

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, October 7, 2025
7:00 p.m., Historic Bowne Township Hall



-
1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Approval of Agenda - MOTION
 4. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes:
 - i. August 5, 2025 - MOTION
 5. Acknowledgment of Visitors
 6. Public Comment and Correspondence Concerning Items Not on the Agenda
 7. Commissioner Comments
 8. Public Hearings:
 - a. None
 9. Old Business:
 - a. None
 10. New Business:
 - a. 2025 Master Plan Community Profile Report and Next Steps Discussion

11. Public Comments

12. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Bradley S. Kotrba, AICP

1 BOWNE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

2 DRAFT MINUTES

3 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

4 TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025, 7:00 pm

5
6 The Bowne Township Planning Commission's regular monthly meeting was held at the Historic Bowne
7 Township Hall, 8240 Alden Nash Avenue SE, Alto, Michigan, Kent County.

8 **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

9 The meeting was called to order by Member Oosting at 7:00 pm.

10 **2. ROLL CALL:**

11 MEMBERS PRESENT: JAMES OOSTING – CHAIR
12 DAVE HOEKSTRA
13 JAY BARNHART
14 DAVID FUSS – TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE
15 FRED OESCH
16 SHAWN WENGER
17 ROGER GRAHAM
18 LARRY WINGEIER
19 SARAH LARSON - SECRETARY
20

21 NOT PRESENT:

22
23 OTHERS PRESENT: BRADLEY KOTRBA – TOWNSHIP PLANNER, WILLIAMS & WORKS
24 AMAN PANNU – COMMUNITY PLANNER, WILIAMS & WORKS
25 5 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

26 **3. AGENDA: MOTION**

27 Chairman Oosting inquired from the Commission if any changes to tonight's agenda were required.
28 After hearing none, Commissioner Larson motioned to accept the agenda submitted for the August
29 5, 2025, regular Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Fuss. Motion carried.
30

4. MINUTES: MOTION

Chairman Oosting asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the April 1, 2025, regular Planning Commission Draft Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Larson motioned to accept the April 1, 2025, meeting minutes with one correction, and Commissioner Graham supported it. Motion carried.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC

Chairman Oosting acknowledged and welcomed the members of the public.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT AND CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairman Oosting asked the public members if they would like to comment on any item, not on tonight's agenda. There were no comments.

7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

No comments.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a. None

9. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. None

10. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Bowne Township Master Plan Update.

Chair Oosting asked the Planner Kotrba to introduce them to the master planning process in the Township, what the Township Board has approved, the timeline, etc. Kotrba thanked the Chair and began by mentioned that the Planning Commission has been discussing updating the Master Plan for several months and really has had comments about things that should potentially be updated in the Master Plan for the last couple of years. The previous Master Plan was adopted in 2012 and was written by the Planning Commission and the previous township planning consultant, so this will be the first time that Williams & Works will be developing a master plan with Bowne Township, even though we have been representing them as their planning and zoning consultants since 2019.

He explained that the Planning Commission had been concerned that the process would be rushed and that they would like to concentrate on each chapter individually before it is completed. Kotrba stated and Aman Pannu, a Community Planner at Williams & Works will

61 be handling the day to day project management of the Master Plan Update. She has worked
62 out a timeline and budget matching the proposal scope built around that timeline. Kotrba
63 then requested that Ms. Pannu be permitted to walk the Planning Commission through the
64 kick-off meeting memo that she had put together explaining the planning process, major
65 components of the Master Plan Update, the timeline, the overall budget, and the
66 community engagement that she has suggested in the scope. The Township Board has
67 agreed to the project scope, but Kotrba explained that minor alterations can be made to the
68 project scope, but that if major alterations were requested by the Planning Commission, it
69 would take away from some of the other areas that initially received more robust attention
70 to accommodate the changes or the project would have to have a change order in place to
71 add to the contract. Chair Oosting then asked Ms. Pannu if she would begin her discussion
72 with the Planning Commission.

73 Pannu introduced herself and asked if the Planning Commission they could go around the
74 table and each Commissioner could introduce themselves and how long they have been on
75 the Township Planning Commission. Each Planning Commissioner introduced themselves
76 individually and how long they have been on the Township Planning Commission, some with
77 only a few years experience and others with more than thirty years experience. Pannu
78 stated that this group sounds like they have a lot of institutional planning knowledge in the
79 Township and have even had one or more rounds of creating a Master Plan as well. This is
80 comforting to hear because having a Commission that has this much knowledge and
81 experience serving the Township provides the consultant team with valuable source of
82 Township land use history and also how the Community would like to see the Township
83 head towards in respects to recent land development patterns, rezoning requests, or other
84 zoning issues.

85 Pannu went through her memorandum with the Planning Commission following the kick-off
86 discussion agenda. She began with establishing a primary contact person that will be the
87 liaison between the consultant and the Planning Commission/Township. The Planning
88 Commission appointed the Township Clerk as the liaison for this master plan update
89 process. Pannu went through the major points and statutory requirements of the master
90 planning process. She noted that many of the Commissioners may remember going through
91 the same process in 2012. This discussion also covered the tentative schedule of the Master
92 Plan; it presently is scheduled for completion in roughly a year's time. She mentioned this
93 should be adequate, but that if the Planning Commission chooses to slow the process down
94 that would be acceptable, but alter the adoption timeline.

95 Pannu then discussed that public engagement process and that she has proposed an online
96 public survey and a community open house as the chosen options for community
97 engagement. Kotrba explained that the method proposed was intended to both be
98 economical and efficient for the Township. He discussed that this process is more efficient
99 that traditional postal surveys. He explained the process of created and postal survey and

100 that they are typically sent to the Treasurers property owner list. It does effectively reach
101 out to all property owners in the Township, however, because survey's tend to be open for a
102 lengthy period, they may be misplaced, thrown away, or simply forgotten and not returned.
103 Kotrba also explained that in addition to developing the survey questions with the Planning
104 Commission, the consultants have to lay out an orderly, check the box format for the survey
105 copy. It is then sent, along with the property owner mailing list obtained from the Township,
106 to a bulk mailing service provider in Grand Rapids. This company then orients the draft copy
107 supplied by the consultants so it may be properly oriented for doubled sided printing and
108 folding, printed, folded, and then postage is applied, then they drop it off with the post
109 office. The surveys are received by the property owners and then after filing it out, the
110 survey they completed already contains pre-paid postage that they can then drop into any
111 mail box and it is returned to Williams & Works for our recording free of charge to the
112 survey taker.

113 After discussion and a few comments from members of the public, many agreed that a
114 postal survey would be more successful than the online version, however, they felt the
115 online version would still be valuable to have. The Township Treasurer did comment that
116 that if the Planning Commission and the consultants could get a draft copy of the master
117 plan survey ready for final printing, it could be added to the December 2025 tax bills and
118 mailed. This way, the Township could print the surveys, fold, and stuff them into the
119 envelopes and pay the postage expense to mail them to the property owners. This however
120 would require the survey taker to pay the postage to return them to Williams and Works.
121 But many felt that the cost of a stamp is inconsequential and that the Township would
122 receive a higher return rate using this process.

123 Pannu thanked the Treasurer and noted that this option would be very valuable and more
124 cost effective with respect to the project budget. She recommended that we still keep an
125 online option available for those that would prefer to take it this way and not have to pay
126 postage. Therefore, the Township can post information with a QR Code for easy access
127 directly to the master plan survey. The Planning Commission agreed and even suggested
128 that it may be an option to add the QR Code to the online version to the postal version in
129 case the survey taker didn't want to pay for the postage, while still participating in the
130 process.

131 Pannu then discussed the process of deliverables for the Master Plan, she noted that the
132 budget will supply a digital Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, and one hard copy for the
133 Township. This digital supply will also include all the maps included in the Master Plan for
134 Township use, if desired. The consultant is also capable to print out copies of maps, such as
135 the Future Land Use map, in case they would like full size copies for the office. Any
136 additional printed and bound copies could be supplied to the Township at the cost. Pannu
137 then walked the Planning Commission through the deliverable process and that the Plan will
138 be worked on in sections or chapters. This will allow the Planning Commission to focus on

139 one specific item. The consultant will draft these chapters, sections, maps, and other figures
140 and supply them to the Planning Commission before each meeting that is scheduled to
141 discuss that topic. This way the Planning Commission will have the draft beforehand and will
142 be able to digest the material and take notes and provide feedback on observations,
143 alterations, additions, or edits that should be made. She then closed again by thanking the
144 Planning Commission and noted that she looked forward to work with them over the next
145 year. Chair Oosting thanked Pannu for her memo and walking the Planning Commission
146 through the process.

147 **11. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

148 a. The Township Treasurer, Bonnie Lent-Davis, did want to reiterate that she would be happy
149 to assist the Planning Commission with printing, stuffing, and mailing the community
150 engagement survey. She felt this would satisfactorily reach all residents in the Township.
151 She also did want to mention that it may be helpful for the Planning Commission to consider
152 hosting at least one joint meeting with the Township Board or Alto DDA to allow other
153 residents, officials, and stakeholders to provide their valuable information and offer
154 suggestions. She thanked the Planning Commission for beginning the Master Planning
155 process in the Township recognizing that it is probably an appropriate time to do this and
156 that the present Plan is more than ten years out of date.

157
158 **ADJOURN**

159 Commissioner Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which Commissioner Oesch
160 supported. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 PM.

161
162
163
Bradley Kotrba
Recording Secretary

Chapter 2. Community Profile

Population

In the decade from the year 2010 to the year 2020, the population of Bowne Township has grown by 205 persons, increasing from a population of 3,084 person to 3,289 persons, an increase of 6.6%. This rate of growth is a significant decrease from the rate of growth experienced between 2000 and 2010, when the Township grew by 12.4%. Bowne Township's rate of growth is compared to surrounding communities and Kent County in Table 1. (Note that incorporated villages and cities within the surrounding townships are not included in the population comparisons in Table 1.)

Table 2.1: Population Trends 2000-2020

	2000	2010	2020	Percent Change (2010-2020)	Percent Change (2010-2020)
Bowne Township	2,743	3,084	3,289	12.4%	6.6%
Boston Township	4,961	4,834	6,021	-2.6%	24.6%
Caledonia Township	8,964	10,821	15,811	20.7%	46.1%
Campbell Township	2,243	1,994	2,399	-11.1%	20.3%
Carlton Township	2,331	2,344	2,368	0.6%	1.0%
Cascade Township	15,107	17,134	19,667	13.4%	14.8%
Lowell Township	5,219	5,949	6,276	14.0%	5.5%
Irving Township	2,682	2,814	3,734	4.9%	32.7%
Thornapple Township	6,685	7,884	9,331	17.9%	18.4%
Kent County	574,421	602,622	657,974	4.9%	9.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000-2020

Table 2.1 shows population changes from 2000 to 2020 across surrounding communities. Between 2010 and 2020, growth rates ranged from just 1.0% in Carlton Township to a significant 46.1% in Caledonia Township. While Cascade, Thornapple, and Bowne Townships also experienced steady growth, Boston Township saw the largest shift from a slight population decline in 2010 to a 24.6% increase by 2020.

Proximity to the Grand Rapids metro area and job markets did not necessarily correlate with the highest growth. For example, some rural townships farther from the metro area grew more rapidly than those located closer. In today's economic climate, a community maintaining stable population levels may be as strong an indicator of local vitality as the rapid growth trends that were once viewed as the primary sign of economic strength.

Age

Table 2.2 shows the age distribution of Bowne Township's population in 2010 and 2020. The largest share of residents in 2020 were between 20 and 44 years (29.1%) and 45 to 64 years (28.7%), reflecting a strong working-age population. School-age children (5 to 19 years) accounted for 22.0% of residents, though this group declined by 6.1% over the decade.

The senior population experienced the most notable change: residents aged 65 to 84 years grew by 62.2%, increasing their share of the population to 12.9%. The number of residents 85 and older remained steady at 0.6% of the population.

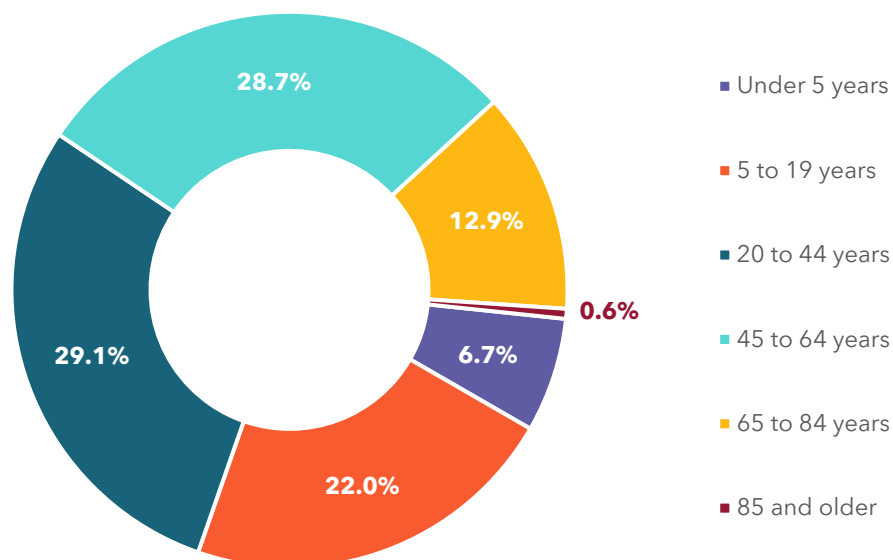
Overall, Bowne Township grew by 6.6% between 2010 and 2020, with demographic trends showing stability in the younger and middle-age groups, alongside a significant increase in older adults. The median age in Bowne Township was 38.5 years with no change since 2010. This pattern is typical of many rural Michigan townships and reflects both an aging population and a solid base of working-age residents.

Table 2.2: Age of Population, Bowne Township

	2010	2020	Percent (2020)	Percent Change (2010-2020)
Under 5 years	203	219	6.7%	7.9%
5 to 19 years	771	724	22.0%	-6.1%
20 to 44 years	902	957	29.1%	6.1%
45 to 64 years	927	945	28.7%	1.9%
65 to 84 years	262	425	12.9%	62.2%
85 and older	19	19	0.6%	0.0%
Total	3,084	3,289	100.0%	6.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2020

Figure 2.1: Age of Population, Bowne Township



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2020

Housing

Table 2.3 provides updated housing information for Bowne Township. In 2020, the Township contained 1,142 total housing units, of which 1,124 were occupied, leaving only 18 units vacant. This represents a vacancy rate of 1.6%, a notable decrease from the 5.0% vacancy rate recorded in 2010.

The majority of occupied housing units remain owner-occupied, with 92.8% of households owning their homes and just 7.2% renter-occupied. Bowne Township is clearly a community centered on homeownership.

Household composition continues to be dominated by family households, which account for 935 of the 1,124 total households. Most of these (818 households) are married-couple families, with 117 households classified as other family types. Households with children under the age of 18 made up about 45% of the total households in Bowne Township.

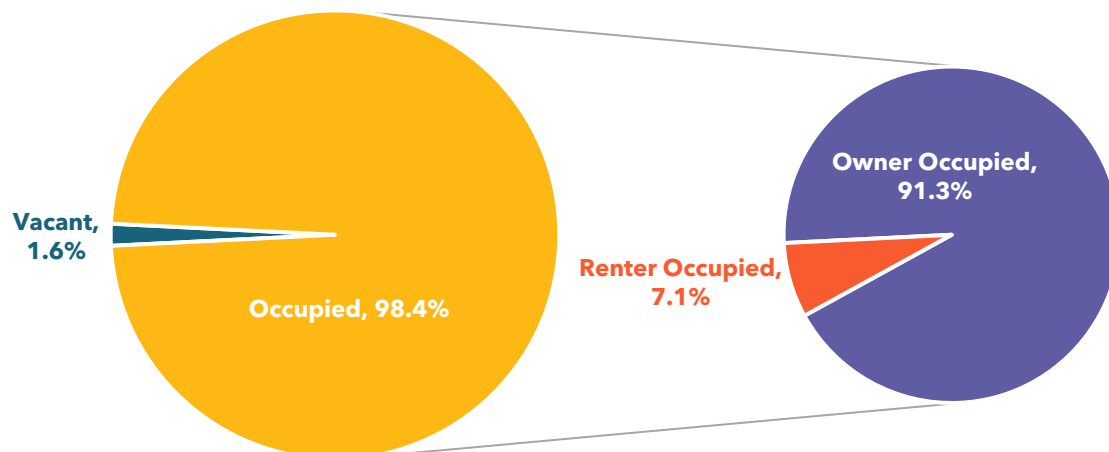
The average household size is 3.2 persons, and the average family size is 3.4 persons, reflecting a stable, family-oriented community with relatively larger household sizes compared to many urban areas.

Table 2.3: Household and Household Types

	Number	Percent
Total Households	1,124	
Family Households	935	
Average Household Size	3.2	
Average Family Size	3.4	
Total Housing Units	1,142	
<i>Occupied</i>	1,124	98.4%
<i>Vacant</i>	18	1.6%
Owner Occupied	1,043	92.8%
Renter Occupied	81	7.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020

Figure 2.2: Housing Characteristics, 2020 Bowne Township



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020

Income and Employment

Table 2.4 presents income and employment data for Bowne Township. Of the 2,433 residents age 16 and over, 1,793 (74%) are in the labor force. The Township reports 1,625 employed persons and 159 unemployed, reflecting an unemployment rate of about 6.5%.

Income levels in Bowne Township are notably high. The median household income is \$113,900 (Kent County: \$64,492), while the median family income is \$119,107. Mean income levels are even higher at \$129,653 for households and \$134,372 for families. These figures are above countywide averages and reflect the Township's position as a relatively affluent community within Kent County.

Poverty levels remain very low, with only 17 families (1.8%) classified as below the poverty line, compared to 6.1% for Kent County as a whole.

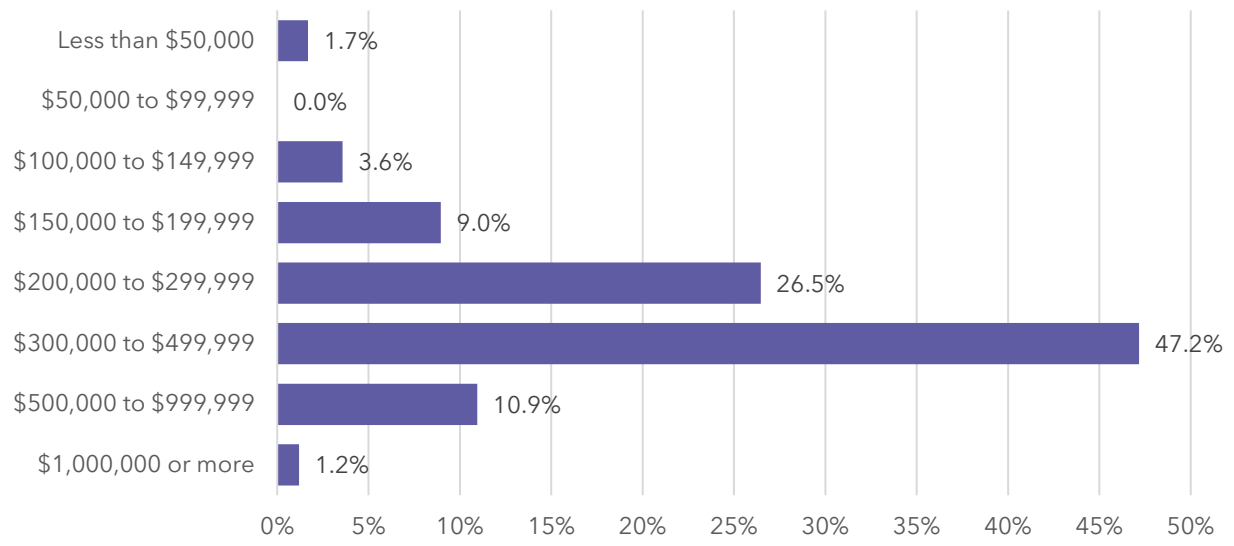
Figure 2.3 shows the value of owner-occupied housing in Bowne Township. Of the 1,005 units reported, nearly 84% are valued at \$200,000 or higher. The largest share of homes falls within the \$300,000 to \$499,999 range (47.2%), followed by homes valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999 (26.5%). Another 10.9% are valued between \$500,000 and \$999,999, and 1.2% exceed \$1 million. The median home value in Bowne Township is \$331,300, representing a 52% increase since 2010. While higher than the Kent County median of \$297,400, this figure is consistent with values found in nearby rural/suburban townships.

Table 2.4: Income and Employment

Category	Number/Percentage
Population 16 years and over	2,433
In labor force	1,793
Civilian labor force	1,784
Employed	1,625
Unemployed	159
<i>Median income (dollars)</i>	
Households	\$113,900
Families	\$119,107
<i>Mean income (dollars)</i>	
Households	\$129,653
Families	\$134,372
Families with Poverty Status	1.8%
Families with Poverty Status (County)	6.10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 2.3. Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Chapter 3. Natural Features

Bowne Township contains a number of natural features that contribute to the desirable rural character valued by residents. These features and their implications for future land use area described as follows.

Water Resources

The Coldwater River and its tributaries remain valuable assets for trout habitat. Land uses which may contribute to degradation in water quality, such as large-scale livestock or other operations, have been addressed over the course of the past several years. Efforts to retain water quality that supports trout fishing are on-going. The Coldwater River Watershed Council recently received a grant enabling further efforts to protect both the Coldwater River and Tyler Creek.

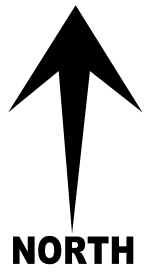
Several smaller lakes are found through the Township. Campbell Lake is the largest with an area of approximately 38 acres. Efforts to retail water quality of these lakes should focus upon limiting septic tank effluent of adjacent land uses, in minimizing fertilizer runoff, and in encouraging riparian vegetative buffers. The Township may promote comm8unity education regarding increased maintenance of septic systems for waterfront properties, as well as upgrades to septic systems if needed at the point of sale of waterfront properties.

Many certified Kent County drains are located within the Township and are shown on Map 3.1. These drains flow into the lakes and streams throughout the Township, and thus the water quality of these drains impacts water quality throughout the Township. As with all bodies of water, efforts to minimize development impacts in regard to soil and fertilizer runoff as well as septic tank effluent should be addressed through community education and at the time of site plan review.

Wetlands

Wetlands are vital to the local ecosystem as they can provide essential breeding grounds, nesting sites, and feeding areas for a variety of waterfowl, migratory birds, and amphibians. They also serve as a natural filtration system, purifying water, and mitigating floods by absorbing excess rainfall and runoff.

Wetlands in Bowne Township are shown on Map 3.2. Wetlands over five acres in size or contiguous to an inland lake, pong, river, or stream are protected by the statute of State of Michigan. Wetlands five acres or less in size are valuable assets to the Township, may be protected through site plan review or open space designs for development.

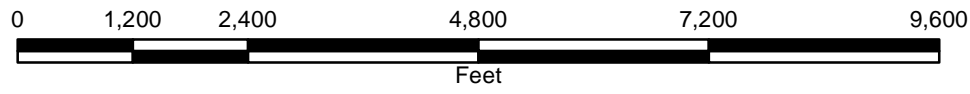


Office of the Kent
County Drain Commissioner

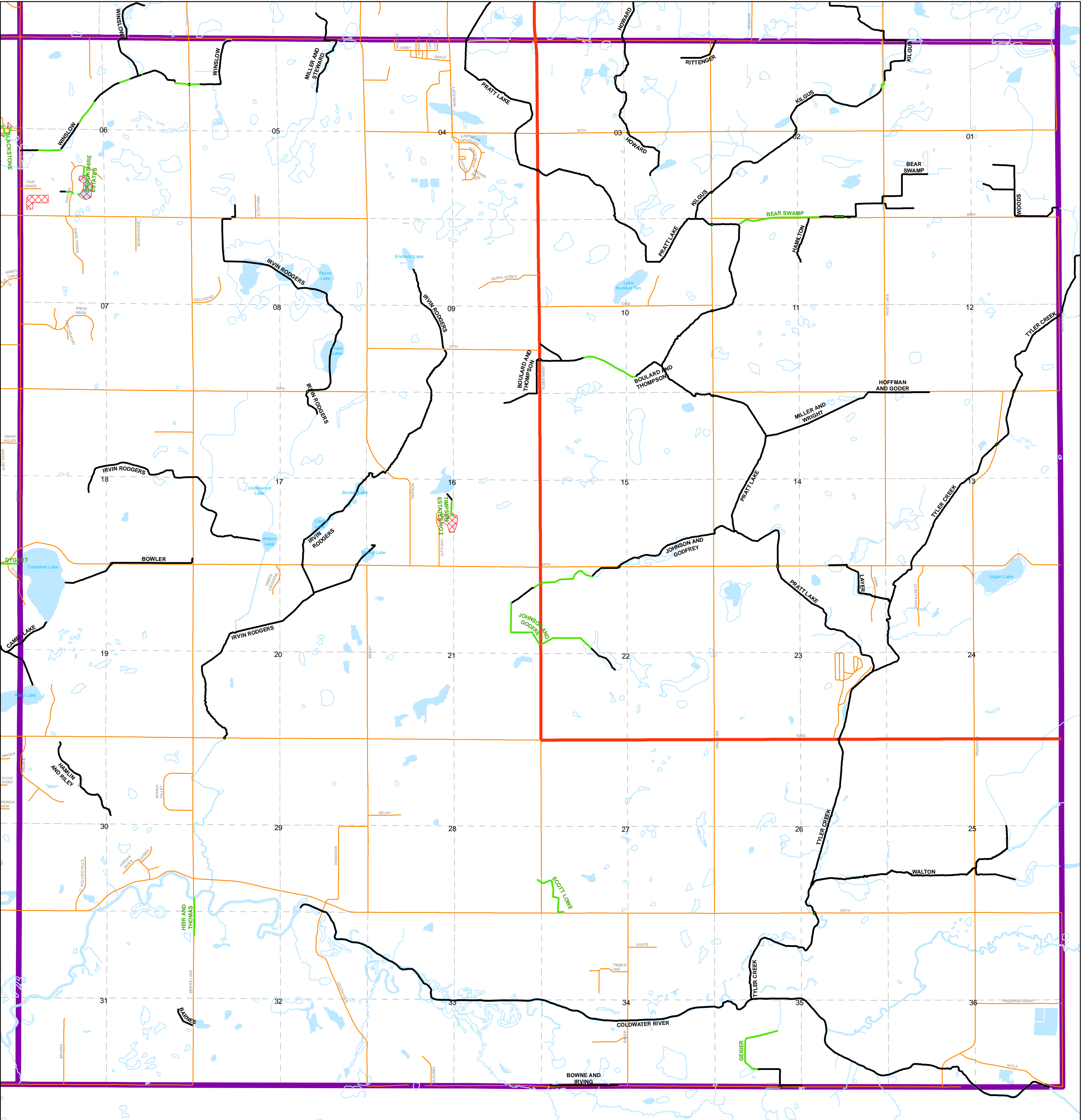


Bowne Township

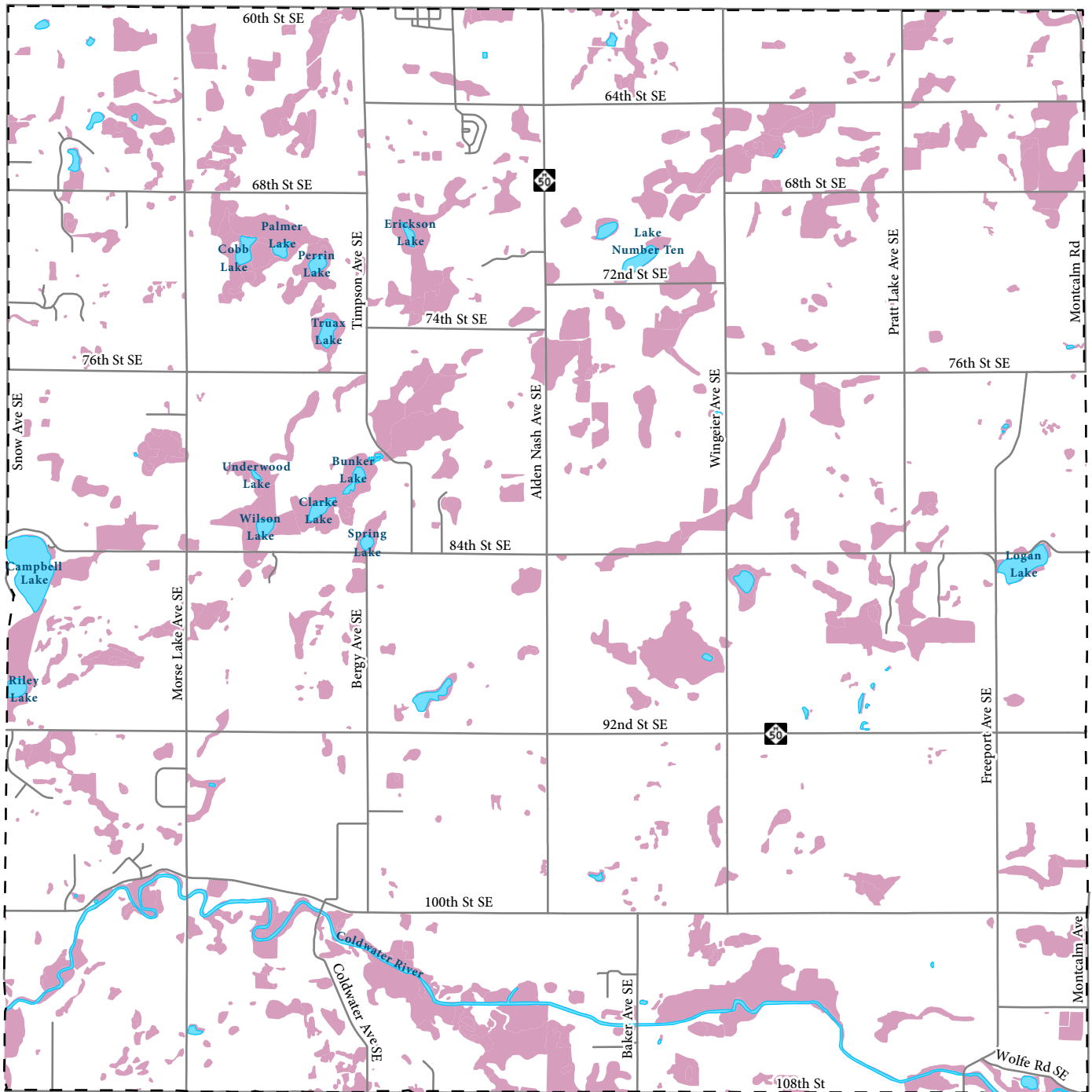
T.05N., R.09W.



September 22, 2023



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Source: Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Wetland Inventory Map

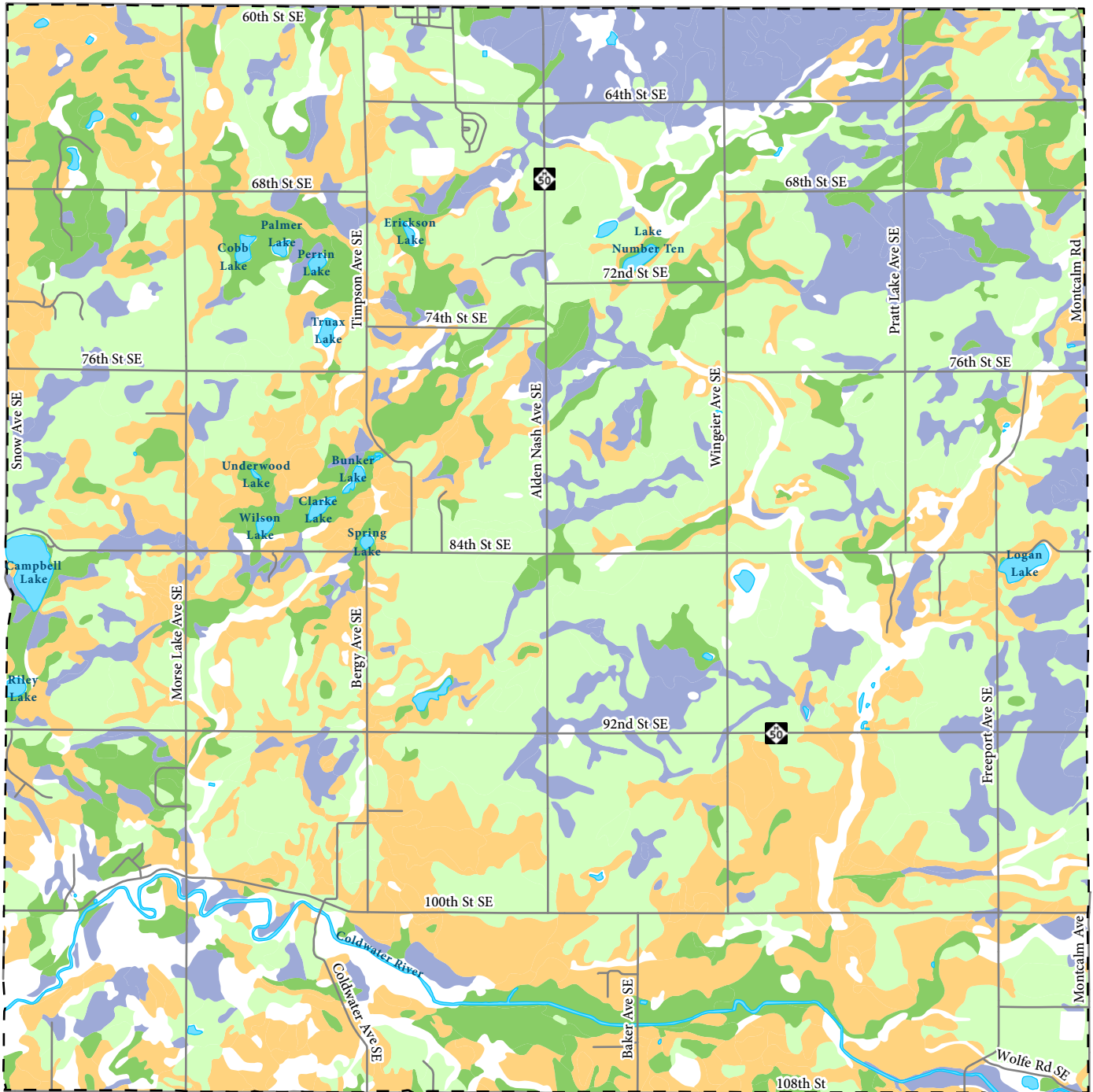
0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Legend

Wetlands

Map 3.2
Wetlands



Source: SSURGO Database, Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA)

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Legend

- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of local importance
- Farmland of unique importance
- Prime farmland if drained

Map 3.3
Prime Farmland

Soils

Bowne Township has several distinctive soil types, with a large composition of prime farmland soils as shown on Map 3.3. With level topography consisting of flat to gently rolling terrain, a majority of soils range from well drained to excessively drained and are comprised mostly of the Melette-Perrinton-Metea Association (see Map 3.4).

The soil drainage map of Bowne Township shows a mix of drainage classes across the area, ranging from excessively drained soils to very poorly drained soils. Well-drained and moderately well-drained soils appear to cover much of the Township, particularly in upland areas, making them suitable for agriculture and development. Poorly and very poorly drained soils are more common near low-lying areas, lakes, and the Coldwater River, where water retention is higher and seasonal flooding or wet conditions are likely. This distribution highlights the importance of considering soil drainage when planning land uses, as areas with poor drainage may limit development potential or require additional stormwater management, while well-drained soils offer more flexibility for building and farming.

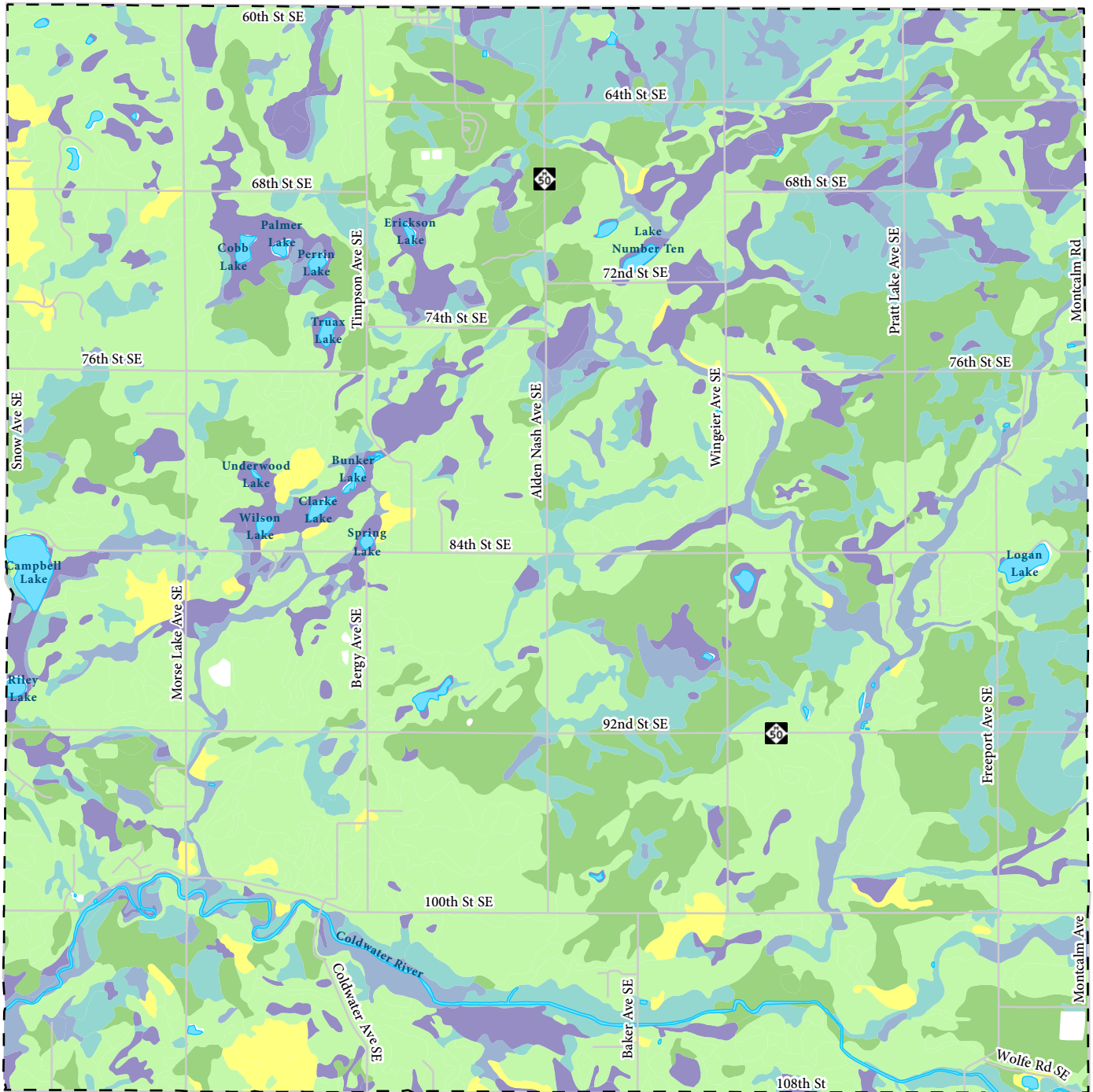
Map 3.5 shows the locations of hydric soils, which present limitation for development as well as septic tank absorption.

Land Cover

Land cover refers to the vegetation and land use present within a particular community. In the case of Bowne Township, the land cover data was obtained from the National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) prepared by the United States Geological Services (USGS) in 2021. This dataset was generated by analyzing Landsat TM satellite imagery through an automated computer-based process. To ensure accuracy, an assessment of the satellite data was conducted, which involved comparing it to aerial photographs to evaluate the quality of the computer-based interpretation.

The data provides “explicit and reliable information on the Nation’s land cover and land cover change.” The information is useful in determining the distribution of vegetation and development patterns and their change over time throughout the City. The 2021 NLCD includes various classes of land cover type based on a modified Anderson level II classification system. While the land cover data may not be entirely accurate, it provides a broader understanding of the overall land cover composition within the Township.

As shown in Map 3.6, the predominant land cover type within Bowne Township is agricultural which is a mix of cultivated crops and hay/pasture land cover classifications. Wetlands and woodlands are some of the other larger land cover types in the Township. Woodlands provide wildlife habitat as well as cover along water ways for fish habitat. Preservation of woodlands as a valuable asset should be addressed at the time of site plan review. High Density of developed areas can be seen near Alto, Wingier Avenue & 84th Street, and around the Brook View Freeport Dairy processing area near the Village of Freeport.



Source: SSURGO Database, Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA)

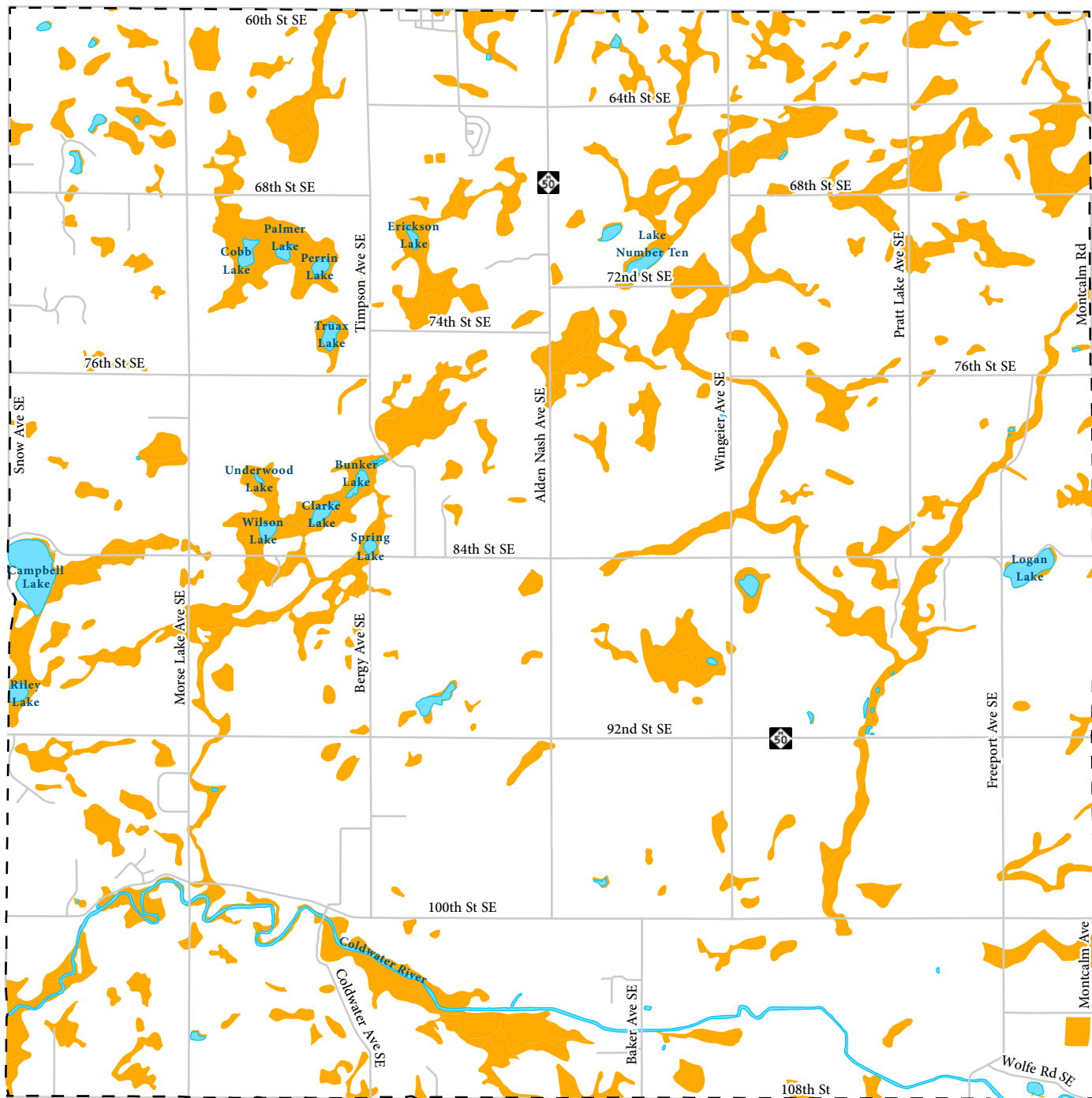
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- Excessively drained
- Well drained
- Moderately well drained
- Somewhat poorly drained
- Poorly drained
- Very poorly drained

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Map 3.4
Soil Drainage Class



Source: Michigan GIS Open Data Portal

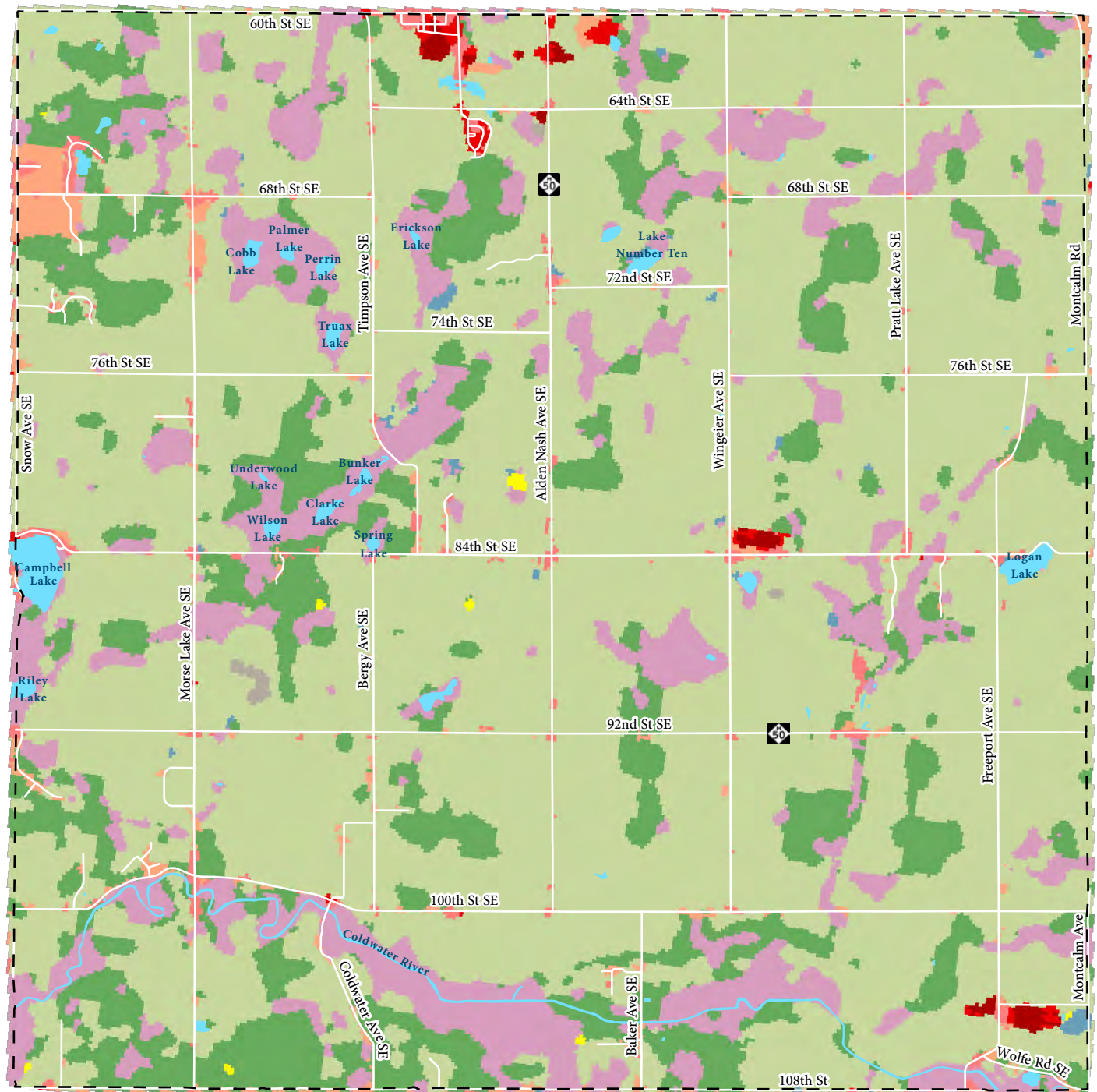
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Legend

Hydric Soils

Map 3.5
Hydric Soils



Source: National Land Cover Database 2021

Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Open Water |  Forest |
|  Developed, Open Space |  Open Space/Grassland |
|  Developed, Low Intensity |  Agricultural |
|  Developed, Medium Intensity |  Woody Wetlands |
|  Developed, High Intensity |  Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands |
|  Barren Land | |

Map 3.6
Land Cover 2021

Chapter 4. Community Facilities

Map 4.1 shows the location of publicly owned or significant community facilities.

Fire and Public Safety

Bowne Township maintains one fire station location at 6260 Bancroft Avenue in Alto. Personnel include two paid and 18 volunteer firefighters. Bowne Township has mutual aid agreements with the Village of Freeport and Lowell Charter Township. The Bowne Township 2010-2016 Capital Improvements Plan includes a plan to design and construct an auxiliary fire station at 84th Street and Alden Nash Avenue. Funding for this fire station remains to be secured. Bowne Township public safety is provided by the Kent County Sheriff's Department.

Sewer

Bowne Township owns and operates a public sanitary sewer collection and treatment system in the immediate Alto area. The sewer collection system is shown on Map #. The collection and treatment systems were built in the early 1970s. The collection system serves approximately 95 residential and 10 commercial/institutional users in Alto. The system discharges sewage through a 4,300-foot-long force main to the 40-acre treatment site south of 64th Street. After a long/storage/treatment period in the aerated lagoons and a sand filter, the effluent is discharged to a surface water outlet to a natural wetland south of the facility.

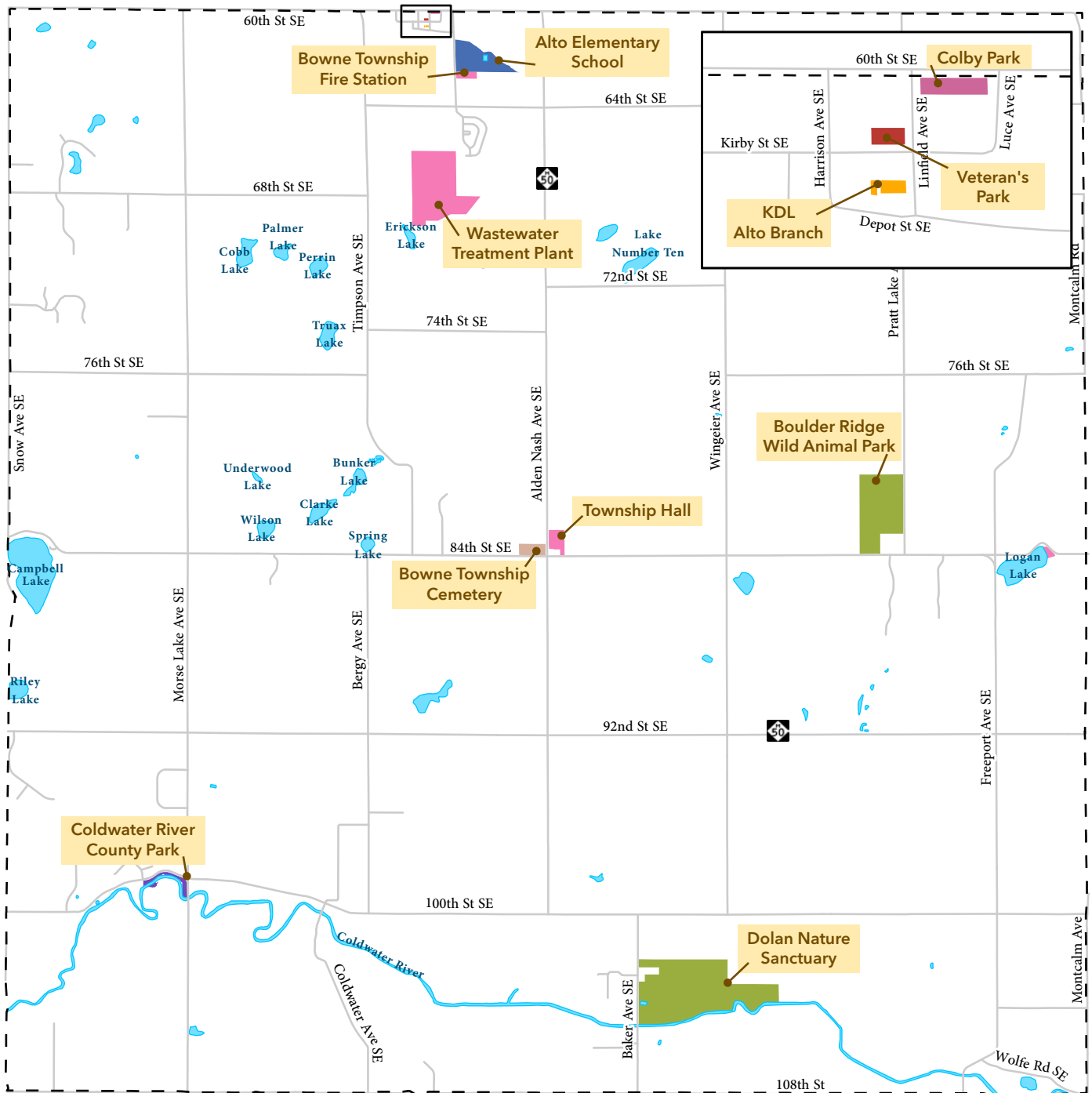
The treatment system has an original capacity of 40,000 gallons per day. In 2002, a plant expansion was completed, increasing the capacity to 90,000 gallons per day. The expansion was undertaken to address performance challenges and to increase capacity to serve a proposed mobile home park. The efforts also included pump upgrades in the existing sewage lift station in Alto.

The wastewater collection system is currently limited to the immediate Alto area, the business, institutions, and residences along Bancroft Avenue, the mobile home park south of 64th Street, and a banquet hall business on the west side of Alden Nash. The Township set the service area limits as the limits of the DDA, allowing for significant possible future expansion. Expansion of the treatment system to a capacity of 170,000 gallons per day was master planned into the treatment system design in 2002.

Current use is approximately 50,000 gallons per day. The remaining capacity, 40,000 gallons per day, could potentially serve 133 additional residential equivalent units. Map # illustrates the Concept Sewer Master Plan area.

Water

The majority of the Township is served by private wells. However, the manufactured housing community in Section 4 is served by a private community water system.



Source: Kent County, Bowne Township.

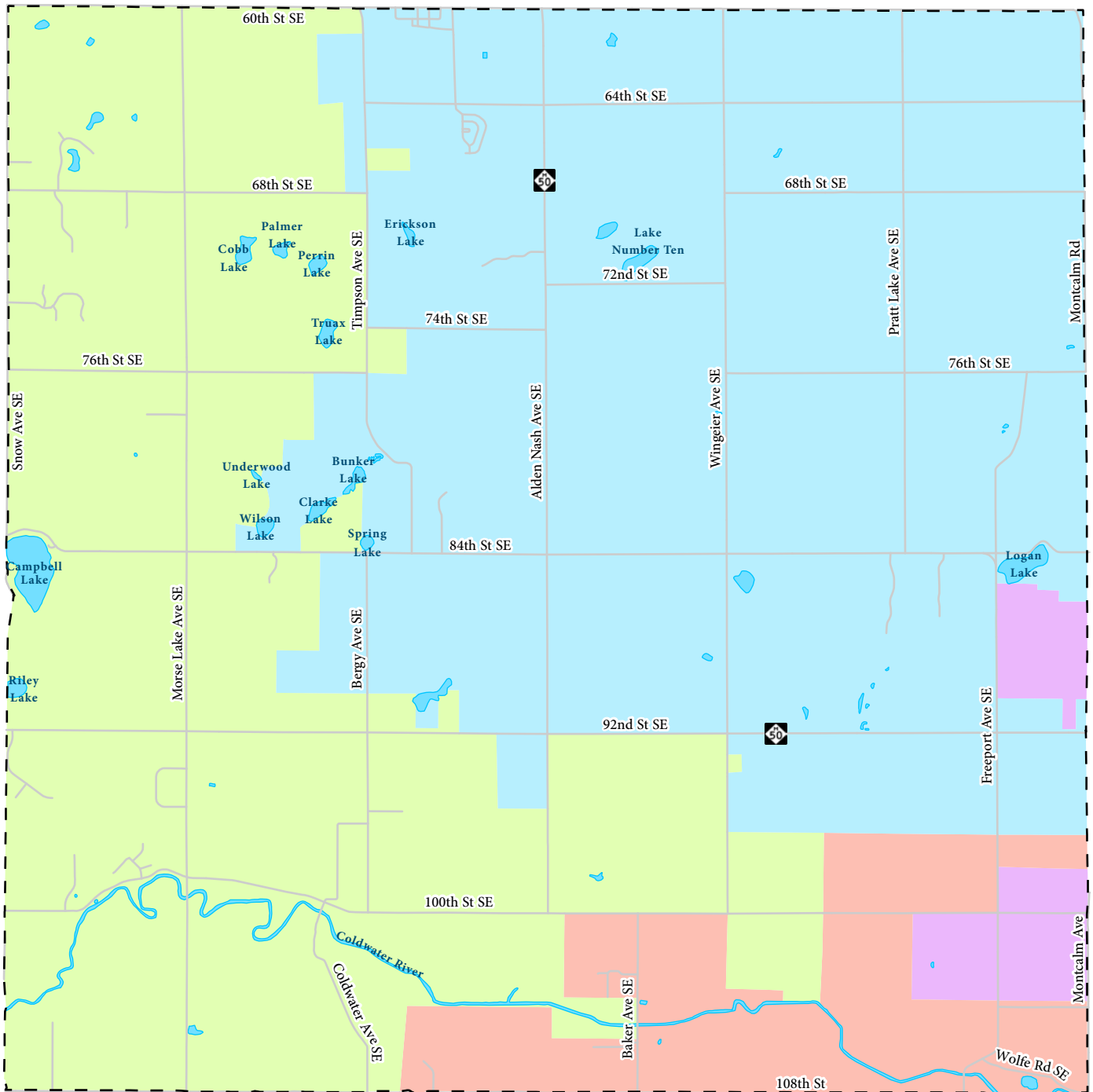
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Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Cemetery |  Lowell Public Schools |
|  County Park |  Private/Quasi-Public |
|  DDA Property |  Township Property |
|  Library | |

Map 4.1 Community Facilities



Source: Michigan GIS Open Data Portal

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Legend

- Caledonia Community Schools
- Lakewood Public Schools
- Lowell Area Schools
- Thornapple Kellogg School District

Map 4.2 School Districts

Township Hall

Bowne Township maintains a historic Township Hall, which is used for public meetings and voting, and a newer Township Hall constructed in 2008. Both buildings are located at 8240 Alden Nash Avenue, the location of the historic Bowne Center. Township business offices and a conference room are located in the newer Township Hall. The 2010-2016 Bowne Township Capital Improvements Plan includes the plans to expand the parking area by 50% with an exit onto 84th Street.

Ladies Aid Hall Museum & School Museum

The Bowne Township's former Ladies Aid Hall Museum is located on the northeast corner of 84th Street and Alden Nash Avenue in Bowne Center. It is owned by the Township and operated by the Bowne Township Historical Society. The museum is open during regularly scheduled times.

The School Museum is located on the southeast corner of 84th Street and Alden Nash Avenue in Bowne Center. The Township owns the museum while the displays are maintained by the Bowne Township Historical Society. The school is listed in the National School Registry as certified by the Country School Association of America. The museum is open during regularly scheduled times.

Schools

Bowne Township encompasses four school districts: Lowell Area Public Schools, Caledonia Community Schools, Thornapple Kellogg Schools, and Lakewood Public Schools. Alto Elementary School, located at 6150 Bancroft Avenue in Alto, is part of Lowell Area Public Schools, and is the only school facility that exists within the Township's Boundaries. Map 4.2 shows the public school districts within Bowne Township.

Library

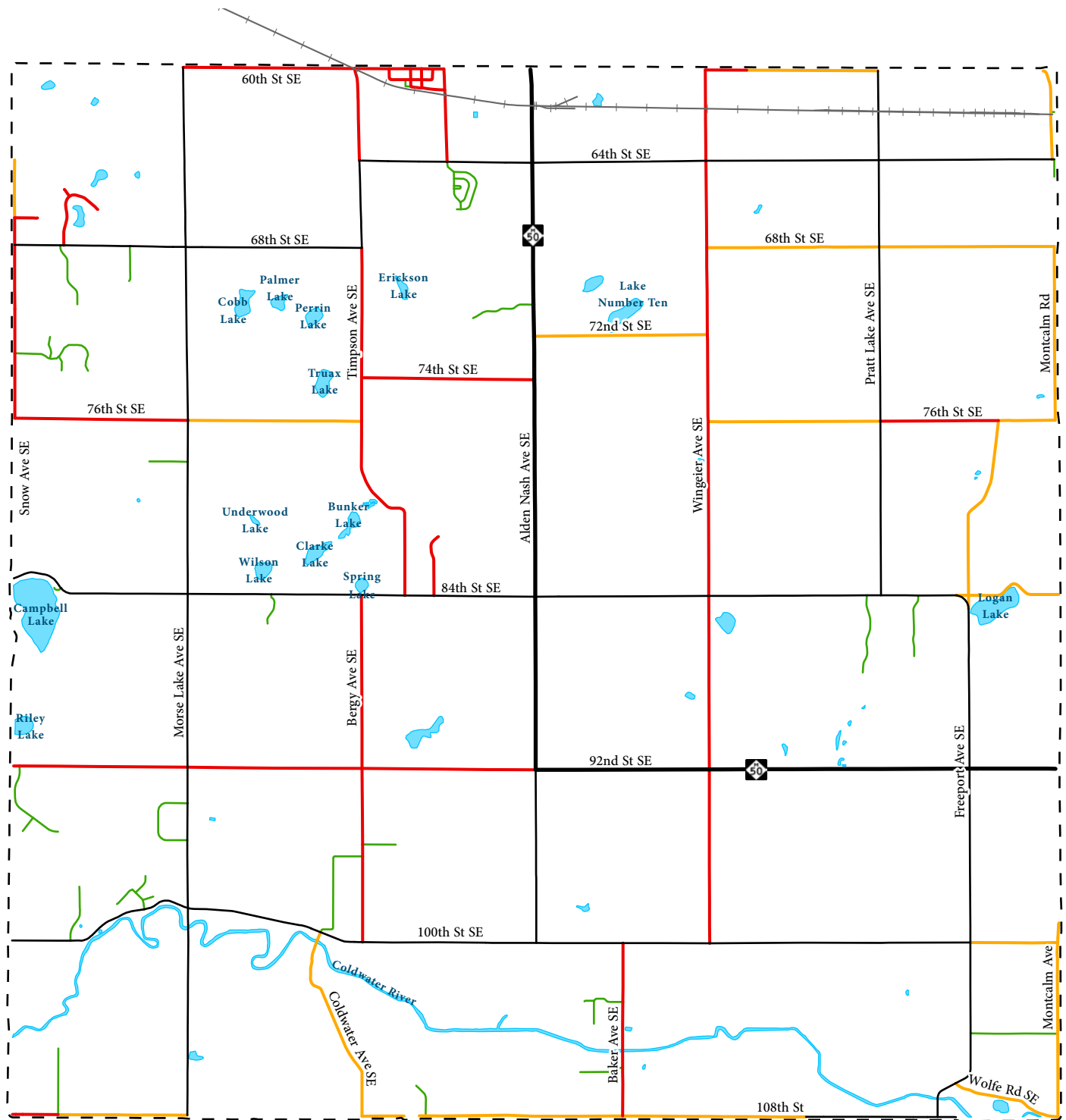
The Alto branch of the Kent District Library is located at 6071 Linfield Avenue in Alto. The Alto Downtown Development Authority maintains the library. The Alto Branch in Bowne Township began in 1937 through the efforts of the Bowne Center Parent Teacher Association. The library has since grown and moved to its most recent location in 1996. The library building is owned by Bowne Township.

Parks and Recreation

Bowne Township owns and maintains Colby Park, the Kent County 0.38-acre park on 60th Street between Linfield and Luce Streets in Alto, which includes children's play equipment. The Downtown Development Authority owns and operates Veterans' Park within downtown Alto at the intersection of Linfield and Kirby Street, which is utilized for community events. Other schools, private, and county-owned recreational facilities are discussed in the existing land use Chapter of this document.

Cemeteries

Bowne Township owns and maintains the cemetery located on the northwest corner of 84th Street and Alden Nash Avenue in Bowne Center. A private church-owned cemetery is located at the southwest intersection of 76th Street and Freeport Avenue in Section 13.



Source: Kent County Road Commission

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Legend

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Railroad Tracks | County Local, Paved |
| State Trunkline, Paved | County Local, Gravel |
| County Primary, Paved | Private |

Map 4.3
Road Classifications

Transportation

Bowne Township's Road classification system is shown on Map 4.3. M-50 (aka Alden Nash Avenue, where it runs north and south and is called 92nd Street where it runs east of Alden Nash) is a two-lane, undivided State Route. The majority of roads in the Township are paved County Primary and County Local roads. County local roads that have been paved since the completion of the 2006 Master Plan include that portion of Snow Avenue from just north of Fair Winds Court to 76th Street. Private roads that have been constructed since the completion of the 2006 plan are shown on the updated road classifications Map.

According to Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) officials, no major road construction jobs are planned in Bowne Township over the next five years; however, resurfacing on 84th Street and 100th Street has been planned for the future.

Traffic volumes in Bowne Township have generally increased on major routes such as M-50 and 100th Street, where traffic grew 15-19% since 2016, reflecting their role as key travel corridors. Moderate growth was also seen on 84th Street and 108th Street, while some local roads, like Bergy Avenue north of 100th, showed sharp percentage increases but remained low in volume. In contrast, several rural segments, including 64th Street east of Timpson (down 45%) and 84th Street east of Wingeier (down 18%), saw declines. Overall, traffic growth is concentrated on primary corridors, while some local roads have experienced reductions. Table 4.1 shows the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Counts for 2016 and 2024 in Bowne Township.

Table 4.1: AADT Counts, Bowne Township 2016 & 2020.

On	Approach	At	2024	2016	Percent Change
M-50(ALDEN NASH)	SOUTH OF	60th Street	8,631	7,528	15%
M-50(92ND)	EAST OF	Alden Nash Ave SE	5,247	4,846	8%
84TH ST	WEST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	1,875	1,632	15%
100TH ST	EAST OF	Alden Nash Ave SE	1,849	1,548	19%
84TH ST	EAST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	1,783	1,527	17%
84TH ST	WEST OF	M 50	1,596	1,371	16%
100TH ST	WEST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	1,467	1,239	18%
100TH ST	EAST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	1,353	1,324	2%
Baker Avenue	SOUTH OF	100th	1,343	1,231	9%
108TH ST	AT	South Kent County Line	1,331	1,155	15%
100TH ST	WEST OF	Alden Nash Ave SE	1,107	947	17%
64th Street	EAST OF	Wingeier	1,069	1,239	-14%
FREEMPORT AVE	SOUTH OF	100th St SE	1,068	1,078	-1%
FREEMPORT AVE	SOUTH OF	92nd St SE	912	1,003	-9%
84th Street	EAST OF	Wingeier	767	935	-18%
64TH ST	EAST OF	Timpson Ave SE	733	1,339	-45%
TIMPSON AVE	SOUTH OF	64th St SE	722	764	-5%
68TH ST	WEST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	639	769	-17%
68TH ST	EAST OF	Morse Lake Ave SE	604	647	-7%
Pratt Lake Avenue	SOUTH OF	64th Street	536	579	-7%
Pratt Lake Avenue	SOUTH OF	68th Street	521	551	-5%

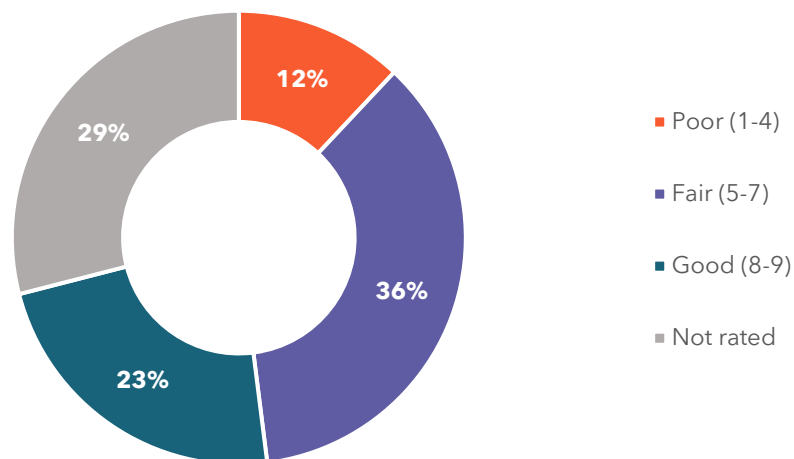
84th Street	EAST OF	Pratt Lake	520	652	-20%
Freeport Avenue	SOUTH OF	84th Street	495	475	4%
Pratt Lake Avenue	SOUTH OF	76th Street	465	456	2%
Morse Lake Avenue	NORTH OF	68th Street	422	402	5%
Morse Lake Avenue	SOUTH OF	68th Street	390	433	-10%
100TH ST	EAST OF	Wingeier Ave SE	384	406	-5%
Pratt Lake Avenue	SOUTH OF	60th Street	298	367	-19%
Wingeier Avenue	SOUTH OF	68th	286	260	10%
Bergy Avenue	NORTH OF	100th	125	88	42%
Bergy Avenue	SOUTH OF	84th	105	128	-18%
Coldwater Avenue	SOUTH OF	100th	101	90	12%
108th Street	EAST OF	Baker	99	121	-18%
68th Street	WEST OF	Montcalm	40	49	-18%
68th Street	WEST OF	Pratt Lake	22	29	-24%

Source: Michigan Department of Transportation

ROAD CONDITIONS

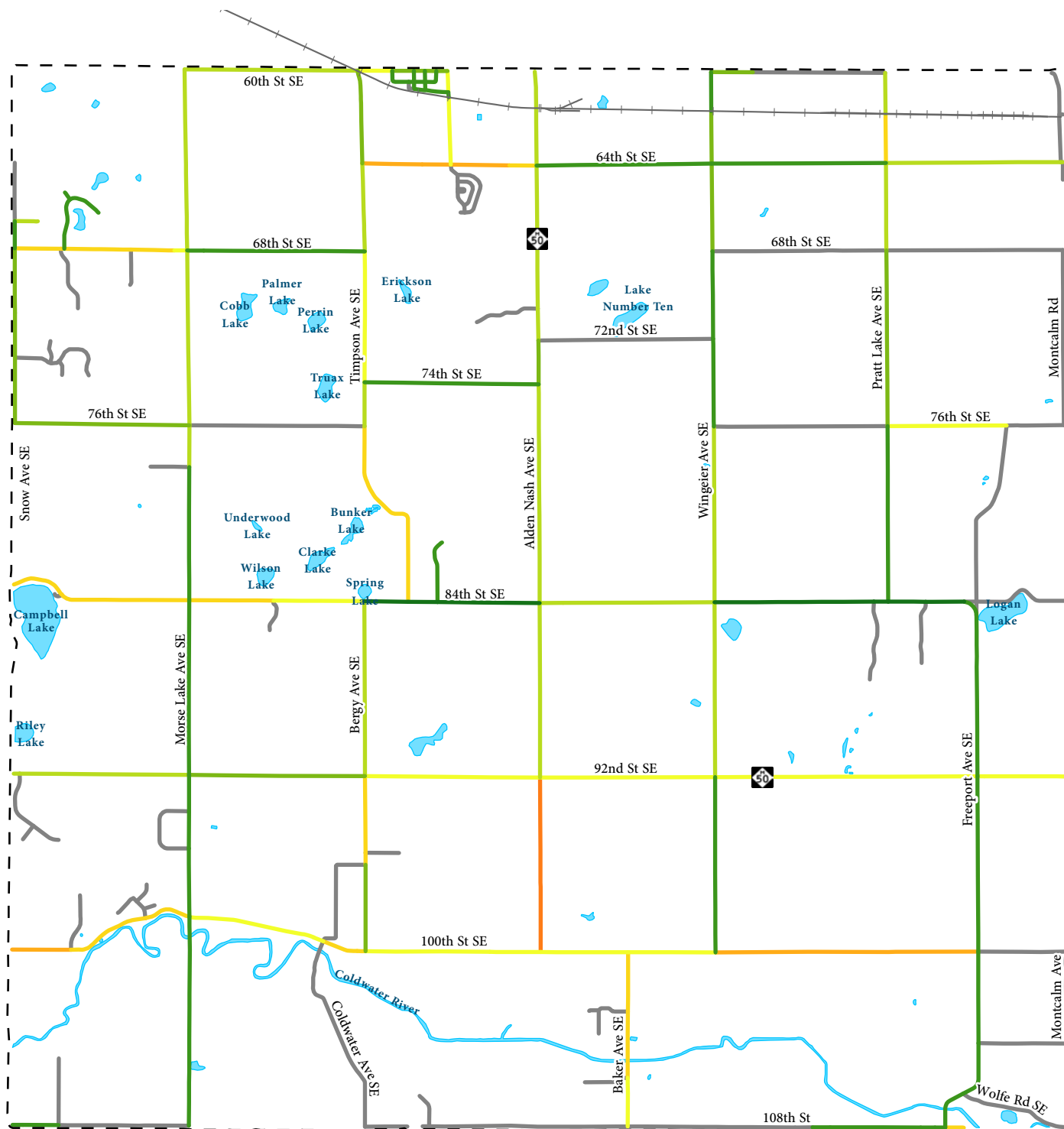
The PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating) system is a method used to assess the condition of roads based on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the poorest condition and 10 representing excellent pavement quality (see map 4.4).

Figure 4.1: PASER



Source: Kent County Road Commission

The PASER ratings show that only 23% of roads in Bowne Township are in good condition, while 36 percent are rated fair and 12% are considered poor. Nearly one-third of the roads (29%) were not rated, suggesting additional evaluation is needed to fully understand roadway conditions. Overall, the data indicates that most rated roads are in fair or better condition, but there remains a notable portion in need of maintenance or reconstruction.



Source: Kent County Road Commission

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| — 0: Not Rated | — 6: Fair |
| — 2: Poor | — 7: Fair |
| — 3: Poor | — 8: Good |
| — 4: Poor | — 9: Good |
| — 5: Fair | |

Map 4.4
PASER

COMPLETE STREETS ANALYSIS

In August of 2010, PA 33 of 2008 (the Michigan Planning Enabling Act) was amended to require that local master plans include consideration of additional elements related to transportation. These elements include safe and efficient movement of people and goods by not only motor vehicles but also by bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users, including handicapped users. Additionally, the amended statute defines street as "a street, avenue, boulevard, highway, road, lake, alley, viaduct, or other public way intended for use by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users."

In December of 2010, PA 33 was further amended to require that local master plans also take into consideration the location, character, and extent of public transit routes and public transportation facilities in the preparation of the master plan, and to coordinate with public transportation agencies in the planning process.

In Bowne Township, an analysis was done of existing transportation facilities, particularly in the settlement of Alto, and recommendations were developed to ensure adequate transportation for all users.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION

While no public bus routes exist in Bowne Township, private and non-profit agencies offer a variety of methods of transportation for the disabled and the elderly, as well as for other persons who may qualify, depending upon the agency offering transportation. Complete information is available through the Kent County Health Department. Some of these programs include the Kent County Community Action Way 2 Go! Program, Senior Millage Ridelink, etc. The Township does not currently maintain contracts for transportation with any public or private agencies.

Alto Area

The settlement of Alto is comprised of Kent County paved local roads arranged in a village pattern. Therefore, all activity on these streets is under the jurisdiction of the Kent County Road Commission. On-street parking is provided in downtown Alto, as are sidewalks in much of the downtown area. Several handicap accessible spaces are located on the east side of Linfield Street, north of Depot Street.

Many of the sidewalks serving the residential areas in Alto are narrow, two-foot-wide sidewalks. Those sidewalks serving the downtown commercial area are primarily five feet wide and provide accessible curb ramp connections to the street surface. Two key areas in Alto not served by sidewalks are the north side of Kirby Street, which includes the US post office, and the east side of Linfield Avenue, which includes Colby Park.

While bicycle lanes are not constructed in Alto, the low level of traffic in the area does not indicate a need for bicycle lanes. Any bicycle traffic could easily maneuver through the existing traffic lanes in the settlement. Bicycle racks are available behind the Kent District Library, located on the west side of Linfield Avenue.

The Alto Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Development Plan of 2008 contains several recommendations for improving vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. The DDA encompasses an area that includes most of Section 4 and a large portion of Section 3. The DDA Plan contains a recommendation that all streets within the boundaries of the DDA include sidewalks and possibly bikeways. A walking and/or biking pathway linking Alto to the Alto Elementary School was previously under consideration by the DDA, but was determined to be impractical due to the location of the active CSX Railroad that lies between Alto and the school. The DDA will continue to focus its efforts on securing funding for improvements in the downtown Alto area.

Remainder of Bowne Township

Bowne Township is a rural community comprised of Kent County primary and local roads, as well as private roads. Bikeways and pedestrian pathways do not exist along these roadways, and very little paved shoulder exists. Serious cycling groups do utilize the roadways, and at times can delay traffic movement on the roadways. While a non-motorized trail system through the Township (whether within or outside the road right-of-way) would be beneficial to recreational bikers and other users, serious cyclists are not likely to utilize an off-road trail system due to conflicts with other recreational users, driveways, and other obstacles.