1984b), while English and Scots-Irish settlers recognized the form from eastern US precedents (McAlester 2015).

5.1.1.3 I-House (ca. 1840s–1880s)

The I-house is a two-story, one-room-deep form with a central passage, symmetrical facade, and rear service ell. Built in frame or brick, it often displayed Greek Revival or Italianate trim (McAlester 2015). The form is commonly constructed in frame, especially within the Study Area (Stratton and Mansberger 2002). The I-house form is among the most common form of historic-age rural dwellings identified in the Study Area.

Figure 5-2: This I-house form dwelling, Resource KB38, was constructed ca. 1890 by Levi Thompson (Geo. A. Ogle & Co. 1893). View looking north.

Ethnic associations: This form appealed broadly as a rural status marker. German settlers favored its symmetry and ornament potential (Noble 1984b), while Irish farmers embraced it as a sign of agricultural success and permanence (McAlester 2015).

One Study Area example is the Dennis Murray dwelling, Resource JK130 (**Figure 5-3**). Dennis Murray was born in Ireland in 1835 and emigrated as a child in 1848. He married Mary Murray, who emigrated from Ireland in 1863, in 1865. By 1870, the couple had settled in Waldo Township, Livingston County, where Dennis was occupied as a farmer and Mary was keeping house. The couple had at least eight children, all born in Illinois (US Census Bureau 1900d; 1870b).

Figure 5-3: Resource JK130, the Dennis Murray Dwelling, constructed by Dennis Murray, Irish immigrant ca. 1870. View looking southwest.

Murray constructed his two story, single-bay I-house type dwelling ca. 1870 and expanded it with a large rear addition sometime after. The foundation was underpinned with concrete blocks in the early twentieth century, and the dwelling has been more recently altered with an enclosed porch and vinyl siding. Despite the alterations, the original I-house form remains visible and speaks to the local vernacular traditions in farmhouse construction that were frequently adopted by recent immigrants. The Murray farm remained in the Murray family through the 1970s, and it is likely that subsequent historic-age changes to the original dwelling and outbuildings on this multi-generational farm were made by descendants of Dennis Murray (Historic Map Works LLC 1979).

Another example is Resource KB323, the Andrew Vercler House, constructed ca. 1875. Andrew Vercler was born in 1850 and raised on his parent's farm (called *Ferme de Boule*) in Lorraine, France. He and his four brothers immigrated with his parents in 1874. The patriarch of the family, Christian Vercler was born in Lorraine, France, in 1817. He married Jacobina Schertz in 1848 and was ordained as a Mennonite minister in France in 1862. Like other French immigrants from the region, the Verclers likely left their homeland in search of stability, an affordable living, and, as Amish Mennonites, religious freedom (Niswander 1990). After arriving at the Port of New York, the Verclers traveled by rail to central Illinois where their second son, Andrew's younger brother Christian (II), had been living for a year and a half with his uncle, the elder Christian's brother

Peter and his family in Livingston County. The family connection likely influenced the Verclers decision to locate in the Study Area. At the time the Verclers settled in the area, it "was a community made up in good part of immigrant Amish farmers who had a spiritual kinship as well as a knowledge of good farmland" – attractive to the Mennonite Verclers.

While Christian and Jacobina and sons settled in Pike Township soon after their arrival, eldest son Andrew purchased 320 acres of farmland "a few miles to the southwest" of his parent's farm on the McLean County line just south of what was then a "small railroad stop called Meadows Station," in 1875. Andrew married Illinois native Jacobina Lehman (known as Phoebe) in 1876 (Niswander 1990). It was around this time that Andrew Vercler built his homestead, which included a ca. 1875 frame I-house that is still extant (**Figure 5-4**).

Figure 5-4: Resource KB323, the Vercler dwelling in an undated early-twentieth century photograph (left) and in 2025 (right) (Niswander 1990).

5.1.2 Barns

5.1.2.1 English Three-Bay Barn (pre-1870s)

The English Three Bay Barn is also known as the "Yankee Barn," "three bay threshing barn," and simply as an "English Barn." The type is a single-story barn which is not bank, with three bays organized perpendicularly to the roofline, one to accommodate livestock, a central threshing floor, and a haymow or granary (**Figure 5-5**). These buildings were typically constructed of heavy timber post and beam framing. The type was common for small-scale, labor intensive farming with low mechanization (Pennsylvania HIstorical and Museum Commission 2015). This form featured a central threshing bay flanked by storage or livestock areas, framed in heavy timber (Noble 1984a).

Ethnic associations: Linked to Mid-Atlantic and New England traditions but was widely used by early German farmers (Noble 1984a).

Figure 5-5: This barn, the Hallstein Barn, was constructed in the early twentieth century in Tazewell County, Illinois. An example of an English barn, it features a large entrance to the threshing floor on the eave ends (Stratton 2002).

5.1.2.2 Transverse-Frame Barns (1870s–1890s)

The transverse-frame barn of Illinois, while sharing some structural ancestry with the earlier three-bay English threshing barn, reflects a key shift in spatial organization and agricultural priorities. While the classic English three-bay barn featured a central threshing floor aligned longitudinally to the roof ridge, the transverse-frame barn rotated the threshing floor perpendicular to the ridge, creating wide doorways in the gable ends and allowing wagons to enter directly across the barn's width (Noble and Cleek 1995, Visser 1997). This transverse orientation not only improved ventilation for threshing but also facilitated a greater range of uses, including stabling livestock along the sides or incorporating mow space above (Noble 1984b). In effect, the transverse-frame barn retained the timber-frame durability of its English predecessor while adapting its internal plan to better suit the diversified, mixed-farming economy emerging in the Midwest by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Figure 5-6: Resource JK52 is a transverse-frame barn constructed by French immigrant Michael Keiefer ca. 1890. In Illinois, this form was common from the mid-nineteenth century into the early twentieth century, evolving from earlier three-bay English barns but adapted for mixed farming needs, often with livestock in one or both side bays and mow space above. View looking southeast.

Ethnic associations: Popular among German and Swiss farmers, reflecting traditional European layouts (Noble 1984b).

5.1.2.3 Gambrel-Roof Barn (1890s onward)

The gambrel roof has strong ties to Dutch building traditions, especially as brought to North America by settlers in New Netherland (modern-day New York, New Jersey, and parts of the Hudson River Valley) during the seventeenth century. The form was well-suited to maximizing headroom and usable attic space without increasing wall height or taxation (as some jurisdictions taxed based on number of stories). It became a common feature in Dutch Colonial domestic architecture and was adapted widely in barn construction across the northeastern US (Lanier and Herman 1997:136–137). The gambrel roof maximized hayloft capacity and gained favor in progressive farming circles by the turn of the twentieth century (C Price 1996).

Figure 5-7: The C.R. Zimmerman barn, Resource JK28, was constructed ca. 1920. View looking south.

While the classic gambrel is often labeled "Dutch," similar dual-pitched roof forms existed in parts of northern Germany, Scandinavia, and the Low Countries, where barn and house forms frequently featured roof breaks to increase storage in the loft. These influences may have diffused alongside immigrant building traditions, though in America the gambrel became most strongly associated with the Dutch (Noble and Wilhelm 1995:43).

In the Midwest, particularly by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, gambrel roofs became popular for barns due to their practicality: the form maximized hayloft capacity while remaining structurally economical. While not necessarily an expression of ethnic identity at this stage, their widespread use may reflect the influence of German-American and Dutch-American settlers who brought similar agricultural building sensibilities (Kniffen and Glassie 1966).

Ethnic associations: Adoption cut across ethnic lines, driven more by agricultural modernization than cultural tradition (Price 1996).

Figure 5-8: Resource JK125, a gambrel roof livestock barn, constructed by Nicholas Roth, a son of French immigrants, ca. 1890 (US Census Bureau 1880c). View looking northeast.

Figure 5-9: Resource JK66, a ca. 1940 gambrel roof barn with a decorative barn quilt on the farm of Christian Ringenberg - a Bavarian Immigrant who settled in the Study Area in the 1880s (US Census Bureau 1900c). The property remained in the family through the 1950s. View looking east.

5.1.2.4 The Gothic Arch or Rainbow Roof Barn (1920s – 1940s)

The Gothic Arch or "rainbow" roof is not traditionally tied to any single immigrant or ethnic building tradition (e.g., German, Dutch, Scandinavian). It did not originate from Old World farmstead architecture, where most barns were rectangular and had gable or hipped roofs. Instead, the form emerged from engineered design solutions responding to new materials, mechanization, and spatial needs in early twentieth century American agriculture (Noble and Wilhelm 1995:79–81).

This form reflected the modernization of American agriculture and became popular from the 1920s through the 1940s as farmers sought greater interior volume for hay storage and later for mechanized equipment. The arched design eliminated the need for interior supports, maximizing uninterrupted loft space. These barns were often pre-fabricated or built using laminated wood trusses or pressed steel frames, techniques unavailable in earlier vernacular forms (Visser 1997:154–156). The descendants of German, Irish, and French Immigrants within the Study Area would have adopted these forms as they became available.

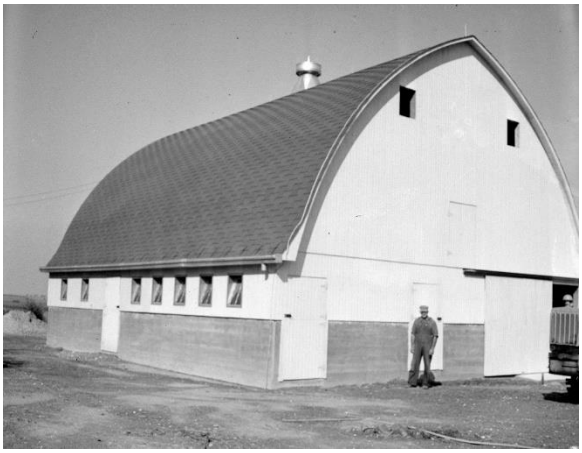

Figure 5-10: A mid-twentieth century photograph of a new barn with a gothic arch roof in Central Illinois (McCain 1952).

5.1.3 Outbuildings

5.1.3.1 Gable-Roofed Granary with Gabled Cupola (ca. 1870s–1900s)

The gable-roofed granary was a standard outbuilding form on late nineteenth century farms in Livingston and McLean Counties, designed to provide secure, dry storage for threshed grain before sale or milling. Typically of frame construction set on stone or concrete block foundations, these buildings were often raised slightly above grade to promote airflow and deter vermin. Siding was usually vertical board-and-batten or horizontal clapboard, and fenestration was minimal to reduce moisture infiltration. Interior arrangements varied, but most were divided into multiple grain bins with plank partitions (Stratton and Mansberger 2002).

A distinctive variant included a small, centrally placed gabled cupola at the roof ridge (**Figure 5-11**, **Figure 5-12**). These cupolas functioned both as ventilation devices, allowing warm, moisture-laden air to escape from the grain bins, and as symbolic markers of agricultural modernity (Noble 1984a). The gabled form of the cupola, echoing the roof shape of the main structure, provided visual cohesion while preventing rain penetration into the ventilating louvers.

Ethnic associations: While not tied to a single immigrant tradition, this granary type was widely adopted by German and Swiss-descended farmers familiar with specialized grain-handling structures in Europe (Noble 1984b). In some cases, the addition of a cupola may have reflected both practical ventilation needs and the influence of model farm literature and agricultural extension bulletins circulating by the 1880s (J Price 1996). Irish and Alsatian-French farmers likewise incorporated the type into diversified farmsteads, signaling alignment with progressive farming standards of the period (Stratton and Mansberger 2002).

Figure 5-11: Resource JK66, constructed ca. 1900 on the farm established by Christian Ringenberg, German immigrant who established his Livingston County farm ca. 1880. The property remained in the family through the 1950s. View looking southeast.

Figure 5-12: Resource KB101, a granary, constructed ca. 1900 by William J Flanagan, the descendant of the Flanagan Family of Ireland (US Census Bureau 1900h). View looking southeast.

5.1.3.2 Corn Cribs (ca. 1870s–1900s)

Corn cribs in Illinois evolved in close parallel with the state's dominant crop economy, reflecting both practical grain storage needs and broader changes in agricultural technology. The earliest corn cribs appeared in the mid-nineteenth century and were small, rectangular structures built with slatted wooden walls to allow maximum air circulation for drying ear corn (Noble and Cleek 1995:102–104). These cribs were often slightly elevated above the ground on stone piers or wood posts to improve ventilation and reduce rodent access. This design element was common to corn-growing regions throughout the Midwest.

In Illinois, early crib construction was often the work of Yankee settlers from the Northeast and Ohio Valley who adopted open-slat storage forms already in use in those areas. By the late nineteenth century, double corn cribs with a central drive, sometimes topped with a gabled roof for additional storage (see **5.1.3.1 Gable-Roofed Granary with Gabled Cupola (ca. 1870s–1900s**), became increasingly common, particularly in the more prosperous corn belt counties, where wagons could unload directly into the cribs from the center bay (Noble and Wilhelm 1995:113–115).

Ethnic influence on corn crib design in Illinois was subtle but present. While no single immigrant group can claim to have introduced the form, building techniques and materials often reflected the cultural backgrounds of local farm populations. In parts of Illinois, for example, German and Scandinavian settlers sometimes favored heavier timber framing and more permanent siding, integrating the crib into larger barn complexes. Conversely, settlers from the Eastern states and earlier Midwestern migrants more frequently built freestanding, open-slat wooden cribs as specialized structures, separate from other farm buildings (Ensminger 1992:188–190). By the early twentieth century, agricultural colleges and extension bulletins began promoting standardized crib plans, which helped erase many regional or ethnic distinctions in favor of uniform, engineering-based designs.

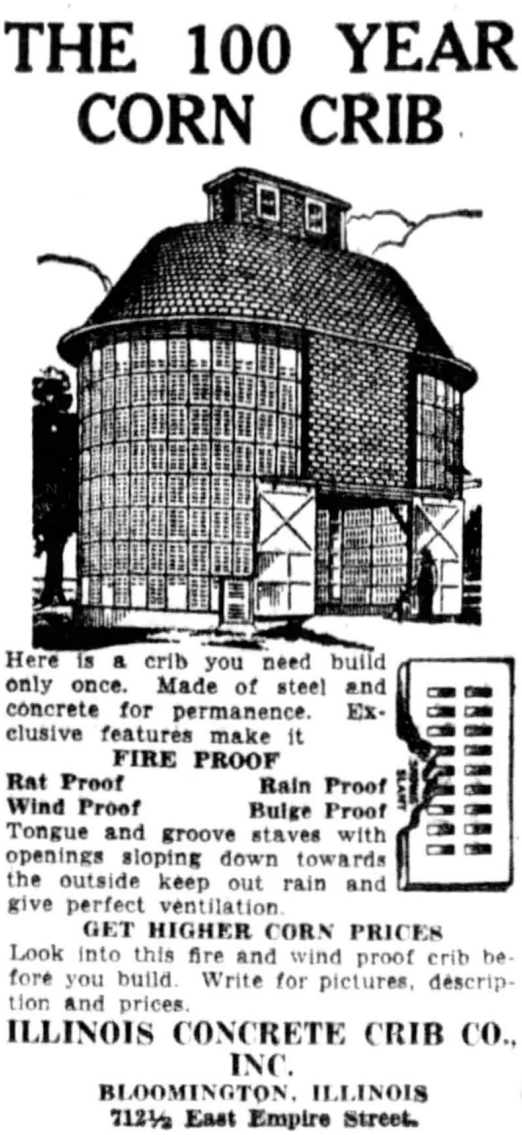

Figure 5-13: Advertisement, ca. 1930, for a concrete stave corn crib promoting the new design by highlighting its resistance to fire, wind, pests, and structural damage from weather. Producers who stored their corn and sold it later in the season generally returned higher profits than producers who sold it soon after harvesting, making corn storage buildings a key part of area farmsteads (McLean County Museum of History 2025).

A major innovation came with the concrete stave corn crib, which rose to prominence in Illinois between roughly 1910 and 1940. Built of interlocking precast concrete blocks or staves, these cylindrical cribs offered greater durability, fire resistance, and rodent protection than wood, while retaining the essential ventilation needed for ear corn

storage (Visser 1997:164–166). Their round form was highly efficient for containing shelled corn, and the modular stave system allowed them to be built quickly from factory-made components. While the technology spread rapidly across Illinois regardless of ethnic background, the adoption of concrete stave cribs reflected a broader shift toward industrialized farm construction, where local vernacular craft gave way to purchased, engineered building systems. By the mid-twentieth century, with the advent of hybrid corn varieties, mechanical shellers, and bulk storage in metal bins, both wood-slat and concrete-stave cribs began to decline, marking the end of a distinctive chapter in Illinois farm architecture.

Figure 5-14: Resource KB27, a ca. 1920 concrete corn crib located within the Study Area, it was constructed on the multi-generation Post Farm, which was established by Albert Johannsen Post, who immigrated from Germany in 1867. It was constructed during the period of ownership of Post's daughter, Anna, who inherited the property from her father (Geo. A. Ogle 1911, 1930; US Census Bureau 1900b).

Figure 5-15: An interior elevator was used to deposit the ear corn, off loaded from trucks, which entered through the central door, into the grain bins (McLean County Museum of History 2025).

5.1.4 Churches

In the rural communities of McLean and Livingston counties, churches served as the most visible markers of ethnic identity for German and Irish immigrants during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. German settlers, many of them Lutheran or Catholic, established congregations in towns such as Gridley and Flanagan, where their churches often maintained German-language services well into the twentieth century, reinforcing communal ties and preserving cultural traditions (Alvord and Carter 1926:229–231). Irish immigrants, overwhelmingly Catholic, organized parishes in Chenoa and surrounding farming settlements, with St. Joseph's Church in Chenoa becoming a focal point for Irish families dispersed across the countryside (Akenson 1993:214–216). These ethnic parishes and congregations were not simply religious institutions but also social centers, hosting festivals, mutual aid societies, and schools that reinforced ethnic solidarity. The persistence of distinct Irish and German churches in these small Illinois towns underscores the degree to which religion and ethnicity overlapped with immigrant identity, even as second and third generations gradually assimilated into broader Midwestern society (Angle 1950:184–186).

Figure 5-16: Resource CL10, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Chenoa, looking west-southwest.

German immigrants were among the most numerous immigrants to McLean and Livingston Counties in the mid-nineteenth century, and they carried with them deeply rooted confessional traditions. In Flanagan, St. Petri Lutheran Church, founded in 1868, served German Lutherans of Nebraska Township and held services in German well into the twentieth century, acting as both a spiritual and cultural anchor for the community (Genealogy Trails 2024; St. Petri Lutheran 2024).

Figure 5-17: Resource CL1, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Flanagan, looking west-northwest. Constructed ca. 1875.

Local historical narratives and documents report that the church was founded by a group of German émigrés from Ostfriesland, Germany, in the 1860s. A history of the Village of Flanagan, published in 1981, relays that the "lowlands" of Illinois was selected due to its close resemblance to their former homeland. Prior to construction of the church, religious services were organized and conducted in various homes within the community (Flanagan Board of Trustees 1981). Local history documentation reports that Pastor M.L. Franz held services in the Warner School, presumably the 1860s schoolhouse on the property, from October 26, 1856 until the present church was built in 1868. The cornerstone of the church was laid in 1868, and the church was dedicated the following year. Construction was completed in 1870 at a final cost of $2,000. Records report that the parsonage, assumed to be the Queen Anne-style dwelling still located on the property, was built in

Figure 5-18: Resource KB11, St. Petri's church, ca. 1868. Looking west-southwest.

1922. In 1959, the "parish hall" was built on its southwest elevation (St. Petri online 2024).

These institutions preserved Old World traditions through language, music, and parish schools, and their architecture echoed popular styles of their time and ranged from simple frame buildings to elaborate sanctuaries.

Irish immigrants, by contrast, tended to cluster in Catholic parishes, where the parish priest served not only a spiritual role but also a mediating position within the wider community. In Chenoa, the establishment of St. Joseph's Catholic Church provided a focal point for Irish Catholic families scattered across McLean and Livingston Counties (Akenson 1993:216–217). These parishes reinforced Irish identity through worship, parish festivals, schools, and fraternal organizations such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). The AOH played a particularly important role in sustaining Irish Catholic identity in McLean and Livingston Counties. Founded nationally in 1836 as both a fraternal and benevolent society for Irish immigrants, the AOH spread widely through Catholic parishes in the Midwest by the late nineteenth century (Akenson 1993:219–220). Local divisions often met in parish halls or church basements, including in towns such as Chenoa, where Irish Catholic families relied on the organization for mutual aid during sickness or death and for assistance with burial costs. Beyond material support, the AOH fostered Irish nationalism, sponsoring St. Patrick's Day celebrations, lectures on Irish history, and fundraising for politics (Alvord and Carter 1926:243).

In small-town Illinois, the society also served a defensive role: in an era when Irish Catholics faced prejudice from nativist or Protestant neighbors, the AOH provided solidarity and collective presence. For many Irish immigrants and their descendants, participation in the AOH paralleled church membership, reinforcing both ethnic pride and Catholic devotion. The Irish also faced distinct challenges, contending with social prejudice in predominantly Protestant rural Illinois, which heightened the importance of their parishes as spaces of solidarity and protection. By the early twentieth century, St. Joseph's and other Irish Catholic parishes had become enduring fixtures of local religious life, serving successive generations and contributing to the cultural fabric of towns like Chenoa and Gridley.

Resource CL10, St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Chenoa, features Irish iconography in its prominent stained glass windows. The harp, long associated with the biblical figure of David and his role as psalmist, also functioned as a symbol of Irish nationalism and spiritual resilience. In stained glass, its appearance alongside items such as a pilgrim's hat or crown invoked themes of spiritual journey and missionary identity, particularly resonant with Irish immigrant congregations (CatholicTradition.org 2025; Enninger 1982). The inclusion of tools such as pincers, hammer, and nails represented the Arma Christi, or Instruments of the Passion, used in Christ's crucifixion. These symbols served as reminders of suffering, sacrifice, and redemption, key tenets of Catholic theology and deeply meaningful to immigrant communities who identified with Christ's endurance (Stokstad 2005). The wheat sheaf, commonly found in Eucharistic imagery, symbolized the Bread of Life and the resurrection, while the rake or other agricultural implements emphasized the sanctity of manual labor and the moral harvest of a well-lived life (Wheatcroft 2009; Taphophilia 2024). These motifs are all included in the windows on the east elevation of the church (**Figure 5-19**, **Figure 5-20**, **Figure 5-21**).

Figure 5-19: Detail of stained glass, showing tools including a hammer, pincers, and nails. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Chenoa, looking west.

Figure 5-20: Detail of stained glass, showing a harp with a crown, sword, farmers crook, and pilgrim's hat. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Chenoa, looking west.

Figure 5-21: Detail of stained glass, showing a wheat sheaf and rake. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Chenoa, looking west.

5.1.5 Cemeteries

In the nineteenth century, German and Irish immigrants significantly shaped the cultural landscape of McLean and Livingston Counties, including Flanagan, Gridley, Chenoa, Waldo, and the surrounding townships of Pike, Waldo, Rooks Creek, and Nebraska by establishing churches, towns, and burying grounds (Alvord and Carter 1926; Akenson 1993). These communities often expressed their ethnic identity through cemetery inscriptions and iconography, reflecting both cultural retention and assimilation. German settlers frequently used gravestones inscribed in German, with phrases such as “Ruhe in Frieden” (“Rest in Peace”) or “Gott sei mit dir” (“God be with you”), signaling a desire to preserve language and heritage within an Anglo-American context (Israel 2018; Currey 2020). Iconography on German-American gravestones often included urns, weeping willows, and angels, which while widespread in nineteenth century cemetery art, can also reflect German Romantic aesthetic influences emphasizing mourning and the afterlife (TalkDeath 2021; 19thCentury.us 2023). Irish immigrants, predominantly Catholic, commonly employed religious symbols such as the IHS monogram and occasionally Celtic crosses, reflecting devotional practices rather than linguistic markers (Pilgrimage Medieval Ireland 2013; Cemetery Insights 2019). While both German and Irish cemeteries incorporated prevalent nineteenth century motifs like angels and urns, Germans emphasized linguistic continuity and Irish gravestones foregrounded Catholic iconography, demonstrating different strategies of cultural expression and adaptation within Midwestern communities (Israel 2018; Currey 2020; Pilgrimage Medieval Ireland 2013).

Figure 5-23: Flanagan Family Monument, St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery (Resource KB93), Flanagan (Vicinity), looking northwest.

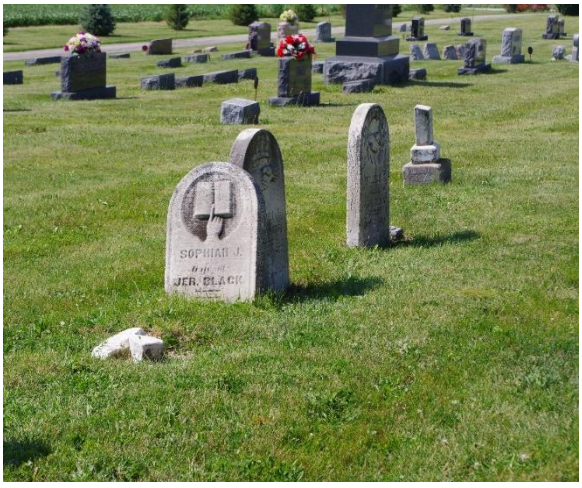

Figure 5-22: View of Gridley Cemetery (Resource JK51) showing common nineteenth century iconography, looking northwest.

Although individual grave markers were not surveyed for ethnic iconography or inscriptions, research clearly indicates that generations of Irish, French, and German immigrants and their descendants are interred in Study Area cemeteries. In particular, St. Joseph’s Catholic Cemetery includes the graves of the Flanagan brothers, the founders of the namesake town (**Figure 5-23**). The Windtown Cemetery, also known as the Saint Petri Evangelical Cemetery, is located on the property of the historic St. Petri’s Church and contain markers which date from as early as 1840 with inscriptions which appear to reflect a primarily European immigrant community, with examples of names and dates consistent with German origins (**Figure 5-22**Error! Reference source not found.).

5.1.6 Commercial Buildings

In the nineteenth century, German and Irish immigrants significantly influenced the commercial architecture of central Illinois and the greater Midwest. German immigrants, who were among the largest immigrant groups in the region, often settled in urban centers and introduced architectural traditions emphasizing functionality, craftsmanship, and communal spaces. This influence is particularly visible in breweries, beer halls, and mixed-use commercial buildings, which featured large, utilitarian structures, ornate brickwork, and prominent signage reflecting German aesthetic and practical sensibilities (Alvord and Carter 1926; Germanculture.com.ua 2023).

Irish immigrants, many of whom were Catholic, also shaped the architectural landscape through churches, schools, and other public buildings, frequently employing Gothic Revival elements such as pointed arches, stained glass windows, and decorative stonework that reflected religious identity and served as community focal points (Akenson 1993; USHistory.org 2025).

The interaction of these ethnic traditions with prevailing American architectural styles produced a distinctive Midwestern commercial architecture, blending European and American elements. These structures not only enriched regional architectural diversity but also embodied the immigrants' efforts to preserve cultural identity while integrating into broader society (Donlon 2018; Germanculture.com.ua 2023).

Figure 5-24: View of the Brumm Store, Resource CL11, looking southeast. The store was established by Frederick Brumm, German immigrant, in Chenoa in 1894. Brumm was listed as an "implements dealer" in the 1900 census. Brumm was born in Pomerania in 1846 and immigrated to the United States aboard the "City of Berlin," which departed Hamburg for New York in 1873. Brumm worked as a blacksmith before establishing his shop ("Fred Brumm" 1880; "Fred E Brumm" 1900; Ancestry.com 2025)

Figure 5-25: Detail of date stamp on parapet of Brumm's store, looking northeast.

5.1.7 Schools

Rural schoolhouses in central Illinois proliferated after the state's 1855 free-school law enabled tax-supported district schools and regularized county supervision, accelerating a shift from scattered subscription schools to standardized "common schools" (Illinois Superintendent of Public Instruction 1856; Abbott and Breckinridge 1917; Illinois State Museum n.d.). Architecturally, most were economical, rectilinear one-room buildings in balloon-frame construction set on stone or brick foundations, with a gable roof, a small entry/vestibule (often used as cloakroom), a bellcote, banks of sash windows for daylight, a coal or wood stove with jacket, and separate privies on the grounds (Fuller 1982; Fuller 1994; Noble 1984a). An excellent Study Area example of this form, though lacking a vestibule, is the German language school constructed on the grounds of St. Petri's Church ca. 1868 (**Figure 5-26**). While some mid-nineteenth century schools show modest Greek Revival or later Italianate touches (corner pilasters, entablature, bracketed bellcotes, etc.), the functional, single-room plan remained the most common into the 1890s (Fuller 1982; Noble 1984a).

Figure 5-26: Resource KB11, St. Petri's Church School, ca. 1888. Looking southwest.

Figure 5-27: This one-room schoolhouse, the former Windtown School, was constructed in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century near Flanagan (Lantz 1951).

Ethnic communities layered additional meanings onto otherwise standard forms. Irish and German Catholic parishes across central Illinois (within the Diocese of Peoria after 1875) commonly erected parish schools. These buildings were frequently simple frame or brick, gable-roofed one- and two-room schoolhouses, immediately adjacent to the church, as seen at St. Petri's. Such parish schools were typically constructed by the same local craftsmen and materials as neighboring district schools but integrated confessional instruction and parish governance into their curriculum (Diocese of Peoria n.d.; Fuller 1982). German Catholic and Lutheran communities sometimes maintained German-language instruction in the elementary grades well into the late nineteenth century, a practice widely documented in Midwestern parochial systems, even as public common schools standardized English-language curricula (Kloss 1998; Goldberg 2008).

5.2 Key Architectural Styles

Few resources documented within the Study Area reflected high-style architectural designs, being primarily vernacular in style and utilitarian farmstead buildings in use, however, some dwellings and other resources, including churches, have features that reflect popular architectural trends of their times. Those styles are summarized in the table below (**Table 5-1**) and in the following section.

Table 5-1: Architectural Forms in Livingston and McLean Counties, ca. 1840–1900

TYPE / STYLE	DATE RANGE (LOCAL)	DEFINING FEATURES
Single-Pen / Hall-and-Parlor House (Frontier Folk)	1830s–1850s	1–1.5 stories; gable roof; minimal ornament; wood or log construction; often later expanded.
I-House (Greek Revival Influence)	1840s–1870s	Two stories, one room deep, two rooms wide; central passage; end chimneys; symmetrical façade; cornice returns; transom and sidelights.
Greek Revival Vernacular	1840s–1860s	Symmetrical façades; gable or low-pitched roofs; wide frieze boards; cornice returns.
Italianate	1860s–1880s	Low-pitched or hipped roof; overhanging eaves with decorative brackets; tall, narrow windows (often with hood moldings); cupolas on high-style examples.
Gothic Revival	1860s–1880s	Steeply pitched roofs; pointed-arch windows; decorative vergeboards; cross-gable plans.
Queen Anne	1880s–1900	Asymmetrical massing; varied wall textures; patterned shingles; bay windows; wraparound porches with spindlework; occasional towers or turrets.

5.2.1 Greek Revival (ca. 1840s–1880s)

Within the Study Area, Greek Revival influence appeared in cornice returns, symmetrical facades, transomed and sidelighted entries, and low-pitched gables. High-style temple-front houses were rare, and most examples were vernacular adaptations in frame (McAlester 2015). One prominent Study Area example, Resource KB324, however, does feature a temple-front with columns. This dwelling is characterized by its two-story, symmetrical, boxy form and a low-pitched hipped roof with a central brick chimney (**Figure 5-28**). The primary façade features a prominent two-story portico supported by classical columns supporting a shallow-pitched shed roof extension. This feature draws directly from Greek Revival influences, adding a formal and imposing presence to the otherwise simple building.

Figure 5-28: View of Resource KB324, the Stride dwelling, a vernacular dwelling constructed by French immigrants to the Study Area ca. 1865. It features a Greek Revival style colonnade. View facing south.

Ethnic associations: A national fashion embraced by multiple groups, including German and Alsatian-French builders, who integrated Greek Revival elements into otherwise vernacular structures (Stratton and Mansberger 2002). The Study Area example dwelling first appears on the 1874 McLean County plat map on an 80-acre parcel owned by J. Stride (or Streid) (Warner & Beers 1874). The 1870 McLean County census records indicate that the Joseph Stride family immigrated to the US from France to Ohio circa 1845 and settled in Chenoa and constructed the dwelling ca. 1865.

5.2.2 Italianate (ca. 1860s–1880s)

Defining features include low-pitched or hipped roofs, overhanging eaves with decorative brackets, tall narrow windows, and occasional cupolas. The style flourished with the arrival of the railroads, which enabled distribution of milled ornament and pressed brick (McAlester 2015; Illinois Department of Transportation 2014b). In towns such as Pontiac, Chenoa, and Gridley, Italianate commercial blocks were prominent (Illinois Department of Transportation 2014b).

Ethnic associations: Italianate's adaptability to both farmhouses and urban storefronts ensured its adoption by German merchants, Irish civic leaders, and prosperous native-born farmers (McAlester 2015).

5.2.3 Gothic Revival (ca. 1860s–1870s)

Characterized by steeply pitched gables, pointed-arch windows, and decorative bargeboards, Gothic Revival appeared mainly in ecclesiastical buildings and select residences (McAlester 2015).

Ethnic associations: German Lutheran and Methodist congregations sometimes employed Gothic Revival for churches, drawing on European precedent (Noble 1984b). Irish Catholic parishes favored simplified Gothic elements consistent with contemporary church-building patterns (Stratton and Mansberger 2002).

5.2.4 Queen Anne (ca. 1880s–1900s)

Queen Anne houses displayed asymmetrical massing, complex rooflines, wraparound porches, and varied siding textures. The style spread rapidly after the 1880s through pattern books and pre-cut decorative millwork shipped by rail (McAlester 2015).

Ethnic associations: Favored by second-generation immigrant families, including German and Irish in the Study Area, typically seeking to demonstrate prosperity through ornate domestic architecture (Noble 1984a).

Figure 5-29: Resource JK64, the Queen Anne style dwelling constructed ca. 1890 by Jacob Yergler, German immigrant who arrived in the area as early as 1880. View Looking south.

6.0 Conclusions

The study concludes that the vernacular architecture of the Study Area (which includes parts of Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties) does not include direct translations of German, Irish, or French traditional house types. Immigrant groups instead adopted prevailing regional building forms available in Illinois during the nineteenth century, constructing primarily frame, side-gabled, and other common house types. This reflects both the availability of local materials and the influence of established Midwestern building practices.

Although no distinct European dwelling forms or types were recreated, ethnic traditions can be identified in other aspects of the built environment. These include the organization of farmsteads, where Irish and German farmers displayed differing approaches to outbuilding placement, as well as cultural and religious expressions in cemeteries, schools, and churches. In these contexts, material culture reflects ethnic heritage through symbolic markers rather than structural forms. Overall, the evidence indicates that while Livingston County's immigrant populations adapted to regional building norms, they maintained cultural identity in ways that are legible through settlement patterns and symbolic features rather than through the direct transplantation of European vernacular dwellings.

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Appendix A – Maps and Figures

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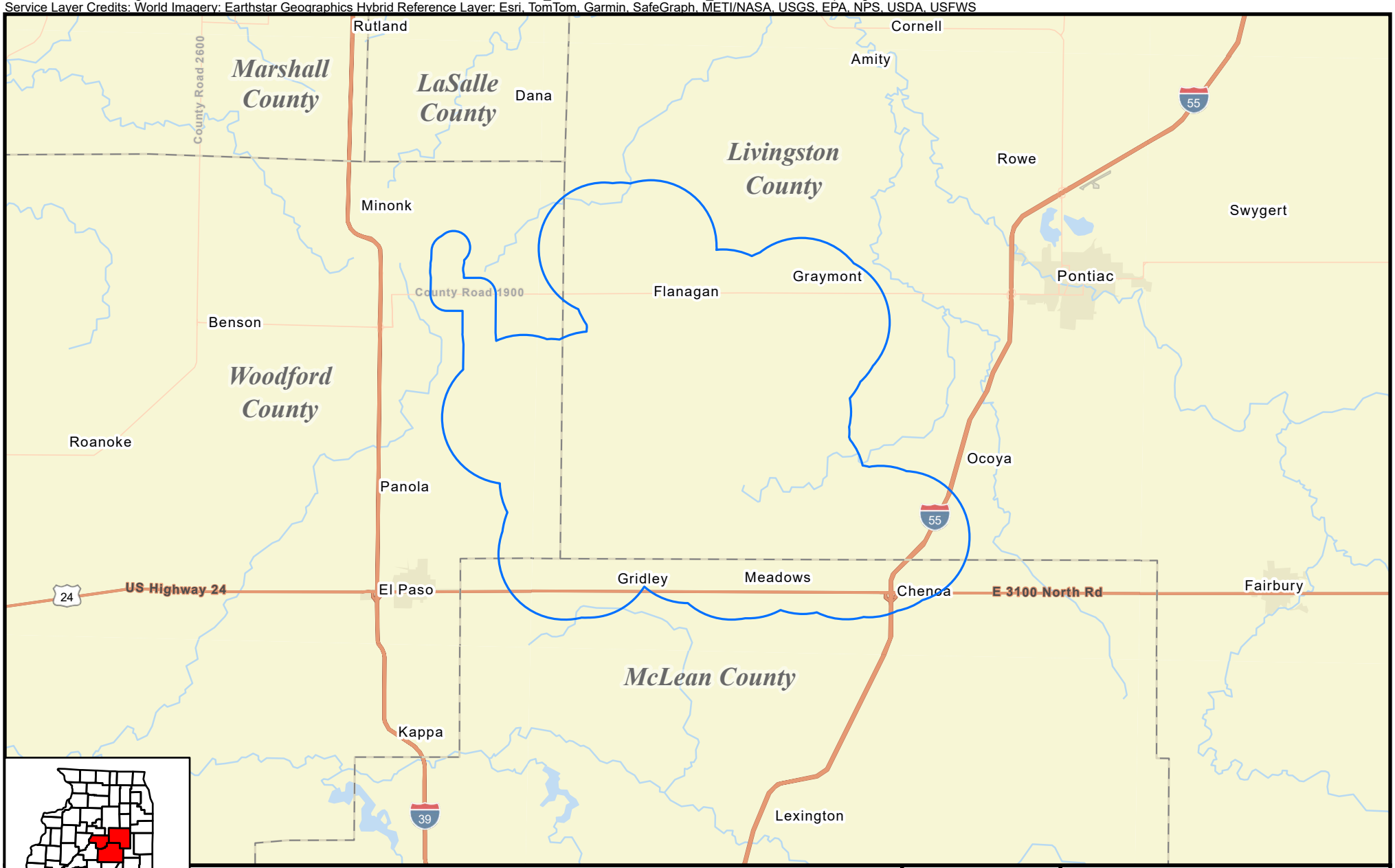

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-1
Project Location
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI

Issued: 8/14/2025

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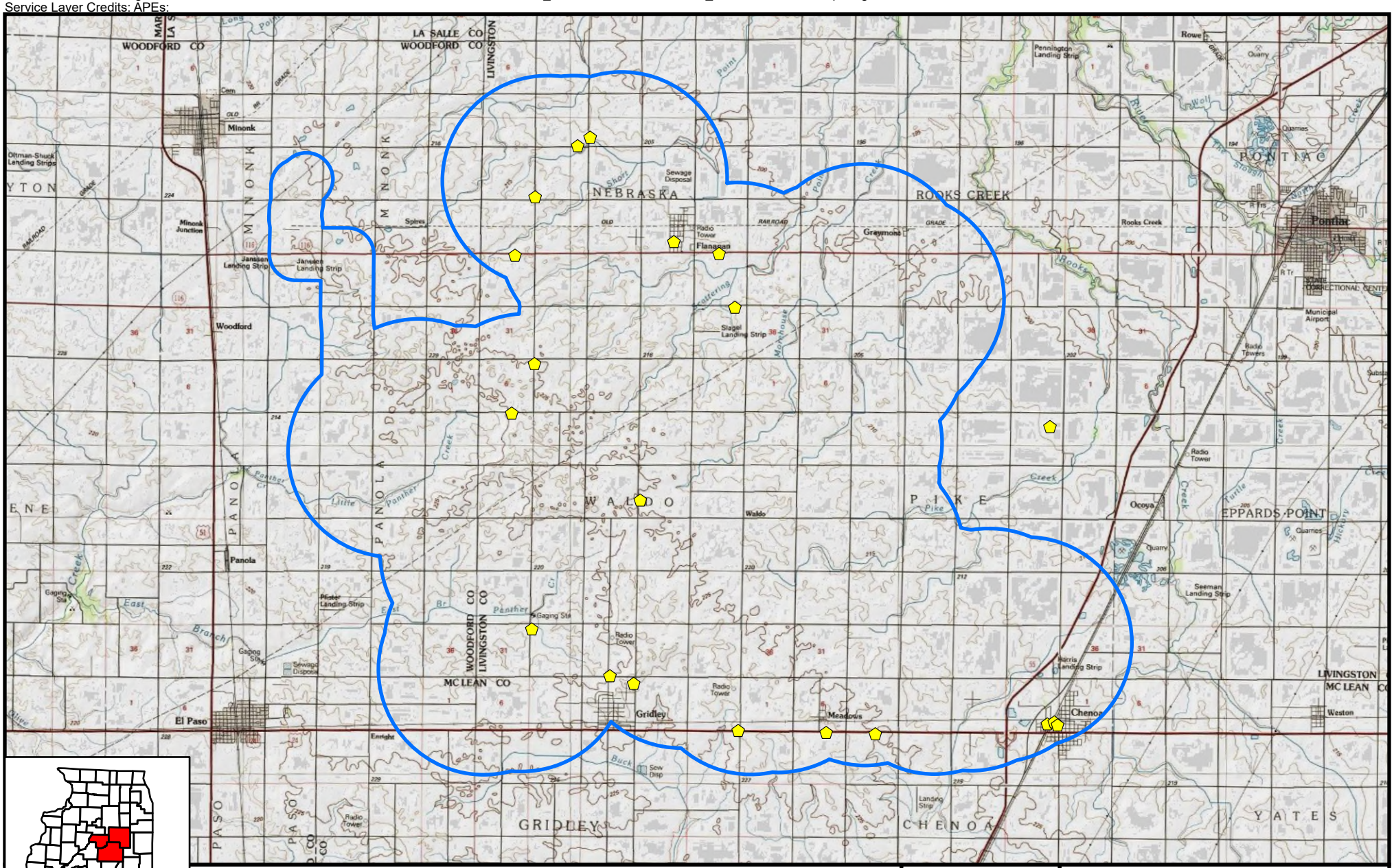

Figure A-2
Study Area Topographic Overview
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS

Issued: 8/19/2025

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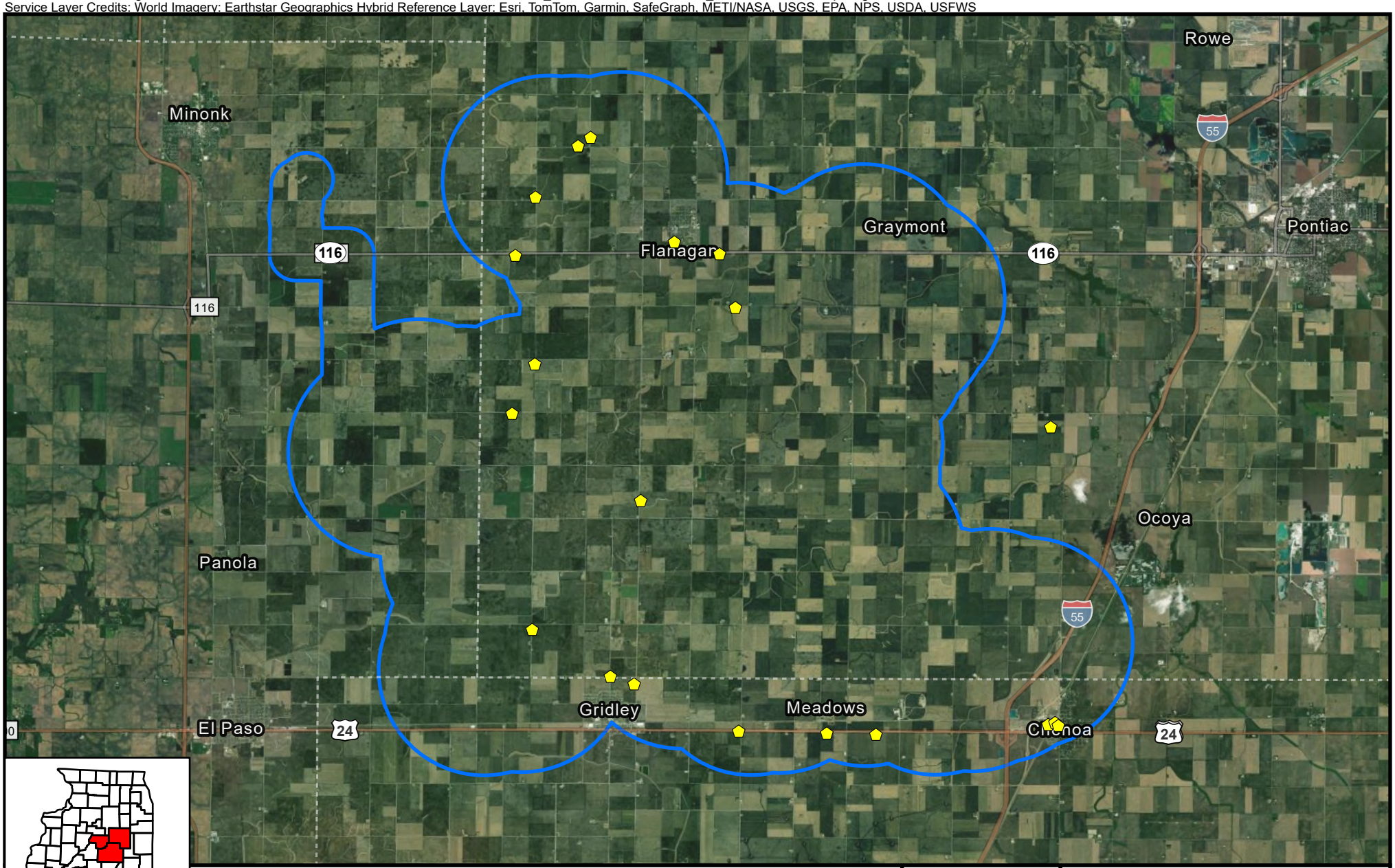

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-3
Study Area Aerial Overview
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI

Issued: 8/19/2025

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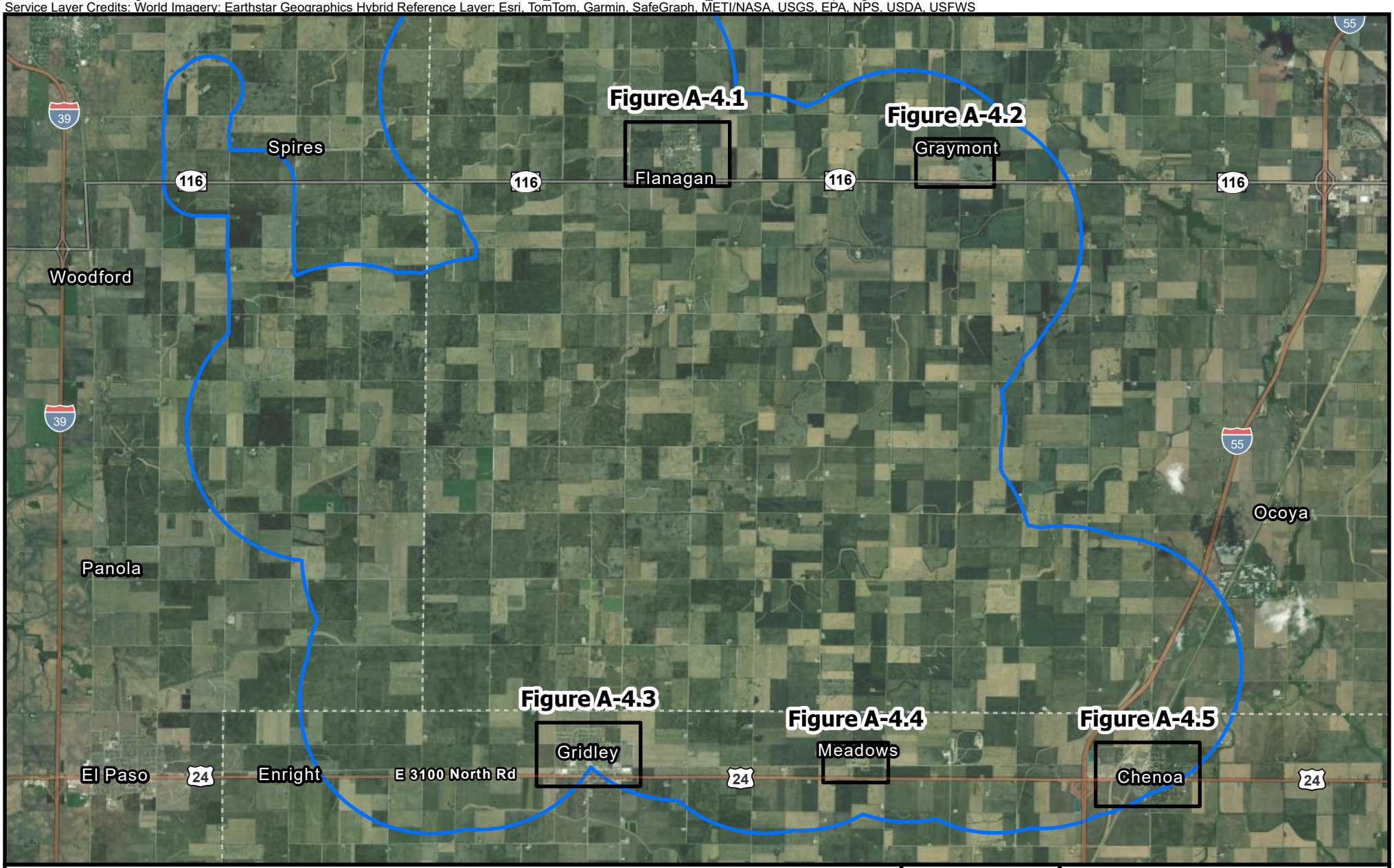

Study Area
Mapbook Sheet

NORTH
0 2 4
Miles

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-4
Community Maps Overview
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; Illinois SHPO

Issued: 8/14/2025

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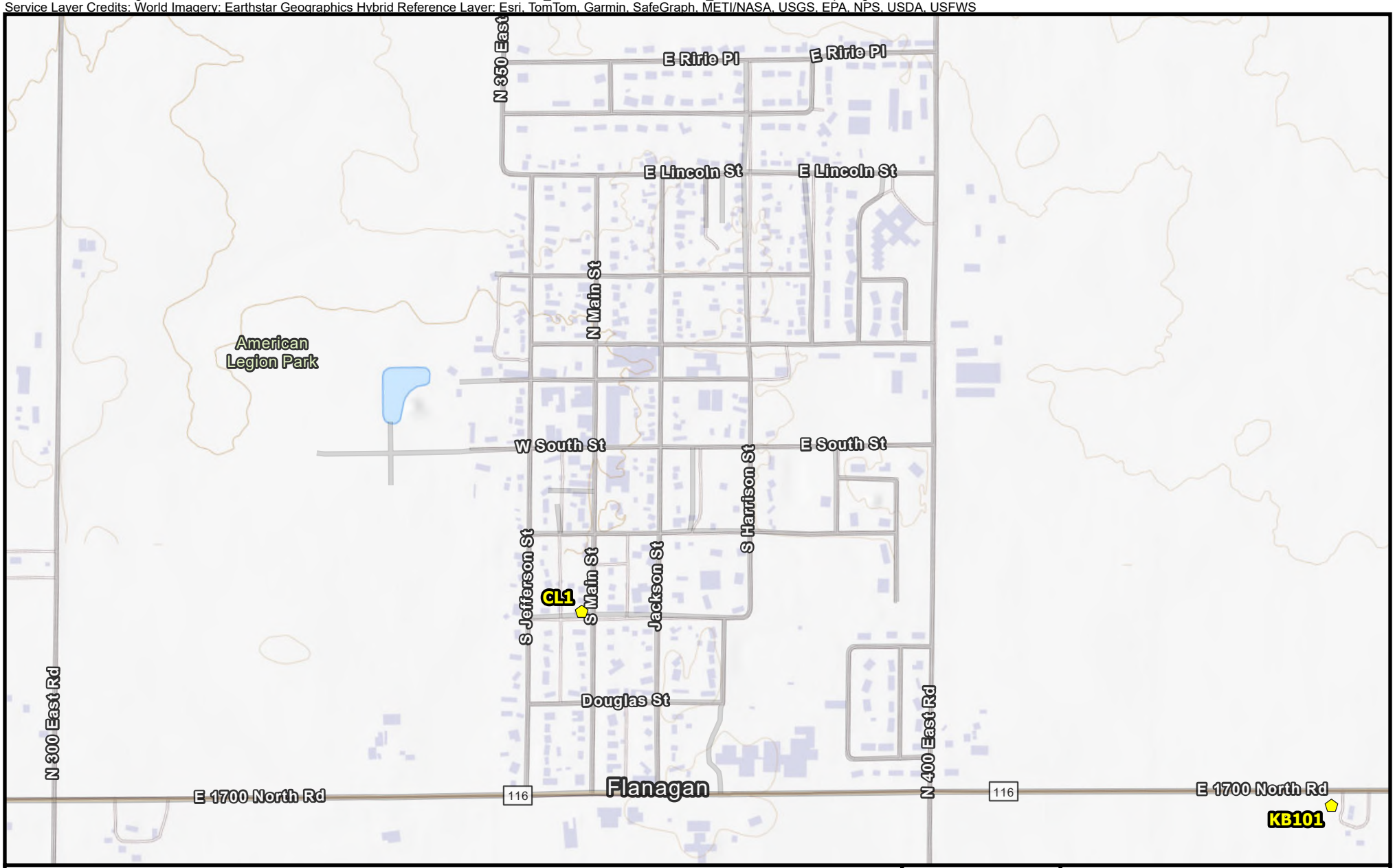

Historic Property
Study Area

NORTH
0 800 1,600
US Feet

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-4.1
Flanagan Community Map
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS "The National Map"
Issued: 8/19/2025

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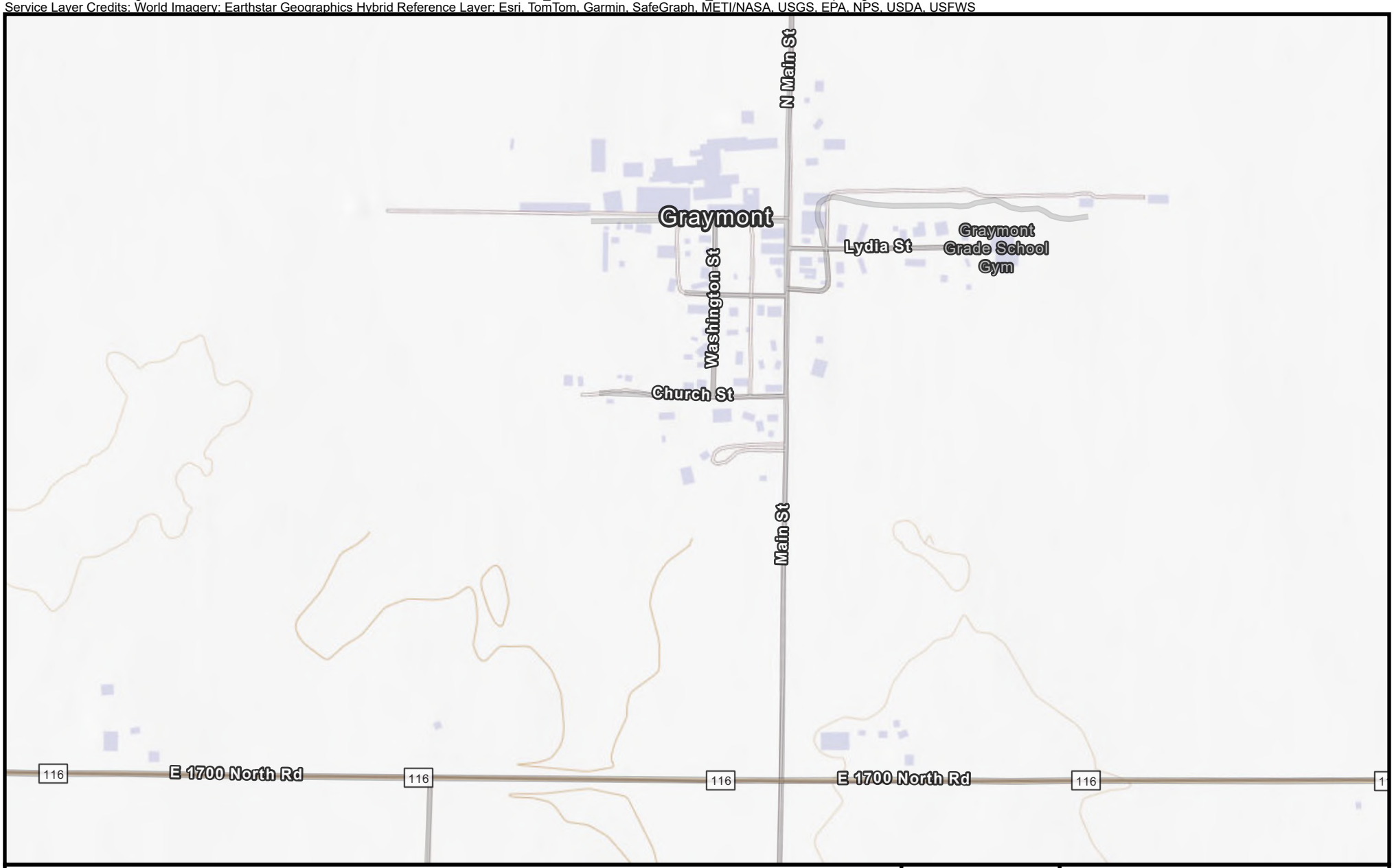

Figure A-4.2
Graymont Community Map
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS "The National Map"
Issued: 8/19/2025

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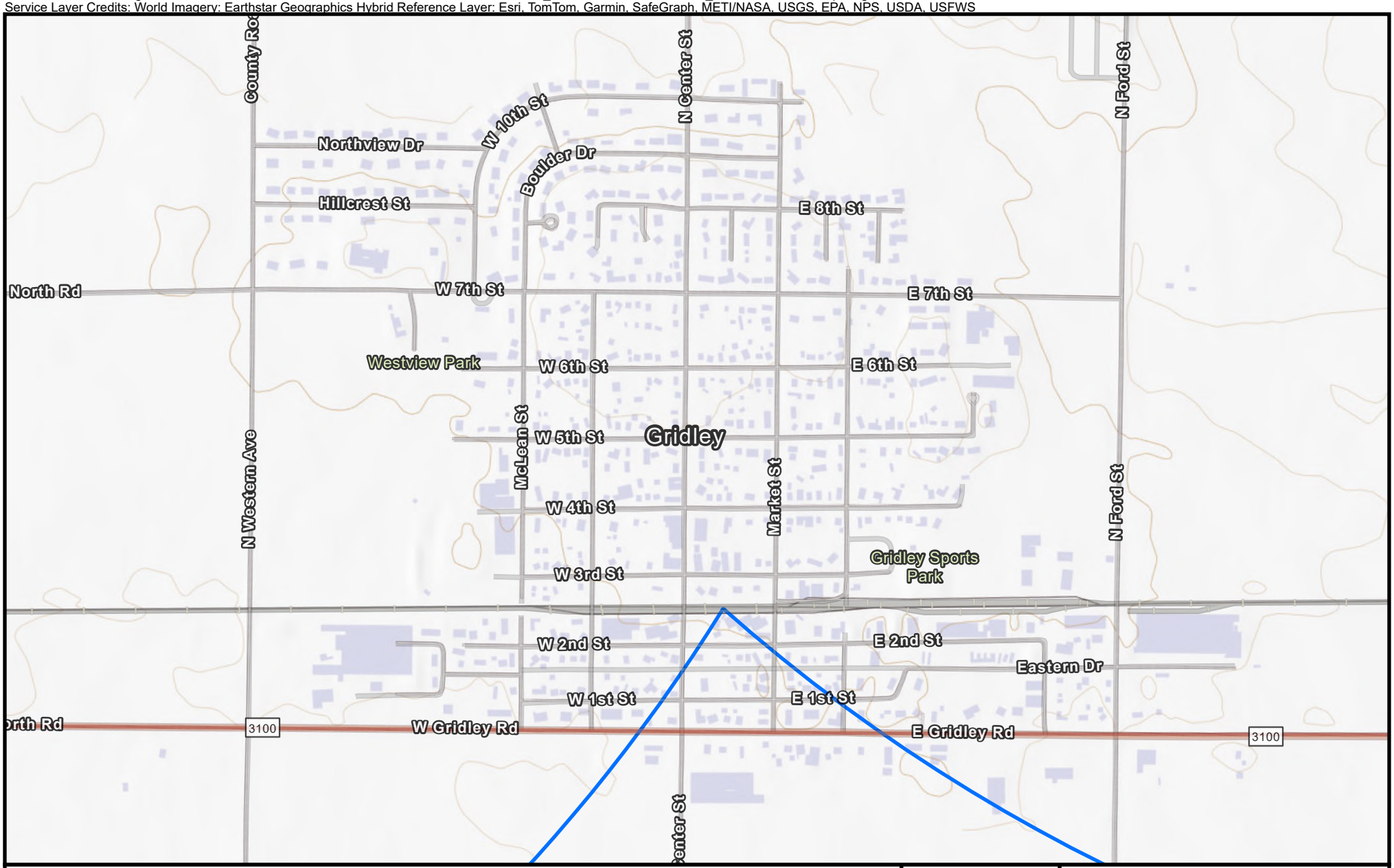

Historic Property
Study Area

NORTH
0 800 1,600
US Feet

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-4.3
Gridley Community Map
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS "The National Map"
Issued: 8/19/2025

Path: <LINK>C:\Users\gacox\OneDrive</LINK> - Burns & McDonnell\Texas GIS\Austin\172872_PantherGroveWind\172872_PantherGroveWind.aprx gacox 8/19/2025
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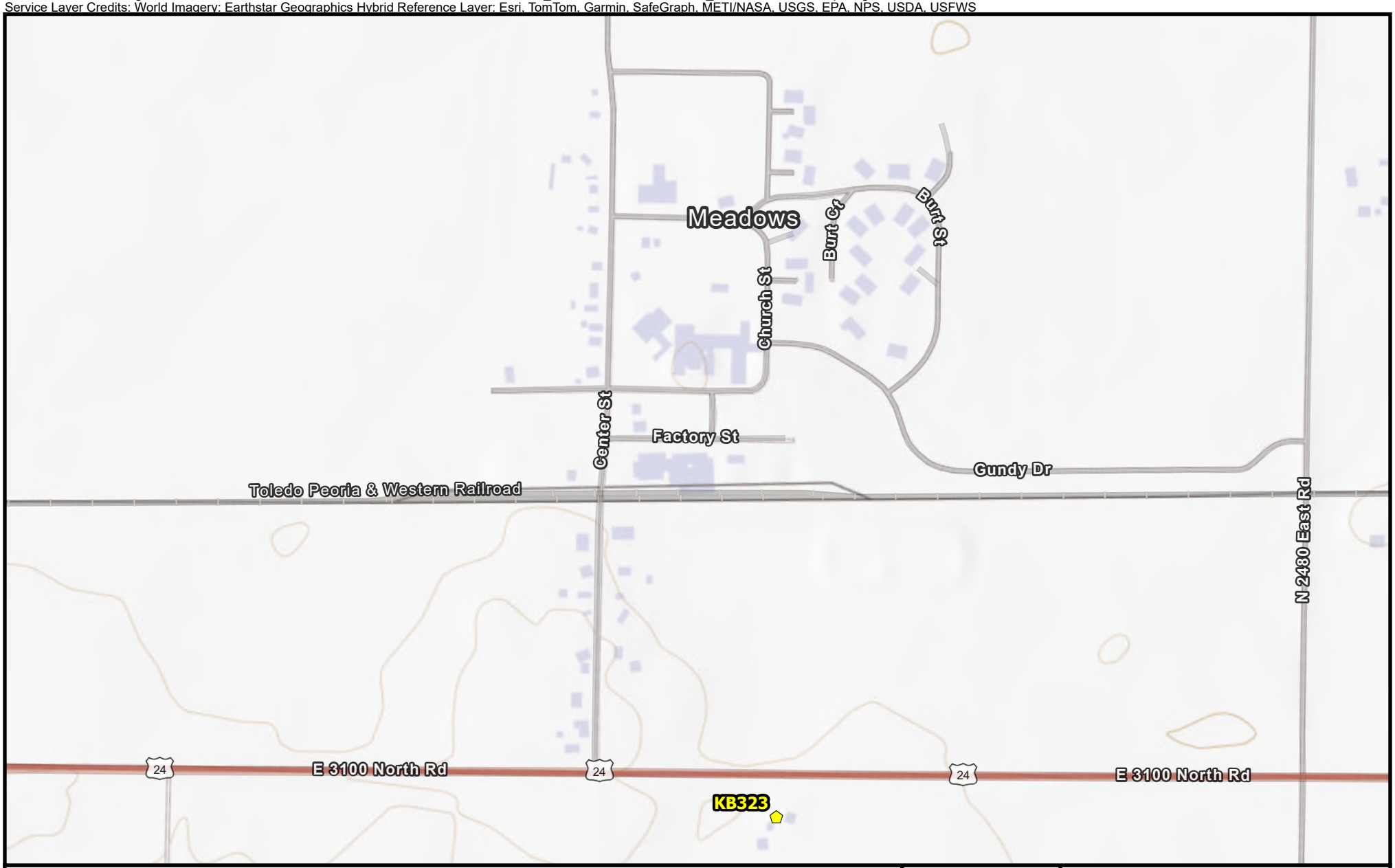

Historic Property
Study Area

NORTH
0 500 1,000
US Feet

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-4.4
Meadows Community Map
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS "The National Map"
Issued: 8/19/2025

Path: <LINK>C:\Users\gacox\OneDrive</LINK> - Burns & McDonnell\Texas GIS\Austin\172872_PantherGroveWind\172872_PantherGroveWind.aprx gacox 8/19/2025
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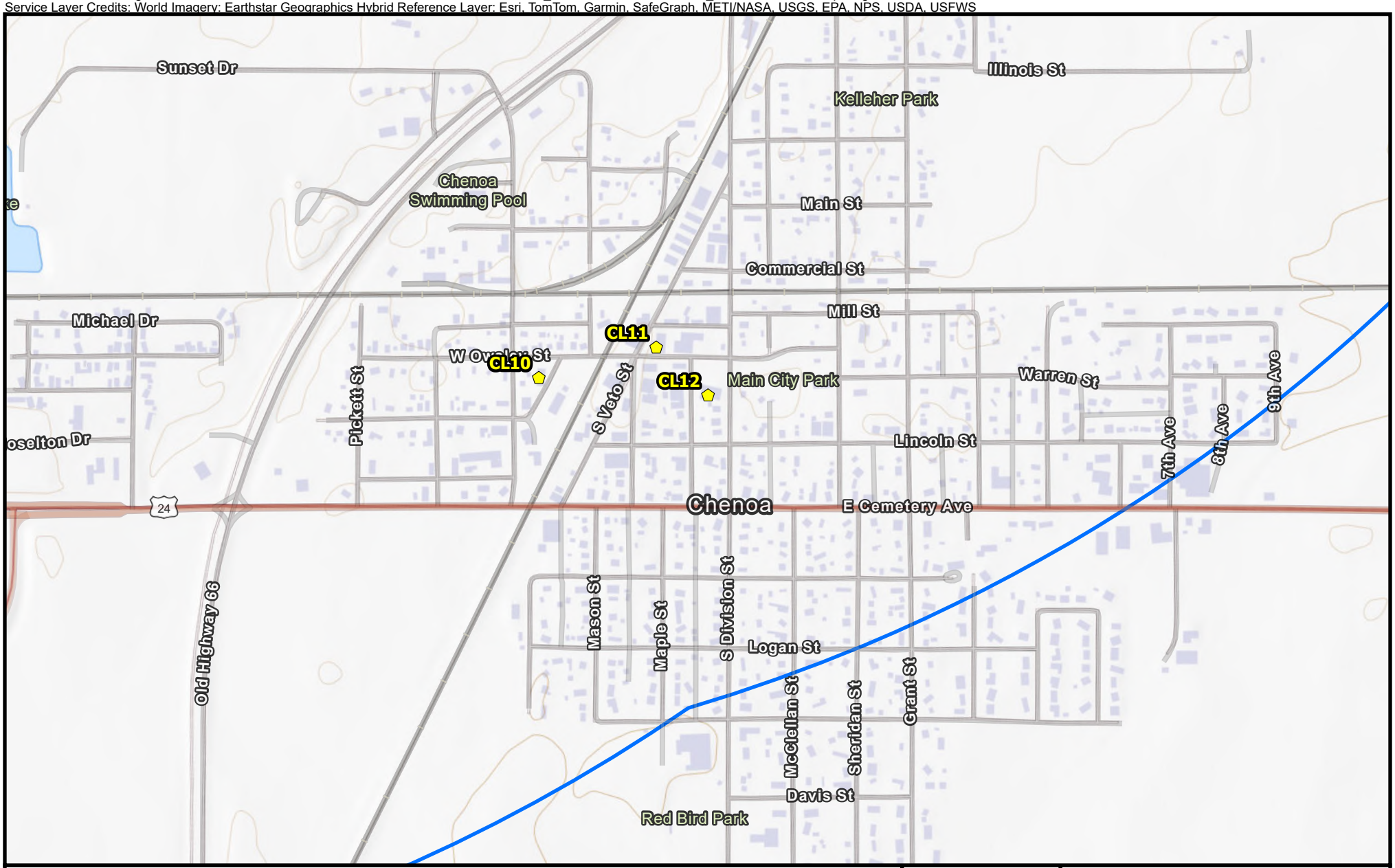

Historic Property
Study Area

NORTH
0 800 1,600
US Feet

BURNS McDONNELL

Figure A-4.5
Chenoa Community Map
Panther Grove 2 Wind Project
Panther Grove 2 LLC
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties, Illinois

Source: ESRI; USGS "The National Map"
Issued: 8/19/2025

Appendix B – SHPO Correspondence

Livingston County
Flanagan
New construction, Panther Grove 2 Wind Energy Project
NW of Chenoa, SE of Minonk, Flanagan,
Sections:1-5,7-32,34-, Section:36-Township:27N-Range:3E,
Sections:28,29,30,31, Section:32-Township:27N-Range:4E,
Sections:16,17,20,21,26-28,33-, Section:36-Township:28N-Range:3E,
Sections:28,29,30,31, Section:32-Township:28N-Range:4E,
Sections:16,21,27,28, Section:34-Township:28N-Range:2E,
Sections:1,2,3,11, Section:12-Township:27N-Range:2E,

B&MC-173864, IEPA, SHPO Log #013010824

April 11, 2025

Brandy Harris
Burns & McDonnell
8911 North Capital of Texas Highway
Building III, Suite 3100
Austin, TX 78759

Thank you for your submission of the requested revised Phase I Archaeological Survey for the Panther Grove 2 Wind Energy Project in Livingston and Woodford Counties, which we received on 3/20/25 SHPO Log#013010824). Our comments are required by the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420) and its implementing rules (17 IAC 4180) (Act).

Your project includes the proposed construction of a new 468-megawatt (MW) wind farm consisting of up to 104 wind turbines (anticipated to be approximately 640 feet) in Livingston County and three wind turbines and 11.5 miles (18.5 kilometers) of transmission lines in Woodford County, along with associated access roads and other appurtenant facilities. Thank you for your patience as we completed our review.

Our staff have reviewed the revised Phase I Archaeological Survey of 2,375 acres; fifty-eight (58) archaeological sites were identified within the project area. Archaeological sites 11LI499, 11LI500, 11LI510, 11WD583, and 11WD584 remain unevaluated for NRHP eligibility and will not be adversely affected. Archaeological sites 11LI488-498, 11LI501-509, 11LI511-534, and 11WD574-582 are ineligible for NRHP listing.

The project, as proposed, is compliant with the Act. This letter remains in effect for two (2) years from the date of issuance. If any archaeological materials are encountered during construction, this office must be notified. This letter is not a clearance for purposes of the Illinois Human Remains Protection Act (20 ILCS

3440). If further assistance is needed, please contact Jeff Kruchten, Principal Archaeologist, at Jeff.Kruchten@Illinois.gov or 217/785-1279.

Our staff have reviewed the Historic-age Resource Evaluation, which we received on 2/3/25 and concur with the following National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility determinations:

1. **141 E 2000 North Rd., Flanagan; Gothic Arch barn (KB 01b)**
2. **18079 N 100 East Rd., Flanagan; St. Petri Lutheran Church and associated properties (KB11 a, c, d, e)**
3. **South side of E 1700 N Rd., 0.3 miles west of intersection with N 100 E Rd., Flanagan; concrete block corn crib (KB 27)**
4. **2461 E 1700 North Rd., Flanagan; Residence (KB 81a)**
5. **14120 N 300 East Rd., Flanagan; Residence (KB 203a)**
6. **Old Route 66 Between Pontiac and Chenoa; (KB 254)**
7. **Illinois Central Railroad between Chenoa and Pontiac; (KB 255)**
8. **25055 E 3100 North Rd., Chenoa; Residence (KB 324)**
9. **3019 County Road 1600 N, Minonk; Residence (JK 22a)**
10. **3064 County Road 1600 N, El Paso; Residence (JK 25a)**
11. **Toledo, Peoria, and Western Railroad between Gridley, Meadows, and Chenoa; (JK 63)**

Additionally, SHPO staff have determined that the following historic resources are eligible for NRHP listing, unless otherwise noted the historic resource is eligible under Criterion C, Architecture, at the local level of significance:

1. **2602 E 1700 North Rd., Flanagan; Residence (KB 80a)**
2. **15161 N 400 East Rd., Flanagan; Mid-Century Building (KB 191a)**
3. **5975 East 1250 North Rd., Gridley; Clay tile barn, ca 1940 (KB 238b)**
4. **654 E 1400 North Rd., Flanagan; Gambrel roof dairy barn, ca. 1920 (JK 28b)**
5. **17249 E 3150 North Rd., Gridley; Foursquare/Prairie Residence ca 1900 (JK 67a)**
6. **31423 N 2180 East Rd., Gridley; Minimal Traditional Residence, ca 1945 (JK 86)**
7. **210 E. Main St., Flanagan; (Resource 123046)**

Of the above NRHP eligible properties, SHPO staff have determined that the following properties may be adversely (visually) affected by the proposed project and the following turbines:

- **2461 E 1700 North Rd., Flanagan; Residence (KB 81a) .25 miles T031**
- **15161 N 400 East Rd., Flanagan; Mid-Century Building (KB 191a) .5 miles pt004**
- **14120 N 300 East Rd, Flanagan; Residence (KB 203a) .6 miles T045 & .4 miles T042**
- **5975 East 1250 North Rd., Gridley; Clay tile barn, ca 1940 (KB 238b) .64 miles T083**
- **3019 County Road 1600 N, Minonk; Residence (JK 22a) .72 miles W3**
- **654 E 1400 North Rd., Flanagan; Gambrel roof dairy barn (JK 28b) .26 miles T015 & .6 miles T010**

These determinations were made using shapefiles of the latest turbine locations. Prior to the commencement of the remaining construction activities, we must have an executed Memorandum of Agreement to mitigate the above adverse visual effects. Please continue working with CJ Wallace and Steve Dasovich on potential mitigation project(s).

Sincerely,

Carey L. Mayer

Carey L. Mayer, AIA
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Appendix C – MOA

Docusign Envelope ID: 9186236F-507D-42B5-BC02-A1139647A94F

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AMONG PANTHER GROVE 2 LLC, THE ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, AND THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER REGARDING CONSTRUCTION OF A WIND FARM IN SOUTHWESTERN LIVINGSTON COUNTY AND WOODFORD COUNTIES, ILLINOIS (SHPO LOG #013010824)

WHEREAS, Panther Grove 2 LLC (Owner) plans to undertake construction of a 468-megawatt (MW) wind farm including 104 wind turbines in Livingston County, 3 wind turbines and 11.5 miles of transmission lines in Woodford County, temporary access roads, and other associated construction activities and appurtenant facilities (Project); and

WHEREAS, the project requires a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, a Water Pollution Control permit, and a Public Water Supply permit from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), thereby making the project an Undertaking subject to review under the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420) and its implementing rules (17 IAC 4180) (Act); and

WHEREAS, the Owner has consulted with the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a Division of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), pursuant to the Act; and

WHEREAS, the SHPO currently resides within IDNR (Office), and the Director of IDNR is the duly designated State Historic Preservation Officer (Officer); and

WHEREAS, the Officer Determined that the fifty-eight (58) archaeological sites reported by the Owner in the Phase I Archaeological Survey will not be adversely affected by the undertaking; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2025, the Officer determined that six of the following properties (Buildings) within the area of potential effects (APE) are eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and may be adversely visually affected by the Undertaking: 1) 2461 E. 1700 North Rd., Flanagan (Residence), 15161 N. 400 East Rd., Flanagan (Mid-Century Building), 14120 N. 300 East Rd., Flanagan (Residence), 3019 County Rd. 1600 N., Minonk (Residence), 5975 E. 1250 North Rd., Gridley (Clay Tile Barn), and 654 E. 1400 North Rd., Flanagan (Gambrel Roof Dairy Barn); and

WHEREAS, the public was notified of the Undertaking and given an opportunity to comment on the adverse effect in notices published in the *Pontiac Daily Leader* on December 20, 2024 and the *El Paso Journal* on December 25, 2024 with one comment received; and

WHEREAS, the Owner has notified the Village of Gridley, the Village of Flanagan, the City of Chenoa, the City of Pontiac, the City of El Paso, and the City of Minonk of the adverse effect

Docusign Envelope ID: 9186236F-507D-42B5-BC02-A1139647A94F

determination on December 17, 2024, and the six parties have chosen not to participate in the consultation to resolve the adverse effect; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Owner, IEPA, and the Officer agree that the Undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations in this Memorandum of Agreement (Agreement) in order to mitigate the adverse effects of this Undertaking to the NRHP-eligible properties.

STIPULATIONS

I. MITIGATION

A. The Owner shall employ or retain a historical expert of its choice (Historian) who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Qualifications (36 CFR Part 61, https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm) to complete a comprehensive thematic narrative and photographic report (Report) describing mid-nineteenth century German, Irish, and French immigration covering topics of churches, schools, social organizations, multi-generational farmsteads, and broad regional patterns, highlighting extant properties in the project area and vicinities, and identify vernacular architecture trends associated with specific ethnic groups in the area.

B. The Owner shall ensure that the Historian develops the Report using census records, records from local libraries and/or repositories, on-site field survey and research, historic photographs, and other primary source data to illustrate broader trends in immigration in central Illinois during the period(s) of significance, while connecting those trends to specific groups within the APE.

C. The Historian shall consult with the Officer to ensure that the Report follow guidelines established by the Officer.

D. The Officer may approve alterations to the format and/or requirements of the Report depending on the circumstances of the project.

E. Upon completion of draft Report, the Historian shall digitally submit the draft to the Officer for review and comment.

F. When the Officer accepts the draft Report submission, in writing, the Historian shall incorporate any comments that the Officer provides and complete the final Report.

G. Upon completion of the final documentation, the Owner and/or Historian shall submit the following to the Officer:

1. One archival clamshell of sufficient size to encapsulate the Report.
2. One copy of the Report on archival materials for deposit in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and one digital copy for display on the SHPO website.

II. DURATION

This Agreement shall be effective for two years or until such time as all of its terms are satisfied, or it is amended or terminated and replaced. Prior to such time, the Owner may consult with the other signatories to reconsider the terms of the Agreement and amend it in accordance with Stipulation VI AMENDMENTS below. The Owner shall notify the

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signatories as to the course of action it will pursue.

III. POST-REVIEW ENCOUNTERS

If potential historic properties are encountered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found, the Owner shall consult with the Officer immediately and make reasonable efforts to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to such properties. In the event of an unanticipated encounter of human remains or burials, the Owner understands and agrees that it must immediately stop work within the area of encounter, consult with the Officer, and comply with the Human Remains Protection Act (20 ILCS 3440) and its implementing rules (17 IAC 4170) as administered by IDNR, which provides that no human remains shall be disturbed without a permit issued by IDNR.

IV. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Each year following the execution of this Agreement until it expires or is terminated, Owner shall provide all parties to this Agreement a summary report detailing work undertaken pursuant to its terms. Such report shall include any scheduling changes proposed, any problems encountered, and any disputes and objections received in Owner's efforts to carry out the terms of this Agreement.

V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should any signatory to this Agreement object at any time to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this Agreement are implemented, the Owner shall consult with the signatories to resolve the objection. If the signatories cannot agree regarding a dispute, the signatories shall utilize the procedures provided in 20 ILCS 3420/4e.

A. The Owner's responsibility to carry out all other actions subject to the terms of this Agreement that are not the subject of the dispute remain unchanged.

VI. AMENDMENTS

This Agreement may be amended when such an amendment is agreed to in writing by all signatories. The amendment will be effective on the date a copy is signed by all of the signatories.

VII. TERMINATION

If any signatory to this Agreement determines that its terms become impossible to carry out, that party shall immediately consult with the other signatories to attempt to develop an amendment per Stipulations V and VI above. If within thirty (30) days an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the Agreement upon written notification to the other signatories.

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VIII. COUNTERPARTS; FACSIMILE OR .PDF SIGNATURES

This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be considered an original and together shall be one and the same Agreement. A facsimile or .pdf copy of this Agreement and any signatures thereon will be considered for all purposes as an original.

EXECUTION of this Agreement by signatories, and the implementation of its terms evidence that the signatories have afforded the Officer an opportunity to comment on the effects of the Undertaking in compliance with the Act.

[Signature Pages to follow]

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MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AMONG PANTHER GROVE 2 LLC, THE ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, AND THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER REGARDING CONSTRUCTION OF A WIND FARM IN SOUTHWESTERN LIVINGSTON COUNTY AND THE NORTHERN EDGE OF MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS (SHPO LOG #013010824)

SIGNATORY

PANTHER GROVE 2 LLC

Signature: DocuSigned by: Sean Toland DAAFB132C879462... Date: April 21, 2025

Name: Sean Toland

Title: Authorized Signor

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SIGNATORY

ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (IEPA)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

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SIGNATORY

ILLINOIS DEPUTY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER (OFFICER)

By: _____ Date: _____

Carey L. Mayer, AIA
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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CONCURRING PARTY OR INVITED SIGNATORY

By: _____ Date: _____


BURNS
McDONNELL