

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**SENT TO D.C.**

4-14-06

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

other names/site number **Yunker Farm**

**2. Location**

street & number **10824 LaPorte Rd.** N/A Not for publication

city or town **Mokena** N/A vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **Will** code **197** zip code **60448**

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide  locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Walter L. Wheeler / 5480*  
Signature of certifying official

*4-11-06*  
Date

**Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

American Indian Tribe

Name of Property **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

County and State **Will County, IL**

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain):	_____	_____

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#### 5. Classification

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Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  9  </u>	<u>  5  </u>	buildings
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	sites
<u>  4  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	structures
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	objects
<u> 13 </u>	<u>  5 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **N/A**

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**N/A**

Name of Property **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

County and State **Will County, IL**

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

**Domestic/Single dwelling**

**Domestic/Secondary structure**

**Agricultural/Storage**

**Agriculture/Animal facility**

**Agriculture/Agricultural outbuilding**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

**Vacant/not in use,**

**Work in Progress**

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Other: T-Plan**

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **Stone: Limestone, concrete**

Roof **Asphalt**

Walls **Wood, asphalt, brick, concrete, woven wire**

other **Brick & wood**

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**See attached continuation sheets**

Name of Property **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

County and State **Will County, IL**

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

**Agriculture**

Period of Significance **1841-1956**

Significant Dates **1841, 1859, 1924**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **N/A**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See attached continuation sheets.**

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Name of Property **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

County and State **Will County, IL**

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository **Mokena Public Library, Arris Architects & Planners, P.C.,  
Mokena Community Park District**

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property **Approximately 30 acres**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Name of Property **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead**

County and State **Will County, IL**

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title **Jennifer L. Medema, Treasurer**

organization **Mokena Area Historical Society**

date **December 9, 2005**

street & number **10918 Front St**

telephone **708-479-4644**

city or town **Mokena**

state **IL**

zip code **60448**

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:  
Continuation Sheets

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Mokena Community Park District, Attn: Connie Eskoff**

street & number **10925 W. LaPorte Rd.**

telephone **708-479-1020**

city or town **Mokena**

state **IL**

zip code **60448**

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1 **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead, Will County, Illinois**

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**The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead Narrative Description**

The McGovney-Yunker Farm is located within the East Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 8 and the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 17, Township 35 North, Range 12 East (Frankfort Township) of the Third Principal Meridian in Will County, Illinois. The farm site is bounded on the north by the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad and industrial development; on the south by fallow land; on the east by Schoolhouse Road and fallow land; and on the west by a religious institution and the Mokena Community Park District. LaPorte Road, which runs approximately east-west, divides the McGovney-Yunker Farm into two, nearly equal parcels. The original farm site consists of approximately 116 acres. The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead is adjacent to the north side of LaPorte Road and occupies the southeast corner of the north parcel of the historic farmstead.

The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead consists of a farmhouse (c. 1860), a gable bank barn (c. 1860), a wooden shed (c. 1880 - 1890), a chicken coop (c. 1880 - 1890), a brooder house (c. 1880 - 1890), a well house (c. 1860), and a smokehouse/woodshed (c. 1880 - 1890). Later contributing additions to the farmstead include a cattle shed and yard (c. 1940), a hog house (c. 1940), three open-wire corn bins (c. 1940 - 1945), and a corn crib (c. 1950). Five non-contributing buildings include two doghouses (c. 1960), a garage/workshop (c. 1955 - 1965), a tool shed/implement shed (c. 1965) and a metal shed (c. 1975). Although one additional building, a barn/shed (c. 1890) has been razed, and a few buildings have been added after the period of significance, the general composition of the farmstead appears to be unchanged throughout time.

The majority of the farmstead buildings are located on the north side of the two lane, paved roadway. Creating a roughly crescent-shaped layout, the north farmstead buildings are clustered around a gravel driveway/farmyard near LaPorte Road. The south farmstead buildings are located in a compact cluster immediately south of LaPorte Road. The south farmstead buildings consist only of the metal shed, wooden shed, and all three open-wire corn bins.

The farmhouse, located to the west of the farmstead, is obscured from LaPorte Road by overgrown vegetation. Remnants of a historic apple orchard lay just to the west of the house.

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Section 7 Page 2 **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead, Will County, Illinois**

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Dominating the farm is the gable bank barn, located in the center of the north cluster of buildings. Ancillary buildings, primarily of the nineteenth century and typically associated with domestic chores (i.e. Smokehouse/woodshed, chicken coop and brooder house), are located near the farmhouse. Outbuildings that housed livestock are located east of the barn and "downwind" of the farmhouse. The well house is the only building located between the barn and LaPorte Road. The roadway itself is an important part of the landscape because historically it has always divided the farm, serving in earlier years as a thoroughfare between Lockport, Illinois, and LaPorte, Indiana.

### **The Farmhouse**

The McGovney-Yunker Farmhouse is a nineteenth century, wood-framed farmhouse. It is a two-story, T-plan residence. The original form of the farmhouse may have been an upright and wing. It is believed that the farmhouse was modernized in the early twentieth century, and the east section was increased to two stories and some early twentieth century Arts and Crafts stylistic details were added. It is also likely that the present front porch was added at this time as well. Reportedly, a two-story wing extending to the north was removed during the early twentieth century.

### **Exterior**

The roof is covered with asphalt composition shingles, though evidence remains of re-sawn, wood shingles. The primary roof forms are simple gables with a moderate pitch.

The eaves of the second story consist of tongue-and-groove boards approximately 8 inches wide; while the eaves on the one-story section consist of a single board approximately 12" wide. The fascia consists of a straight board with a shaped, crown molding at the upper edge at both sections of the farmhouse.

There are three chimneys in the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse. Historically, one chimney was located roughly at the center of each ridge of each section of the house. The east chimney of red brick remains and extends high above the ridge; the west chimney was largely removed at some point in time. The Yunker family room incorporates a large masonry fireplace; the chimney breast of buff-colored brick is exposed on the north façade of the farmhouse.



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Section 7 Page 3 **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead, Will County, Illinois**

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Clapboard siding installed as early as 1860 sheaths the exterior façade, although some portions of the farmhouse are covered in twentieth century compressed hardboard siding. All exterior trim is plain milled boards. The exterior walls were finished with a 5-inch exposure straight lap siding. After 1960, much of the original siding had been covered with compressed hardboard siding with 8-inch exposure.

The farmhouse is constructed on a foundation of undressed, roughly coursed limestone, most likely Joliet limestone quarried locally. A small portion of the west foundation as well as c. 1960-1970 foundation walls are constructed of concrete masonry units.

Exterior doors are single leaf, devoid of sidelights, transoms or decorative trim. With few exceptions, the windows are circa 1940, one-over-one, double hung wood sash. The exterior doors include a variety of styles reflecting the "waste-not" philosophy of many farmers. The east-facing door of the north extension is a twentieth century wood door with horizontal panels.

Other than a few stylistic details, the McGovney-Yunker Farm House is generally devoid of any ornament on the exterior. The "upright" section, or south elevation has the most detail, with simple brackets decorating the upper south gable. Beneath the gable is a small rectangular louvered window. The elevation is divided into three bays, with three windows on the upper floor directly above the openings on the first floor. On the first floor the front door is located between two windows. The entrance is through a screened porch that was added after 1900. The original wooden screen door and window screens are intact and in good condition. The front door, which is the oldest exterior door and original to the McGovney era, is a wooden four-panel door. The raised panels are vertically oriented.

The southeast corner of the house, where the east gable bisects the north/south gable, has a window on each floor, one above the other, on the east wall of the south gable. The south wall of the east gable has two single windows on the second floor and one paired window on the first floor.

The frame of the louvered window beneath the gable of the east facing wing cuts into the fascia. There are paired windows on each floor. A one-story addition is located at the juncture of the east and west gables. Access to the addition is granted on the east wall. A concrete stoop with a wrought-iron railing leads to the wood paneled glazed door. The

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Section 7 Page 4 **McGovney-Yunker Farmstead, Will County, Illinois**

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entrance also has an aluminum storm door. On the north wall of this addition, a metal cellar hatch-type door was installed which opens to the cellar stairs. There are three windows on the north wall of the addition and one window on the north wall of the second story, located near the juncture of the east and north-facing gables.

The north elevation is accentuated by the exterior chimney located on the gable wall. A window is located on either side of the chimney on both floors. The west elevation has one window located near the center of the second elevation. Two window openings are on the first floor, with a triple window on the north side of the wall and a single window on the south side.

A full cellar rests below the west section of the farmhouse and extends under the west half of the east section. Only a crawlspace exists below the east half of the east section. No accessible crawlspace exists below the north extension. The cellar was excavated to full depth over the years; the exact date of this modification is unknown. The cellar has been remodeled over time; it is difficult to determine the original configuration. The first floor of the cellar is concrete. The clear distance from floor to joists above is approximately 7'-7", although portions of the cellar have a raised concrete floor.

### **Framing**

The structural system is relatively simple and conventional throughout the McGovney-Yunker Farmhouse. Machine-sawn, dimensional lumber is utilized to create balloon-framed walls and to achieve simple floor spans. Most of the structural members are obscured by architectural finishes throughout the building.

The framing members that form the deck at the first floor are true-dimension, sawn 2" x 8" wood joists spaced roughly at 16 inches on center. The joists span north-to-south throughout the house. It appears that the house is constructed on either a heavy timber sill or a heavy dimensional lumber sill (more than 2 inches thick.) The deck itself is one inch thick, tongue-and-groove, pine board floors laid tightly to one another and perpendicularly to the joists. Later sub-flooring has been installed above the original floor deck.

The vertical framing members are true-dimension, sawn 2" x 4" wood studs spaced roughly at 16 inches on center. The wall framing appears to be balloon-framed; however, architectural finishes obscure the construction. The exterior face of the studs is covered

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with one inch thick, horizontal board sheathing; the interior face appears to be covered with 1/4" thick, machine-cut lath and 1/2" of plaster.

Although it was difficult to view because of the small access hatch to the attic, the roof framing is believed to be true-dimension, 2" x 4" sawn wood rafters; no ridge board is evident. The roof sheathing consisted of spaced boards or 'skip sheathing', which is probably one inch thick. However, it appears that plywood roof sheathing was installed above the historic sheathing when the roof materials were replaced.

**Interior**

Throughout the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse, the walls and ceilings are finished with lath and plaster. Walls of newer spaces appear to be plaster or gypsum wallboard as well. No ornamental moldings of any kind exist in the house. Much of the plaster has been covered with wallpaper, and all others have been painted in recent years. The interior finishes include a stained beaded wood ceiling, painted beaded wood walls and 1' x 3' tongue-and-groove flooring.

Within many of the rooms dating to the two earliest periods of the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse, loose-laid twentieth century linoleum flooring remains. These remnant-flooring materials were, most likely, laid in major rooms of the farmhouse at one time. Although modern resilient sheet vinyl, ceramic tile, wood, or plywood sub-flooring, cover the floors in those rooms remodeled in the late twentieth century, other spaces retain floors consistent with the period of construction or remodeling. The other spaces that were remodeled during the early part of the twentieth century retain hardwood floors with a deep red-brown finish that matches the door and window trim. The rooms in the circa 1860 section of the house retain painted, six inch wide pine floors; early finishes remain on many surfaces. Where pine board floors remain, doorways are treated with a raised, bevel-edged wood threshold.

Throughout the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse, all windows are double-hung, one-over-one sash except in the cellar and those spaces where late twentieth century remodeling occurred. The sash is painted. In the areas remodeled in the late twentieth century, the windows are either double-hung or casement finished in a light ash or blond stain. The cellar windows consist of at least one wood, framed historic window and one or more awning-type, metal-framed windows with one light per sash.

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Historic doors in the circa 1860 section of the farmhouse are 2'-6" wide x 7'-0" high, four panel doors; door panels are slightly raised. These doors are painted, as they most certainly were historically. Doors within the sections of the farmhouse that were remodeled in the early twentieth century are two panel doors finished in a red-brown stain and varnish to match the woodwork throughout these sections of the farmhouse. Modern era doors from the late twentieth century remodeling are flush panel, hollow core doors. Doorjambes are wood.

Nearly all of the interior and exterior doors to the circa 1860 section of the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse have cast iron hinges, box locks, and ceramic knobs. The majority of the ceramic knobs are white porcelain, which have crazed. The doors within the areas of the farmhouse, which were remodeled in the early twentieth century, have electro-plated metal hinges, doorknobs, escutcheon plates and accessories.

The hardware in the portions of the farmhouse remodeled by Ed and Lavern Yunker is non-descript, brass-plated, hardware typical of the late twentieth century. Most of the windows have simple, brass-plated sash locks.

The first floor consists of 9 rooms or spaces: formal parlor, side parlor with closet, family room, bathroom 1, kitchen, pantry, mud room, bathroom 2, stair hall and storage room. Additionally, the screened porch is accessible from the first floor. Representative of the McGovney era, the formal parlor and side parlor survive relatively intact with a high degree of architectural integrity. The remaining areas of the first floor, significantly remodeled by Edwin and Lavern Yunker, are representative of typical late-twentieth century remodeling projects completed by many Will County farmers.

The formal parlor is rectangular in plan, occupying the two east bays of the three-bay, front-facing gable section of the house. The formal parlor is separated from the present family room by a large opening that may have included a pair of hinged doors. The formal parlor opens, also, to the side parlor.

The side parlor and closet occupy the west bay of the three-bay, front-facing gable section of the house. The McGovneys may have maintained a bedroom at the first floor at this location. Bedrooms that incorporated a closet were more typical after 1860.

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The modern-era family room is the largest room in the farmhouse. A large brick fireplace, window styles, paneled walls and wall-to-wall carpeting (which has since been removed) are a departure from the historic character remaining in other areas of the farmhouse. Opening off the family room, a modern bathroom is incorporated in the twentieth century addition along the north side of the farmhouse.

The kitchen is the second largest room in the farmhouse and was remodeled simultaneously with the family room. Modern cabinets line the south, east and west walls. The enclosed stairway to the second floor is accessed through the kitchen.

The mudroom, finished similarly to the kitchen, contains a large closet. A bathroom is accessible from the mudroom. There is an exterior door on the east wall.

The second floor consists of 9 rooms or spaces: 3 bedrooms, 3 closets, 2 storage rooms, a stairwell and a hall. The west section of the second floor appears to be largely intact and dates to the Elijah McGovney era (c. 1860-1921). The east section of the second floor appears to be completely intact and dates to the L. Edward McGovney era (c. 1921-1924).

The largest bedroom is located at the southeast corner (above the formal parlor on the first floor) and is rectangular in plan. This bedroom has a large walk-in closet, which may have served as a small bedroom. The southeast bedroom also has a smaller closet. Additionally, doorways open from the southeast bedroom to the northeast bedroom as well as a large storage room, which may have served as an original bedroom.

The northeast bedroom is rectangular in plan and is located above the first floor family room. The room is adjacent to two large storage rooms, which appear to be original to the construction. The southernmost of the storage rooms is the same room connected to the southeast bedroom. The northernmost storage room is accessible from only the northeast bedroom and may have served, originally, as a bedroom or "trunk room."

The location of the original stairway is unknown at this time. The existing stairway dates to the early twentieth century and is not elaborate. The steep flight of switchback stairs is completely enclosed without any balustrade or newel post; a door and transom window are located at the first floor. The steep stairway, which is finished in a red-brown stain

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consistent with other areas remodeled in the early twentieth century, consists of 13 risers which are 8 3/4 inches high; treads are 10 inches wide.

The west section of the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse is raised one step above the east section. The east section contains the present stairway and hall, a small toilet room and an additional bedroom. The architectural finishes and details differ remarkably from the west section of the farmhouse and, stylistically, are Arts and Crafts influenced.

The toilet room contains a sink and toilet. The room is located below a pitched roof, consequently sloping a portion of the ceiling.

The east bedroom occupies the entire east half of the east wing, the ceiling slopes at the north and south edges. A large reach-in closet is adjacent to and accessible from this bedroom.

The cellar is unfinished, exposed wood and limestone with a concrete floor. Late twentieth century plumbing within the farmhouse is in good condition. Several historic washing machines and an early bathtub remain in the cellar.

Historically coal stoves placed in many of the rooms heated the farmhouse. It is now heated by a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, hot water boiler, the fuel source appears to be propane gas drawn from a storage tank west of the residence.

Modern incandescent fixtures light the farmhouse throughout, with exception to three historic twentieth century fixtures remaining in the first floor side parlor, the second floor stair hall and the second floor southwest storage room.

**Outbuildings**

LaPorte Road divides the McGovney-Yunker farmstead, the majority of the buildings being north of LaPorte Road. Eleven buildings are to the north of the road, including the house and the gable bank barn. The five structures on the south side of LaPorte Road include the metal shed, the corn bins and the wooden shed. While the present appearance of the farm can be attributed to the Yunker families, several buildings can still be attributed to the McGovney families.

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**McGovney-Yunker gable bank barn, ca. 1860, contributing**

While the McGovney-Yunker gable bank barn is not cohesively representative of a single period of historic architectural styles, but rather typical of rural American barns that slowly evolved over time, it does retain a good degree of integrity for a continually functioning barn for the period between 1860 and 1954.

The McGovney-Yunker gable bank barn dominates the north side of the farmstead. Built in 1860, the barn is attributed to Elijah McGovney, who acquired the property from his father in 1857. A significant portion of the nineteenth century barn remains intact. Built into an embankment, it is identified by its gable roof and raised limestone foundation. With the exception of highly decorative roof ventilators, the gable bank barn is generally devoid of stylistic details. The roof is covered with green asphalt shingles. Doors are single leaf doors that roll on an overhead. The building is sheathed in board-and-batten. The interior of the gable bank barn being virtually unchanged since the late nineteenth century; the barn itself is in reasonably good condition and retains a high level of architectural integrity.

Additions to the barn include a silo of concrete masonry unit and steel compression rings, a manure elevator hood roof and a millhouse. The barn is mid-sized compared to other barns found throughout Will County. Attached to the barn with a small connecting shed accessible from only the lower level, the silo is capped with a sectioned, metal dome and rises about 45 feet above the grade. The manure elevator hood roof has no foundation. It was designed to keep storm water out of the barn and to keep the elevator and manure dry during rain and snowstorms. The milkhouse was added to the original structure sometime after 1940, finished similarly to the main section of the barn.

The McGovney-Yunker gable bank barn is constructed on a limestone foundation. The undressed, roughly coursed stones were likely quarried locally. In the early twentieth century, the entire north and east walls of the foundation were replaced with poured concrete (ca. 1940). Enclosed by the foundation walls is a full cellar that served as the milking area for dairy cattle. It opens to the lower grade around the north and east sides of the barn.

The exterior walls of the gable bank barn are finished with vertical board-and-batten siding. The boards are approximately 12 inches wide, while the wooden battens are about 2 inches wide. The wood windows and trim windows were recently replaced with

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aluminum framed windows and trim. The dimensions of the new windows match those of the old. The original siding survives in good condition and has been maintained with regular coats of paint over time.

The heavy timber frame of the barn is constructed on a heavy timber sill resting on the foundation wall. The deck is one inch thick, tongue-and-groove, wood board floors. The barn is of wood peg construction and the beams have straight cuts, indicating that the lumber was cut by hand.

The principal door opens to the south and consists of a pair of rolling doors suspended from an overhead track. Other doors are typical barn doors with interior cross bracing.

The roof forms are simple gables with a moderate pitch of approximately 12:12. Secondary roofs are likewise simple gables that follow the pitch of the primary roof. Evidence remains of re-sawn, wood shingles over "skip" sheathing, although the roof is now covered with asphalt composite shingles. The eaves consist of tongue-and-groove boards, approximately 8 inches wide laid parallel to the ridge. A straight board makes up the fascia.

The lower level is outfitted as the milking floor for dairy cattle. A concrete floor with manure channels has been poured throughout. The milking apparatus remains nearly intact along with various grain bins and other associated apparatus. The stanchions were recently removed in order to be cleaned thoroughly. Some of them will be reinstalled for educational purposes. The barn was not originally built for milking and the stanchions were added later around the turn of the century. When the stanchions are reinstalled, they will only be added in one section, in order to represent the transition of the barn's use over time.

The main level consists of an open threshing floor and implement storage areas as well as a few wooden grain bins and at least one hay chute. A small haymow is constructed above a small portion of the threshing floor.

The main stairway, located adjacent to the north wall, connects the two levels. Within the milkhouse, a second stairway leads up from the milking floor. Doors with weighted closers seal off the stairwell from the milking floor and the milkhouse operation. The weighted doors prevent insects and airborne elements from entering the milkhouse.



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The walls at the main level of the gable bank barn are unfinished, unpainted board, the interior face of the exterior siding. The lower level walls and ceilings are painted with a whitewash-type paint approved for dairy applications.

Interior doors are similar to the exterior doors, except where metal or wire gates separate stalls. The doors and gates are unpainted at the main level and painted at the lower level to match the walls and ceiling where milking occurred. Interior doors are four-panel, wood doors that appear to be salvaged from the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse.

Heating was provided only in the milkhouse room via a small electric heater. Ventilation occurs through natural convection throughout the entire barn. Windows provide air movement from the lower level up through the barn roof ventilators. The ventilators themselves are moved by prevailing breezes to capture natural air currents, which assist in building ventilation.

Minimal lighting is provided by exposed light bulbs strung throughout the barn where needed.

**Smokehouse/Woodshed, ca. 1880 – 1890 contributing**

The smokehouse/woodshed is a brick structure that was built between 1880 and 1890. In the early twentieth century a wood framed structure was added around the original structure, sitting on a poured concrete foundation. A portion of the brick remains exposed. A portion of the east foundation wall was repaired by Edwin Yunker and bears his initials and rural free delivery postal route designation (EY R2). The gable roof, with asphalt shingles, has a ridge that runs north to south. The smokehouse/woodshed is located in close proximity to the farmhouse, suggesting its association with domestic functions of the household. Historically the building served as a smokehouse for preserving meats, a woodshed for storing fuel for cooking and heating, and as a workshop. It is associated with both the McGovney and Yunker families.

**Chicken coop, ca. 1880 – 1890, contributing**

The chicken coop is a frame structure covered with wood siding and sheathed in roll asphalt roofing material. Although the asphalt sheathing kept the building free of drafts, the material has trapped moisture and may be contributing to the building's deterioration.

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It has been significantly altered over time as evidenced by the "ghost" outline of the original roofline on the east and west walls.

The south-facing windows may consist of the historic window sash from the ca. 1860 McGovney farmhouse. Although the historic appearance of the building has been altered significantly, the original construction can be attributed to either Elijah McGovney or his son, L. Edward McGovney.

The interior of the chicken coop is in relatively good condition and retains numerous historic features including the nesting hutches. However, the concrete floor has heaved and will need to be replaced eventually.

**Brooder house, ca. 1880 – 1890, contributing**

The brooder house dates back to the early twentieth century and was utilized to hatch and raise chicks. A propane gas heater was installed to maintain a warm interior environment. Its architectural character rivals that of the chicken coop. The building itself is severely deteriorated; however, in 2002 it was re-set on a temporary foundation of concrete blocks. This initial stabilization effort returned the small structure to a "square and plumb" state. The construction of this building may be attributed to either L. Edward McGovney or Fred Yunker.

**Well house, ca. 1860, contributing**

The well house c. 1860 is a frame structure covered with wood board and batten siding similar to the gable bank barn. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and is in poor condition. An active well is located within the structure. A grinding wheel important for the sharpening of farm implements, tools and equipment is located east of the building.

The small structure retains a high degree of integrity and is an important structure for the interpretation of the McGovney-Yunker Farm. The building sits, partially, in the present LaPorte Road right-of-way.

**Corn Crib, ca. 1950, contributing**

The corn crib probably dates to the mid-twentieth century. The frame structure sits on a poured concrete foundation. It is possible that this is an earlier corn crib that was moved to a new foundation, making it difficult to determine its date of construction. The main

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structure has a gable roof with a north-south ridge. The headhouse has a gable roof with the ridge running east-west. The corn crib has a high degree of integrity and is sound condition.

**Cattle shed, ca. 1940, contributing**

The cattle shed is a simple gable-roofed structure designed to provide shelter for herds of cattle of Fred and Lavern Yunker. The wood-framed building is sheathed with vertical, butt joint wood siding; the interior face of the wall is unfinished. It has a concrete floor and a pair of pens at either end with small haylofts above each pen. The pens are created with unfinished wood board and swinging gates.

Doors with upper and lower leaves open from each pen towards the pastures which surrounded the cattle shed, opening to the east and west. A large open doorway faces the south; a pair of sliding doors hangs from an open track and is located at the center of the north façade.

Just to the south of the cattle shed and to the east of the gable bank barn is a concrete cattle yard. Two historic swales are located in close proximity to the cattle yard. Their purpose was to carry groundwater and run-off away from the livestock areas and towards the crop fields.

**Hog Shed, ca. 1940, contributing**

The hog shed, a very utilitarian structure, may be attributed to the Yunker families. The wood framed building has vertical, butt joint wood siding and sits on a poured concrete foundation. It is the only structure on the McGovney-Yunker Farmstead with a gambrel roof, the ridge running north-south. A single metal ventilator (devoid of ornamentation) is located towards the south end of the shed. The roof is in poor condition.

The interior is divided into three levels. The north end is a small implement bay with a badly deteriorated concrete floor. Two swinging, wood board doors open outward to the west. The northern bay is open to the roof structure above. Interior walls are unfinished. A steep staircase leads to the hayloft above the south end of the shed.

The south end of the shed is raised several feet above the northern bay and consists of small pens along the east and west walls on either side of a central aisle. A set of concrete steps joins the northern and southern bays. Opening to the exterior is a door with upper

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and lower leaves at the south end of the central aisle. The interior walls, pen enclosures and feed troughs are constructed of unfinished wood board.

The hayloft, located above the pens, incorporates several openings to the pens below; the loft is open to the roof structure above. The roof is punctured with several makeshift skylights, providing light to the pens. Square windows on the east and west walls provide additional light to the pens.

**Corn bins, ca. 1940 - 1945, contributing**

The corn bins, ca. 1940, are open wire structures with metal roofs. The bins vary in size and style, but all are similar in design and function. It is difficult to determine if the bins were erected at this location or moved to the site from other locations. The types of bins were common rural landscape elements prior to the advent of mechanically drying shelled corn off the ear. These bins have a high degree of integrity and are an integral part of the interpretation of the farmstead during the Yunker years.

**Wood shed c. 1880- 1890, contributing**

The wood shed sits on a stone foundation. The simple one-story building has a gable roof with an east-west ridge and a pair of swinging doors comprising almost the entire east wall that swing outward. Attributed to the McGovney period, this structure retains a high degree of integrity.

**Garage, ca. 1955 - 1965, noncontributing**

The garage, a non-contributing building made of concrete masonry units, is attributed to Edwin and Lavern Yunker. It is a good example of mid to late twentieth century farm modifications.

**Doghouses, ca. 1960s, noncontributing**

Although the pair of doghouses are constructed of scrap materials and were built after the contributing period, they are an important part of a rural farmstead that is often overlooked. Dogs serve many purposes on a farm as guardian, companion and helper. They are most certainly the handiwork of Edwin Yunker.

**Tool shed, ca. 1965-1970, noncontributing**

The tool/implement shed ca. 1965 - 1970 was inaccessible at the time of the site visits. It reportedly has an unfinished dirt floor. It is sheathed in metal panels.

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**Metal Shed, 1975 – 1985, noncontributing**

The metal shed was built sometime between 1975 and 1985 and is suitable for storage.

**Integrity**

The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead retains sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The farmstead is reflective of the changes occurring on America's farms from the mid nineteenth to the mid twentieth century. The farm retains many buildings from its first inhabitants, the McGovney family, who occupied the property from the mid 1800s until the 1920s. The structures that were present at the time the farmstead belonged to the McGovneys are mostly still intact. A windmill was located—most certainly—to the east of the well house. The date or circumstance of its removal is unknown. The twentieth century changes made to the farmstead represents the evolution of farming occurring in many Will County farms at that time. Fred and Carrie Yunker made many improvements between 1924 and 1955, including the construction of the cattle shed and yard, the hog house and corn crib. Edwin Yunker continued to make modifications from the mid 1950s and into the early 1980s.

The McGovney-Yunker Farmhouse stands in reasonably good condition and retains a high level of architectural integrity. The interior of the west section of the home is virtually unchanged since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first floor was remodeled in the 1960s and 1970s to include a modern family room with a fireplace in the north side of the house, two bathrooms and an updated kitchen in the east side. With exception of the remodeled areas of the first floor, nearly all of the original flooring, casing, trim and hardware is intact.

The second floor of the east section retains a high degree of integrity. Nearly all of the period flooring, casing, trim and hardware is intact, and the spaces are representative of early twentieth century design. Minimal lighting has been installed throughout the house. Contemporary floor coverings are loose-laid in most instances.

Few alterations were made to the home between 1924 and 1955. Many windows have been kept in their historic locations. Although the original window sashes were replaced with one-over-one windows, the work occurred well within the period of significance. Edwin and Lavern Yunker installed a large modern window during the remodeling phase on the first floor, west wall.

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OMB No. 1024-0018  
(8-86)

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Although the McGovney-Yunker farmhouse is not architecturally distinctive of any one historic period, it is strongly representative of the evolution of an American farmhouse, typical of rural families to remodel over the decades to fit their needs. The farmhouse, as it now stands, is clearly the product of three distinct periods. Each period is clearly represented and identifiable.

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### **The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead Narrative Statement of Significance**

#### **Summary of Significance**

According to the four criteria considered for listing a property on the National Register, McGovney-Yunker Farmstead qualifies under *Criterion A: A property may be registered if it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.* The McGovney-Yunker farm reflects the nineteenth and twentieth century agricultural development of rural Will County, Illinois. Additionally, wooded areas south of LaPorte Road may be remnant of the wood lots which were both sold and timbered by the McGovney families. The wooded areas that border the south of the farm define its southernmost boundary and create a scenic historic view from the front porch of the farmhouse. This historic view is significant to create the full effect of what life on this farm was like decades ago.

Farming was the livelihood of Mokena and contributed to the success of the community. Most of the farms in Mokena have been redeveloped into subdivisions or commercial sites. The farm was first built in the middle 1800s and is still being tilled today. It is also the first parcel of land to be settled in Mokena. The period of significance of the McGovney Yunker Farmstead is from 1860, the date of the oldest extant building, until 1956, the fifty year cutoff for significance for the National Register.

#### **Historical Background and Significance**

The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead was originally settled by John McGovney, the first permanent non-native resident of Frankfort Township. McGovney is considered one of Mokena's two founding fathers, being the first to make a claim in this rural community with this exact parcel of land. He "squatted" on the land until he officially acquired it from the federal government in 1841 and resided there until his death in 1859. While McGovney made the initial land purchase, the expansion of the farm, and much of the farm buildings, were built by Elijah, the youngest of John and his wife Nancy's eight children. When Elijah was old enough, he began to take over the farm from his father. He began acquiring portions of the land as early as 1857. The buildings constructed while

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Elijah ran the farm include the farmhouse (c. 1860), the gable bank barn (c. 1860), the LaPorte Road barn/shed (c. 1880-1890), the chicken coop (c. 1880-1890), the brooder house (c. 1880-1890), the well house (c. 1860-1890) and the smokehouse/wood shed (c. 1880-1890). At the time of his death in 1921, Elijah's son, L. Edward McGovney, took over the farm. He had made numerous improvements to the property prior to his father's death and is responsible for the early twentieth century remodeling of the original McGovney farmhouse.

The farm, which had been in the McGovney family for decades, was acquired in 1924 by Fred and Carrie Yunker, following a three-year dispute between the heirs of Elijah McGovney. The Yunkers made a number of improvements and additions to the farm, including several poured concrete foundations beneath existing structures, and new construction. Structures attributed to Fred and Carrie Yunker include the cattle shed and yard (c. 1940), the hog house (c. 1940), three open-wire corn bins (c. 1945), and the corn crib (c. 1950).

With the death of the widowed Carrie Yunker, their son Edwin took over the farm with his wife Lavern in the mid 1950s. Structures that are attributed to Edwin and Lavern are non-contributing and include the garage/workshop (c. 1960), two doghouses (c. 1960), the tool/implement shed (c. 1965) and the LaPorte Road metal shed (c. 1975). Edwin, who resided at the farm until his death in 2001, wanted the farmstead to be saved for the purposes of remaining an active farm and educating countless generations to come about farm life and the roots of Mokena. It was Edwin's concern for the rural character of Mokena that compelled him to form the Mokena Park District in 1958. During the final years of his life, Edwin chose to sell his farmstead and all of its land in its entirety to the Mokena Park District, rather than sell it for development.

### **Farming in Northern Illinois from 1850 to 1900**

Farming has always been a significant enterprise in Illinois. Natural conditions in Illinois, which lies primarily in the corn belt, made farming quite profitable. Economic conditions also aided the success of farming in Illinois, relative to other locations in the United States. Illinois farmers benefited from accessible markets and improved transportation. A network of hard roads and railroads provided excellent transportation to the interior markets of Chicago and St. Louis. From there, transportation routes connected to the rest of the country, as well as the world. The developments made in



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transportation directly affected the production of whole milk and vegetable crops, as well as other perishable crops.

Prior to the coming of the railroad, grain production in the northern part of Illinois, where Mokena is located, was greater than in the rest of the state. This was largely due to its proximity to major water transportation routes, which allowed farmers in this area to ship grain to the East Coast. This was substantiated in the 1850 Agricultural Census, which compared the amount of crops and livestock in different regions of the state, and showed that more tons of hay and bushels of oats and wheat were grown in the northern region. However, while this region produced more corn than any other grain, the amount was far less than the other regions. This was probably because the northern region had the least amount of livestock.

The farming industry in Illinois was transformed by rail transportation, which really began to expand in the state during the 1850s. Farming was no longer restricted by proximity to water routes and woodlands. Railroads allowed farmers easier access to markets. As a result, regional farming in Illinois, beginning around 1850 and continuing to 1870, became more defined by the environment, i.e.: climate and soil, than by location. Grain production occurred more in the central and southern part of the state, whereas the northern region saw an increase in livestock production.

During the later part of the nineteenth century, farming in the area around Chicago was affected by the city's increasing population. Dairy production in this region expanded to meet the demands of the market. The Federal Census of 1900 indicated that the number of dairy cattle in the collar counties was more than anywhere else in the state, with 9.6 per 100 acres. The northwestern region came in second, with almost half that amount (5.2 per 100 acres).

### **The McGovney-Yunker Farm from 1850 to 1900**

The farming activity that occurred on the McGovney-Yunker Farm during the mid to late nineteenth century was in keeping with the agricultural patterns and trends that occurred elsewhere in the northern region. The Agricultural Census reports (Fig. A & Fig. B) show that both Elijah McGovney and his father John farmed mainly corn and oats, with a small production of wheat. Oats were a logical crop for the McGovney-

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Yunker Farm, as they are choice feed for dairy cattle. Potatoes were another small crop noted in the report.

Figure A – Agricultural Census Records for John McGovney<sup>1</sup>

<b>Product</b>	<b>1860</b>
Acres -- Improved	100
Acres -- Unimproved	25
Cash Value of Farm	\$4000
Cash Value of Farm Machinery	\$200
Total Amount of Wages Paid during the year, including value of board	Not calculated
Estimated value of all farm products (sold, consumed, or on hand)	Not calculated
Horses	3
Milk Cows	5
Other Cattle	86
Pigs	5
Value of Livestock	\$400
Bushels of Wheat	100
Bushels of Indian Corn	2000
Bushels of Oats	1200
Bushels of Potatoes	150
Value of Orchard Products	--
Value of Garden	--
Pounds of Butter	300
Gallons of milk sold, or sent to butter and cheese factories	Not calculated
Tons of Hay	50
Tons of Buckwheat	25
Pounds of Honey	40
Value of animals sold for slaughter	\$100
Total value of farm	Not calculated

<sup>1</sup>, The information about the McGovney Farm found in the 1860 Agricultural Census was probably recorded in 1859 prior to John McGovney's death.

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Figure B – Agricultural Census Records for Elijah McGovney

<b>Product</b>	<b>1860</b>	<b>1870</b>	<b>1880</b>
Acreage -- Improved	50	112	80
Acreage -- Unimproved	621		80
Cash Value of Farm	\$6000	\$6000	\$8000
Cash Value of Farm Machinery	\$100	\$200	\$300
Total Amount of Wages Paid during the year, including value of board	Not calculated	\$190	\$50
Estimated value of all farm products (sold, consumed, or on hand)	Not calculated	Not calculated	1200
Horses	3	14	4
Milk Cows	5	9	10
Other Cattle	13	3	12
Pigs	6	5	12
Value of Livestock	\$500	\$1800	\$800
Bushels of Wheat	150	30	
Bushels of Indian Corn	400	--	800
Bushels of Oats	400	220	1400
Bushels of Potatoes	100	40	
Value of Orchard Products	\$50	\$70	
Value of Garden	\$25	--	
Pounds of Butter	300	560	
Gallons of milk sold, or sent to butter and cheese factories	Not calculated	Not calculated	1500

The McGovney-Yunker Farm also benefited from rail transportation. The Chicago-Rock Island Railway line, while important to the growth of Rock Island, was just as important to the development and growth of the towns in between and in general, the Midwest and the westward expansion of the United States. In February of 1851, a charter was amended by Illinois legislature to allow for construction of this line. Construction began in October of 1852 and was completed by July of 1854. The famed "Rocket Line" would travel daily between Rock Island and Chicago, traveling three-hours one way, hauling freight,

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passengers and mail. The existence of this rail line increased traffic through Mokena and was instrumental in the growth of the town, which was established in 1852, as it was with all small towns that developed along the route. It was also highly instrumental in the success of the McGovney-Yunker Farm. The railroad serves as the boundary of the north end of the farm, providing the McGovneys and the Yunkers with the convenience of transporting crops and milk via the rail line to Chicago and thus all outside markets.

#### **Farming in Northern Illinois from 1900 to 1950**

Farming in Illinois during the early to mid twentieth century was affected by changes in economic, scientific, and technological advances. Some of the economic factors that influenced farming included land tenure, proximity to markets, and available transportation, capital, and labor. Up until 1880, most farms in Illinois were owner-occupied. The appreciation of land since then allowed more farmers to retire and rent out their fields. Land appreciation also made farmland attractive to investors as well as speculators, who would sell the land for a quick profit. Finally, since farm land was becoming more valuable, it was becoming more difficult for the less affluent to buy it. By 1930, the majority of farms (43%) were rented, while 40% were owner-operated. Only 16% of farms had some combination of the two (Case and Meyers, 1934:119). By 1950, 65% were owner-operated and 35% were tenant-operated. The number of farms that had both had increased from 1930 to 20% (Ross and Case, 1956: 19). The increase in the number of owner-operated was attributed to an increase in production due to labor-saving technology, which allowed for larger farms, and an increase in earnings, which enabled good tenants to purchase more equipment and more acreage. (Ross and Case, 1956: 20).

Being close to larger markets was an advantage for Illinois farmers. Illinois had the good fortune of being both a large industrial and agricultural center. While industries had taken over some of the functions that were once performed on farms, they also created new markets for them. Manufacturing facilities for food products certainly led to an increase in their distribution, which would benefit farmers (Case and Meyers, 1934:116).

Illinois farmers also had little trouble transporting their goods due to its extensive railroad lines and paved roads (Case and Meyers, 1934:117). Having reliable methods of transporting goods and close proximity to industrial centers created a stable market for farming in Illinois. Illinois also had no shortage of labor for farming, although in the more industrialized areas of the state there was some competition for labor between industries and farm markets (Case and Meyers, 1934:117-119).

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Many scientific advances were made in agriculture during the early to mid twentieth-century. Better pest and disease control, more fertile soil, and improved breeding and feeding practices for livestock allowed farmers to increase crop and livestock production and, if desired, to experiment with new crops (Case and Meyers, 1934: 22). Farmers employed more efficient farming methods in order to realize greater profits. By the turn-of-the-twentieth-century, farmers had begun to notice that the value of their land was increasing at a far greater rate than that of their crops and products. Due to the efforts of Illinois farmers seeking ways to improve the soil's fertility, the soil survey program was formed and a system of lasting soil fertility was founded under the supervision of a professor at the University of Illinois (Nelson, 1931:116). Fertilizers, erosion control, soil additives, and crop rotation helped farmers yield more crops (Ross and Case, 1956:86).

Illinois farmers also benefited from improvements made in technology during the early-to-mid twentieth century. The new machinery that was invented during this time did well in areas that were flat, had good soil, and large spaces of land that was all for plowing. This gave Illinois an advantage over other states and ensured the profitability of the state's crops (Case and Meyer, 1934:122). The mechanization of farming between 1930 and 1950 resulted in dramatic changes in farm operations. During that time ". . . the number of farms with electricity multiplied five times. The number of tractors and trucks on Illinois farms more than doubled, and the number of horses and mules decreased 78 percent....within the period of 1950-1954, the number of combines increased 12 percent; corn pickers, 13 percent; and pickup hay balers, 19 percent (Ross and Case, 1956:86)."

In the mid-fifties changes came to the importance of crops, as mentioned earlier. The greatest shift in secondary crops being from oats to soybeans. Severe winters in the early 1950s contributed to the steady decline in fruit trees. Dairy cattle increased in the major dairy areas, while they decreased in outlying areas. And although the number of chickens declined during the period from 1930-1950, an increase was seen in the number of eggs produced per hen.

Specifically between 1930 and 1950, the rate of change was accelerated by the Depression and World War II, often causing a temporary imbalance. Marked changes occurred in Illinois, decreasing the number of farms in the state as well as the total area of land. This trend continued at an even accelerated rate in the early 1950s, between 1950

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and 1954. Urban development, highways, and recreation, among other uses, are responsible for the diminishing acreage devoted to farming.

The U.S. Census recognized nine types of farming in the country, based upon their origins of income (Case and Meyer, 1934:154). Studies conducted in 1934 and 1956 at the University of Illinois divided the state into nine sections based upon the different types of farming occurring in each area.

Mokena straddled two farming regions, the northeastern region, which was primarily dairy, and the east-central region, which was primarily grain. The primary crop in the east central region was corn. The secondary crop varied between oats, soybeans and wheat, depending upon the area. Mokena farms produced largely corn and oats. During the early years of World War II, as a result of wartime demands for vegetable oils and protein feeds, a major increase of soybean crops took place in Illinois. It was not uncommon to see soybeans grown on the farm in the later years, as a result of keeping up with the demand.

Cash-grain farms predominated and accounted for 64% of the farms in the east central region. Few in number were dairy and poultry farms, dairy including about 2 – 5% of the farms, poultry only 2%. While cash-grain farming predominated, livestock products furnished appreciable income. Many farms kept dairy cows, and most milk produced was sold as whole milk. Hogs were raised on most farms as, producing more income than any other class of livestock. Flocks of chicken were found on most farms as well. Although in the northern and central areas of Illinois, chickens and eggs were kept on farms mainly for family consumption.

**The McGovney-Yunker Farm from 1900 to 1956**

The primary crop on the McGovney-Yunker Farm was corn, but a strong focus was also on the dairy business. The main barn, which dates back to 1860, housed many dairy cows over the years. There were also two chicken buildings, for brooding chickens and hens, having both a chicken coop and brooder house on the farm, and a hog house. It was uncommon to see less than two types of livestock on farms in Illinois that contributed to the cash income or provided food for the family. With chickens, hogs and cows, the McGovney-Yunker Farmstead held true to this fact.

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There are remnants of a small apple orchard on McGovney-Yunker Farm just to the west of the farmhouse. Although it is unclear if there were more trees than what currently remain and if any apples were sold commercially by either the McGovney or Yunker families, at the very least, the existence of the orchard is typical of farms in Illinois for home use.

The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead is a good example of what was once a typical farm in its area. The changes that have occurred on the farm over the years during the period of significance demonstrate the evolution of the American Farm during mid nineteenth to mid twentieth century. Historically, the McGovney-Yunker Farm was located in a rural area, immediately east of the Village of Mokena. However, today the farm lies within the corporate limits of the Village of Mokena. Much of the historic rural landscape and vistas, which were associated with the farm site for nearly 130 years, have been rapidly disappearing, replaced by late twentieth century development. Large areas of woodland that were turned into pastures and crop fields during the nineteenth century are now being threatened by sprawling religious facilities and suburban residential development. The McGovney-Yunker Farm today is not an oasis among cropland and woodland, but rather an island surrounded by contemporary development.

Although the surrounding development clashes with the historic rural setting of the McGovney-Yunker Farm, the farmstead site itself has survived with sufficient historical integrity. It is a prime example of the changes that occurred over time on American farms as required by the farmer's needs and financial abilities to do so.

The location of the farmstead is important to its history and integrity. The south view from the front porch of the farmhouse overlooks the wooded lot of an historic oak grove. The surrounding developments are hardly noticeable from this viewpoint.

In conclusion, the McGovney-Yunker Farmstead represents the importance of farming to the Mokena community. It is a prime example of the changing conditions in farming that took place during its period of significance. The many technological changes and shifts in the economy and national needs helped to dictate the progress and success of the McGovney-Yunker Farm.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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**UTM References**

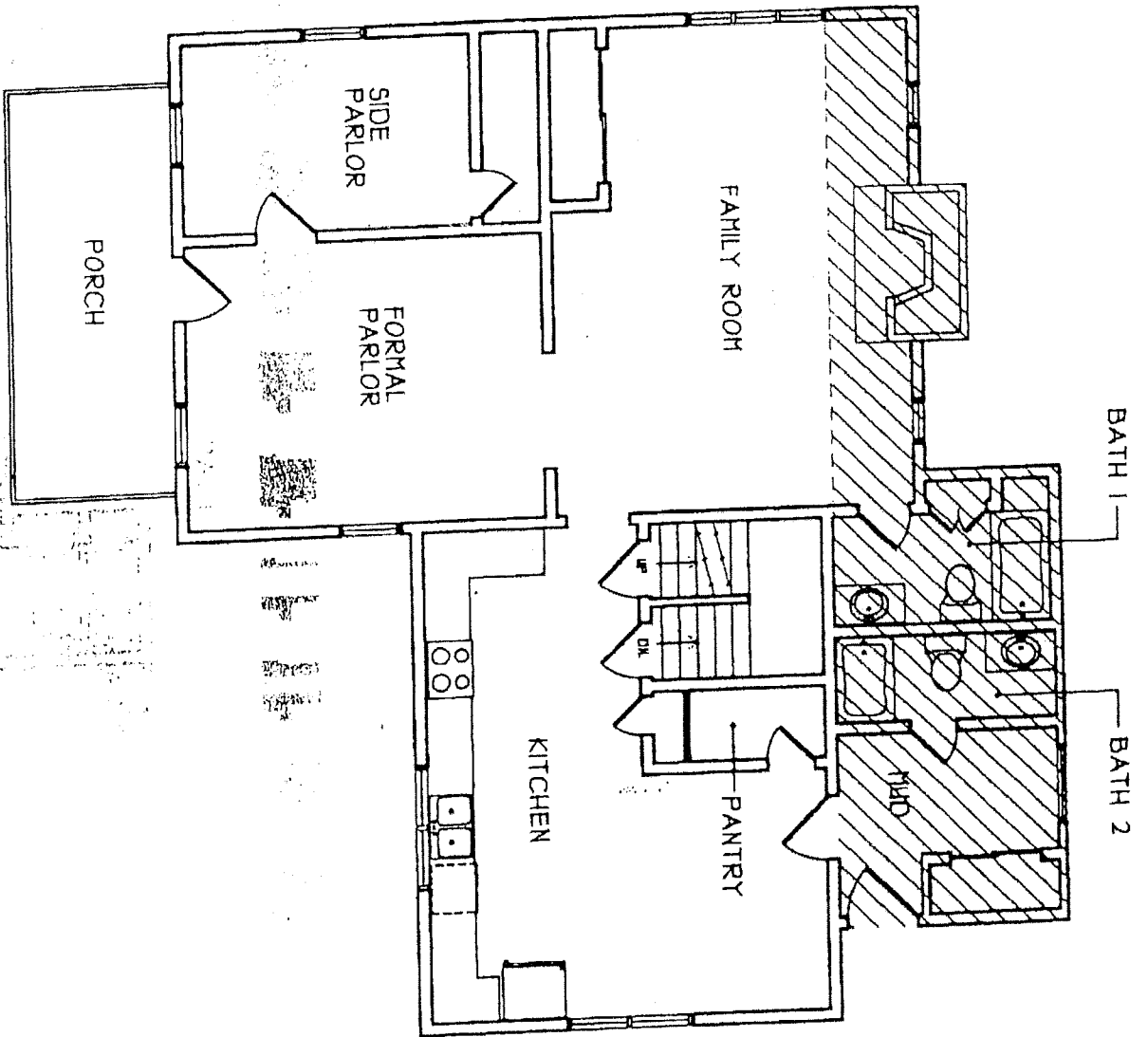
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**Boundary Description**

The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead is located in the Village of Mokena, Illinois, and consists of the properties specified in the nomination located west of the juncture of LaPorte and Schoolhouse Road, on the north and south sides of LaPorte Road, in a part of the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 17, Township 35N, Range 12E, in Frankfort Township, Will County, consisting of approximately thirty acres.

**Boundary Justification**

The L-shaped boundary includes the farmhouse, outbuildings on both sides of LaPorte Road, fields, and an orchard that historically have been a part of the McGovney-Yunker Farm and that maintain historic integrity. A portion of the boundaries include a viewshed South of LaPorte Road that is relevant to the history of the farm. This viewshed provides a historic view that would have been enjoyed by the McGovney and Yunker families over the decades. This scenic view is of the centuries old oak grove just south of the farmland that defined the southernmost historic boundary. The viewshed includes all of the outbuildings south of LaPorte Road. The parcel of land to the west of this viewshed was excluded because the park district is developing a recreation center on this land. The farmland to the north of the buildings has been excluded for the park district is building a park of walking paths, baseball diamonds, fountains and benches. However, it was important to include within the boundaries a portion of the farmland that will continue to be farmed as a living farm, as well as a small portion of land that runs the length of the historic boundary along the westernmost edge of the historic farmland. This was crucial for defining the importance of the location of the farm in proximity to the Chicago-Rock Island Railway line.

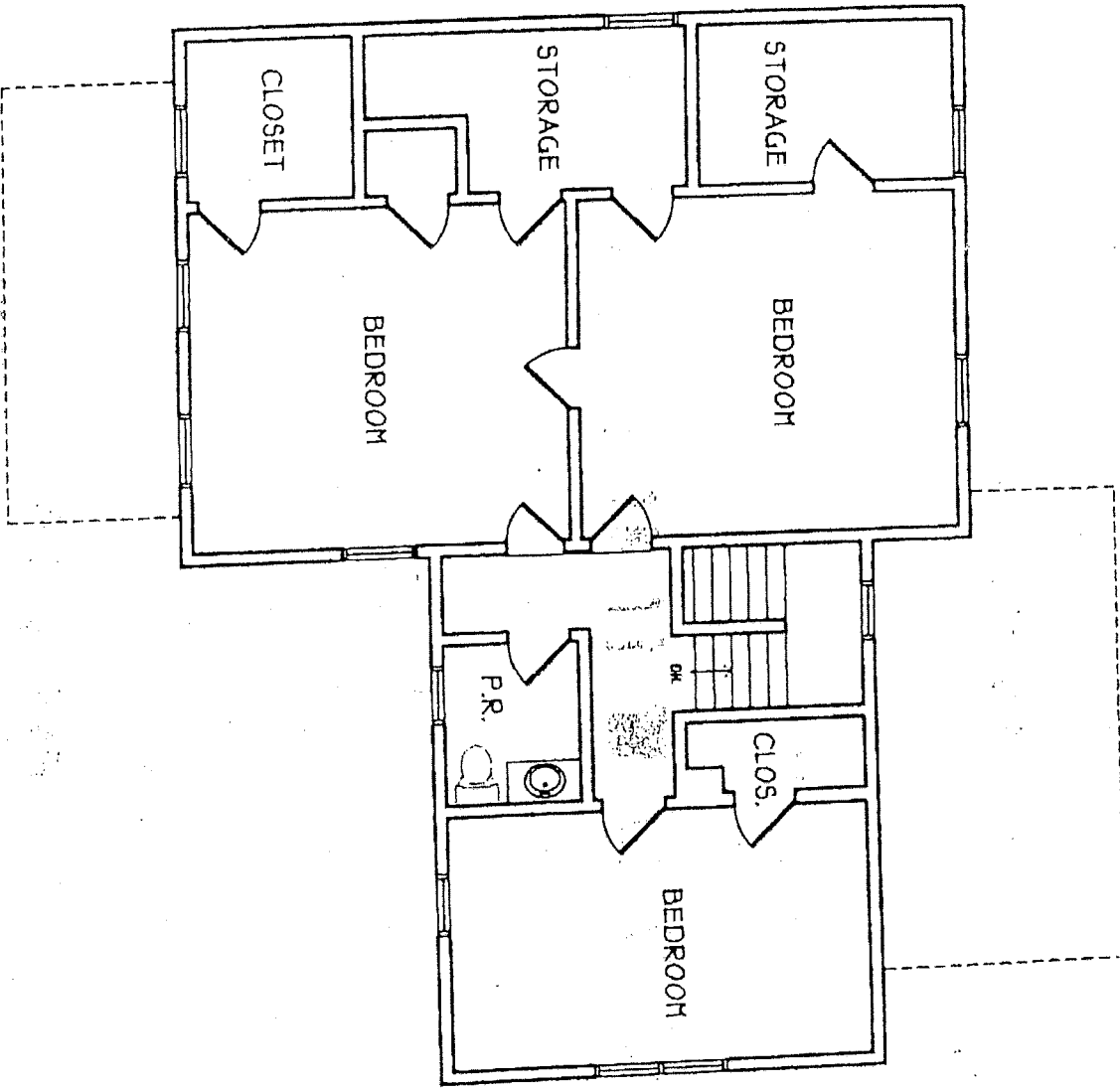


NORTH

# FARM HOUSE

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

McGowney-Yunker Farmstead Will Co, IL



NORTH

# FARM HOUSE

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

McGovney - Junker Farmstead Will Co, IL

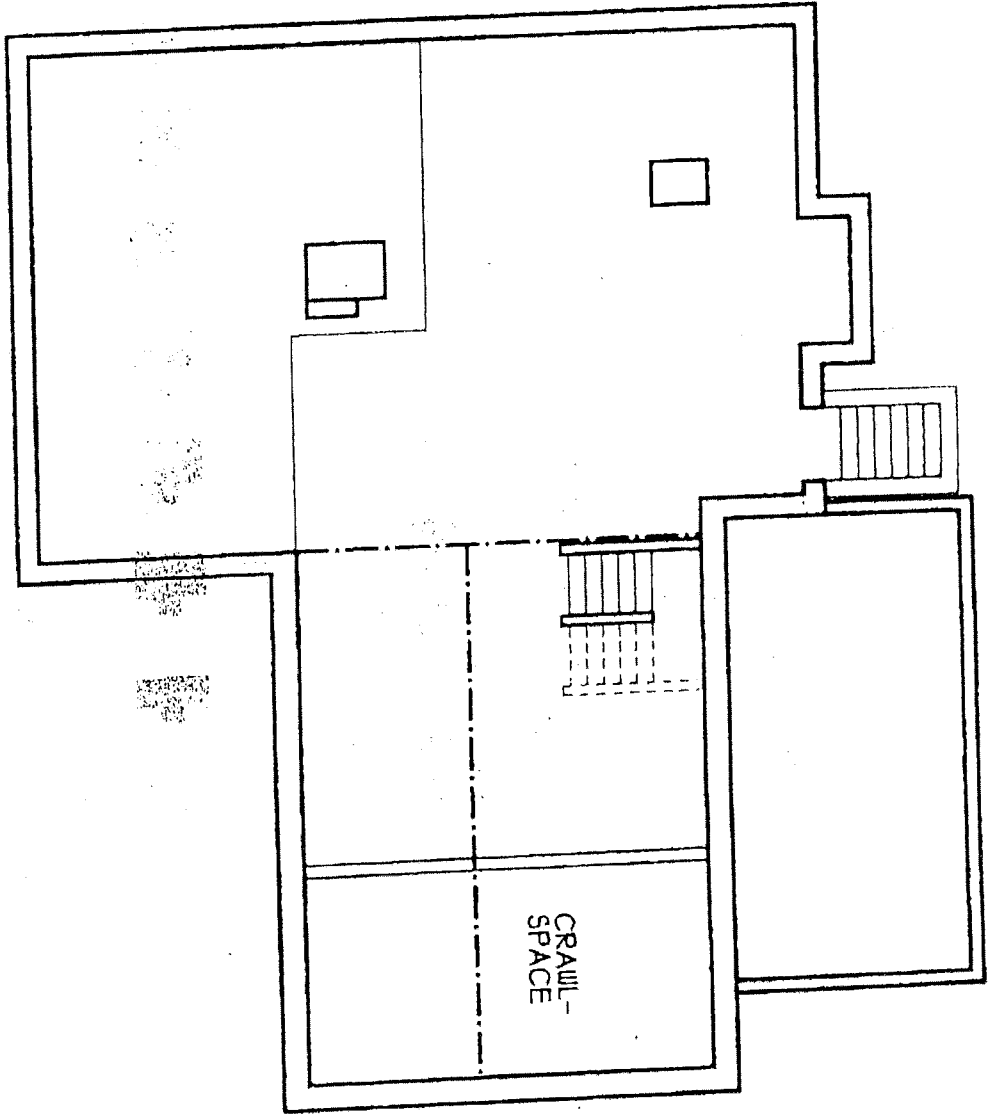


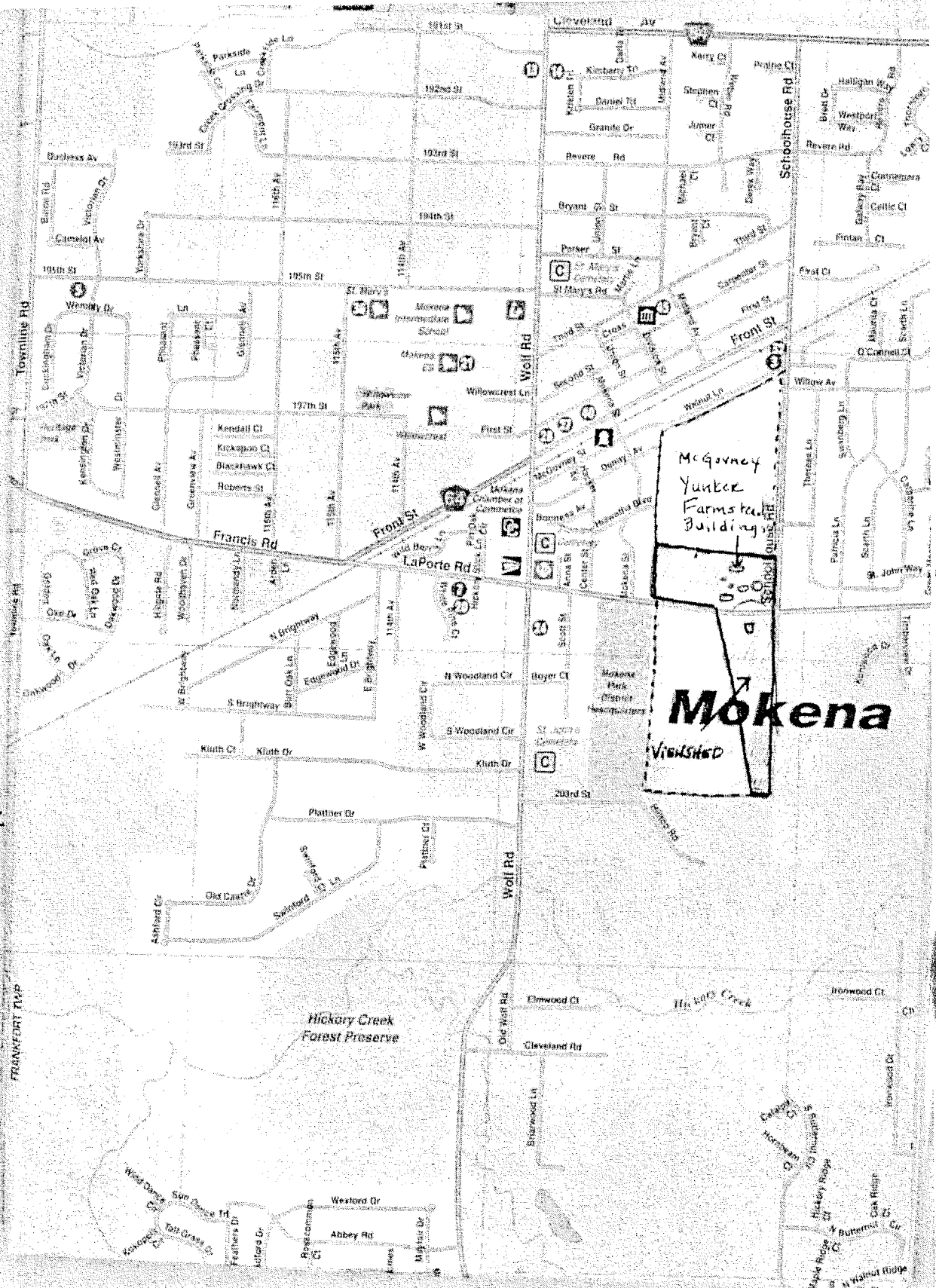
NORTH

# FARM HOUSE

McGovern - Junkies Farmstead Will Co, IL

BASEMENT PLAN





Historic Acreage  
 NR District

McGovney-Yunker Farmstead  
Will Co, IL



# McGouney - Yankee Farmstead Aerial

Send To Printer

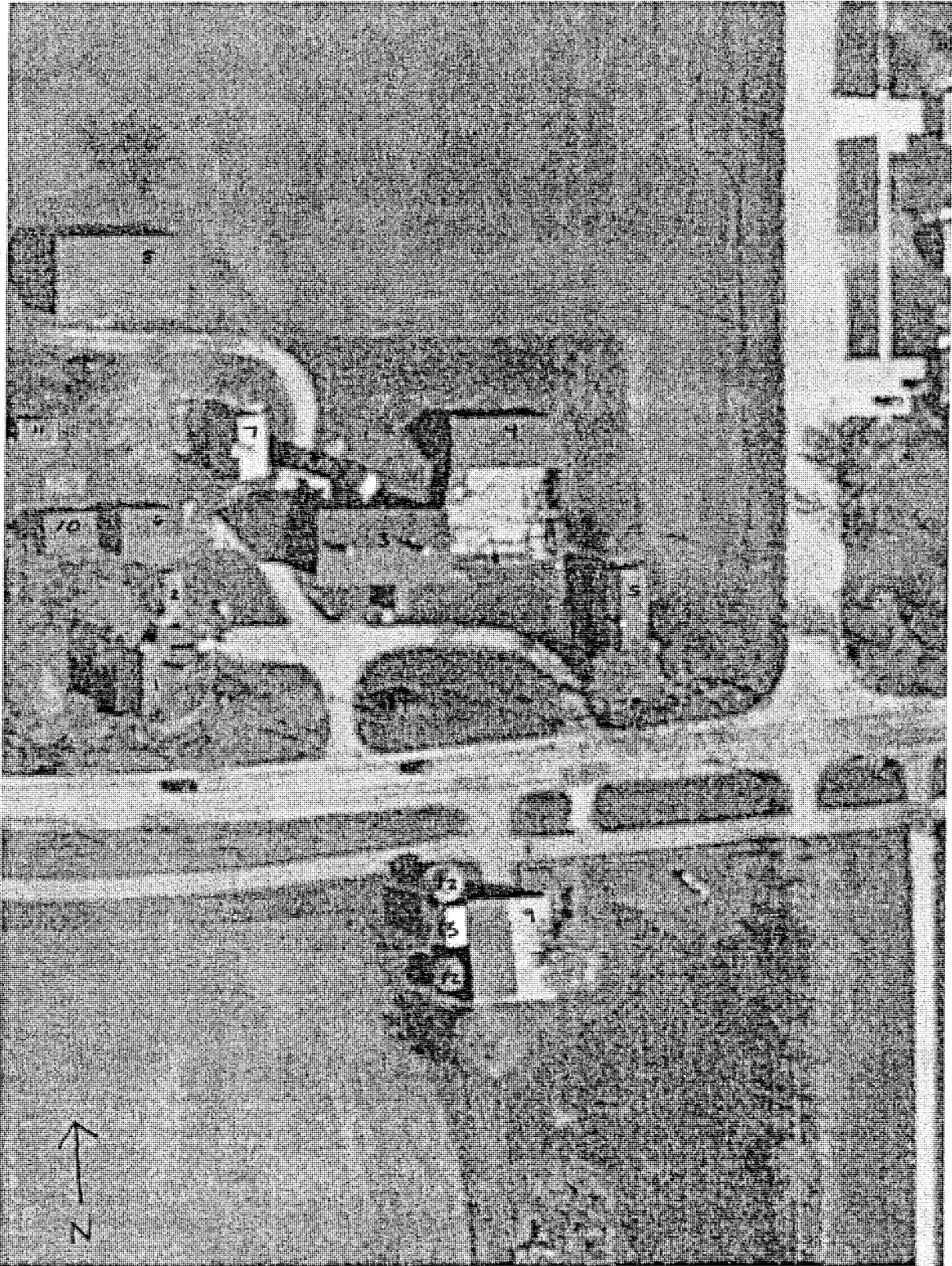
Back To TerraServer

Change to 11x17 Print Size

Show Grid Lines

Change to Landscape

USGS Mokena, Illinois, United States 10 Apr 2002



- 1. House
- 2. Smoke House
- 1. Gable - Bank Barn
- Cattle shed
- hog shed
- Garage (NC)
- corn crib
- tool shed (NC)
- metal shed (NC)
- 1. chicken coop
- broader house



0 25 m

0 25 yd

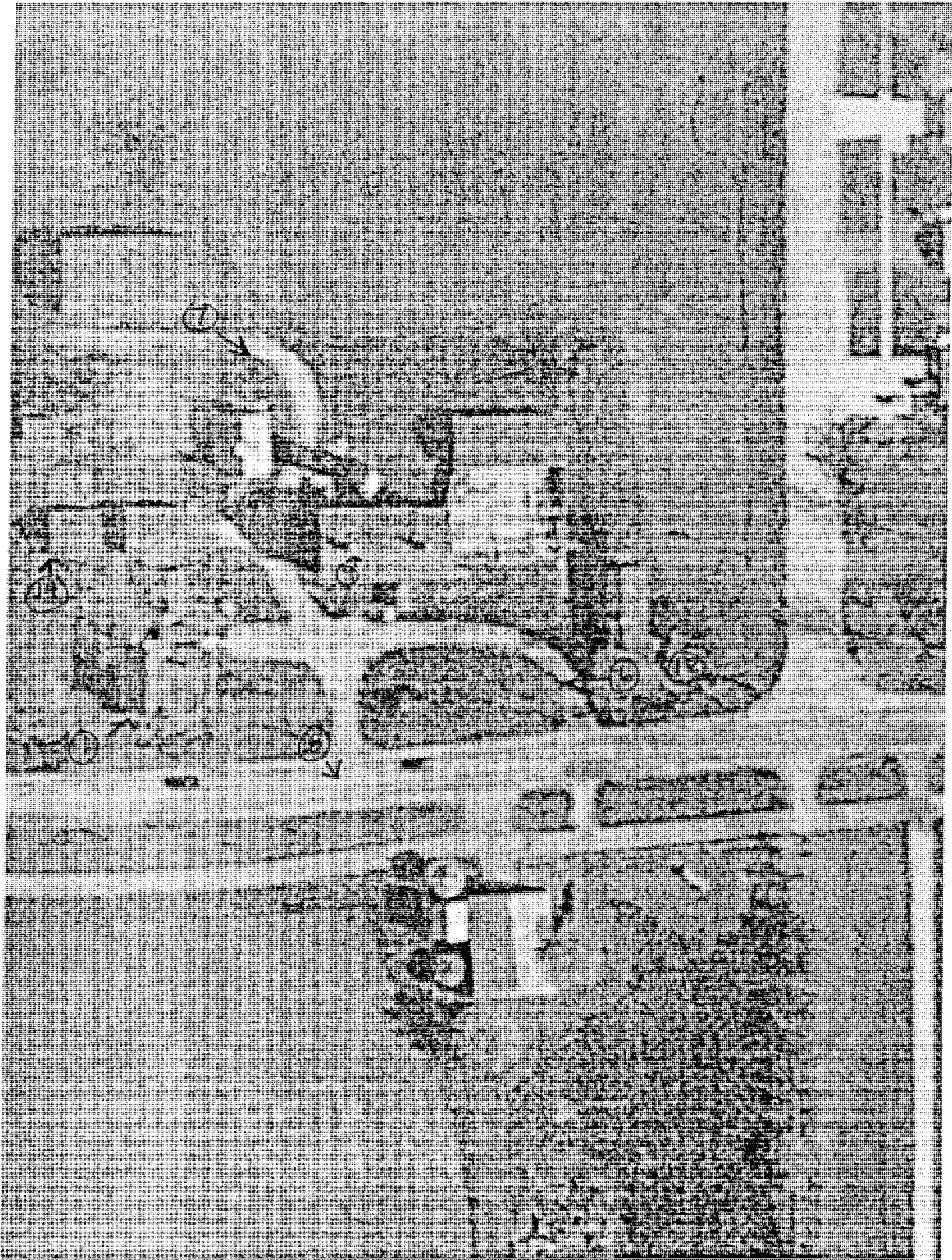
- 2. corn bin
- 3. Wood shed
- 4. Well house

Image courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

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# Photo Key For Exterior Views (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, & 14)

USGS Mokena, Illinois, United States 10 Apr 2002



0 ————— 25 m

0 ————— 25 yd

N  
↑

ILLINOIS, Will County  
McGovney--Yunker Farmstead,  
10824 LaPorte Rd.,  
Mokena, 06000448,  
LISTED, 5/31/06

IOWA, WOODBURY COUNTY,  
Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Church,  
600 Court St.,  
Sioux City, 06000444,  
LISTED, 5/30/06

MARYLAND, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY,  
Linthicum Heights Historic District,  
Roughly bounded by Camp Meade Rd., Homewood Rd., Twin Oaks Rd. Locust Grove  
Rd. and Forest View Rd.,  
Linthicum vicinity, 06000451,  
LISTED, 5/31/06

MINNESOTA, FILLMORE COUNTY,  
Milwaukee Elevator,  
Fillmore Street and Root River State Trail,  
Preston, 06000454,  
LISTED, 5/31/06  
(Grain Elevator Design in Minnesota MPS)

MINNESOTA, ST. LOUIS COUNTY,  
Duluth Commercial Historic District,  
Superior and 1st bet. 4th Ave. W and 4th Ave. E,  
Duluth, 06000455,  
LISTED, 5/31/06

NORTH CAROLINA, RICHMOND COUNTY,  
Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot,  
2 Main St.,  
Hamlet, 71000617,  
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 4/13/06

SOUTH DAKOTA, CLAY COUNTY,  
Bluff View Cemetery Chapel,  
0.2 mi. S of jct. of Crawford Rd. and Pinehurst Dr.,  
Vermillion, 06000458,  
LISTED, 5/31/06

SOUTH DAKOTA, FALL RIVER COUNTY,  
Bartlett--Myers Building,  
506 1/2 2nd Ave.,  
Edgemont, 06000457,  
LISTED, 5/31/06

SOUTH DAKOTA, HUGHES COUNTY,  
Hilger Block,  
361 S. Pierre,  
Pierre, 06000456,  
LISTED, 5/31/06