

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

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. May 5, 2026 - 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. Master Plan: Future Land Use Discussion
10. New Business:
 - a. none
11. Public Comments
12. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley S. Kotrba, AICP - Recording Secretary

1 BOWNE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

2 DRAFT MINUTES

3 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

4 TUESDAY, May 5, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

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 p.m.

10 **2. ROLL CALL:**

11
12 MEMBERS PRESENT: JIM OOSTING – CHAIR
13 DAVID FUSS – TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE
14 SHAWN WENGER
15 LARRY WINGEIER
16 ROGER GRAHAM
17 JAY BARNHART

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19
20 NOT PRESENT: SARAH LARSON – SECRETARY
21 DAVE HOEKSTRA
22 FRED OESCH

23
24
25
26 OTHERS PRESENT: AMAN PANNU AND BRAD KOTRBA, WILLIAMS & WORKS
27 6 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

28 **3. AGENDA: MOTION**

29 Chairman Oosting inquired of the Commission if any changes to tonight's agenda were required.
30 Commissioner Graham motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Fuss
31 supported the motion to approve. Motion carried.
32

33 **4. MINUTES: MOTION**

34 Chairman Oosting asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the March 3, 2026,
35 regular Planning Commission Draft Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Barnhart motioned to accept
36 the March 3, 2026, meeting minutes as presented, and Commissioner Graham supported it. Motion
37 carried.

38 **5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC**

39 Chairman Oosting acknowledged and welcomed the members of the public.

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

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

43 **7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

44 No comments.

45 **8. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

46 None.

47 **9. OLD BUSINESS:**

48 a. 11441 64th Street Preliminary Rezoning Application Review
49

- 50 • Chairman Oosting asked for an update on the 64th Street rezoning application.
51 Planner Kotrba asked the applicant what he intended to construct on the property.
52 If the property were to be industrially zoned, there is a wide possibility of industrial
53 uses that could be located on the property. The applicant, John Timpson, stated he
54 was considering small contractor's facilities, or one larger building that could be
55 subdivided. Kotrba stated that a conditional rezoning was the best approach to
56 avoid incompatible land uses on the site in the future. Kotrba discussed with the Mr.
57 Timpson which zoning district was most appropriate for the site, indicating that C-1
58 zoning is suited for the village, while C-2 is best situated along Alden Nash. Industrial
59 zoning isn't as compatible with what Mr. Timpson is proposing, though a conditional
60 rezoning would prevent incompatible land uses with the site's surroundings.
61 Chairman Oosting asked Kotrba how to proceed. He stated he would work with Mr.
62 Timpson, and asked him to draft a letter stating his intent with the property. Kotrba
63 also stated he would work with the Township Attorney on a rezoning ordinance and
64 contract.
- 65 • The Commission asked about the current zoning of the site. Kotrba stated it was
66 currently zoned R-3. The rezoning would be to propose a conditional rezoning,
67 possibly Industrial with conditions attached. Mr. Timpson asked about when the
68 rezoning goes into effect. Kotrba stated after the development agreement is worked
69 out with the applicant and Township Attorney, the agreement would be included in
70 a rezoning vote by the Township Board.

b. Bowne Township Master Plan Goals and Objectives Discussion

- Aman Pannu explained that she passed out a worksheet and supplemental maps to the Commission. The worksheet contains the goals and objectives from the previous Master Plan, with spaces for the Commission to write down their thoughts about each. She also clarified the differences between goals and objectives, and walked the Planning Commission through the worksheet.
- Under Agricultural Goals, the Planning Commission agreed that policy 3 under Goal 3 should be moved up to Goal 1, and that new policy language should be included under Goal 2, including encouraging children in the Township to be engaged in farming. The Planning Commission discussed the PA116 farmland preservation program and agritourism. Pannu stated that agritourism businesses ranked highly as a desired commercial development type in the community survey. The Planning Commission deliberated agritourism businesses and right to farm. Kotrba and Pannu recommended policies under Goal 2 could be to partner with organizations such as 4-H, as well as adding another policy to amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage agritourism businesses. Goal 3 was recommended to be added as a policy statement under Goal 2, and the Commission agreed. Pannu recommended that Policy 1 under Goal 3 be moved under Goal 1 to further the Goal, which the Commission also agreed to. Pannu also recommended Policy 2 be moved under Goal 1 or 2 where it fits better. The Commission discussed adjusting the policy statement into a goal that covers environmental protection, including protecting wells and livestock. Another policy was added under Goal 1 to prevent the fragmentation of farmland.
- Under Natural Environment Goals, Goal 1 was recommended to remain. A policy statement was recommended under Goal 1 to support committees associated with river protection. Goal 2 was recommended to remain. Goal 3 was recommended to move to the Recreation Goals. New goals were recommended pertaining to wellhead protection areas and wetlands. Goal 4 was recommended to remain.
- Under Transportation Goals, discussion was had regarding the DDA constructing a sidewalk along the east side of Bancroft for a sidewalk and boardwalk connection from Alto to 64th Street. A policy was recommended to be added that included supporting the DDA in this effort. Further discussion revolved around complete streets. Policy 4 under Goal 1 was recommended to be added into Policy 1 to better reflect complete street design in the Village area. The Planning Commission recommended adding sidewalks to Policy 2 under Goal 1. Policy 3 was recommended to remain.
- Under Residential Goals, Pannu discussed the outcomes of the community survey and how it relates to the existing residential goals and objectives. Planner Kotrba explained what cluster development is in the context of Policy 2. Goal 1 was recommended to remain. Goal 2 was recommended to remain. Pannu asked if the Planning Commission would like to see any changes to lot sizes. The Planning Commission agreed to see lot sizes increased.
- Under Recreation Goals, maintenance of facilities was recommended to be added to the goal statements. Pannu recommended that maintenance be placed under Goal 1. Township-owned lands and future park development was discussed. The Planning

117 Commission recommended adding a goal that a parks and recreation plan be
118 developed to aid in applying for grant funding.

119 **10. NEW BUSINESS:**

120 None.

121

122 **11. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

123 None.

124

125 **ADJOURN**

126 Commissioner Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Wenger supported.

127 The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

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129

130

Toby Hayes
Recording Secretary

Chapter 7. Future Land Use

The Future Land Use section of the Master Plan guides the growth and development in the Township and serves a visionary blueprint for the community's long-term plan for the next 15 to 20 years. This plan acts as a policy guide for different types of growth should ideally occur within the Township.

The plan recognizes the primary goals of the Township: To preserve the agricultural base while providing opportunities for non-farm residential land uses or suburban setting. The future land use categories are described as follows, with rationales for the proposed location of each category as shown in the accompanied Future Land Use map along with compatible zoning districts.

Agricultural Preservation

This future land use category echoes the goals and objectives from Chapter 6 that place high importance on preserving farmland which is supported by community feedback gathered to develop the 2026 Master Plan.

Preserving active agriculture in Bowne Township has been achieved by planning nearly one-half of the land area of the Township for Agricultural Preservation. The area planned for long-term agriculture includes large parcels of active farming as well as an abundance of prime farmland soils concentrated in the eastern and central portions of the Township. The area also includes a number of properties which are enrolled in PA 116, the Farmland and Open Space Preservation program administered by the State of Michigan. Map # shows those lands currently enrolled in PA 116.

The areas planned for Agricultural Preservation area intended to be zoned AG, Agriculture, which allows primarily farming and single-family dwellings by right. Accessory uses include greenhouses, home occupations, storage sheds, etc. Special Land Uses include, among other, campgrounds, confined animal feeding, migrant housing, natural resource removal, private zoos, kennels, and rescue facilities.

Specialized agricultural uses such as farm markets, wineries, crop mazes, U-pick operations, hay rides, petting farms, etc. are also recommended uses by right to support value-added farm activities. Sale of non-farm products in a limited fashion may also be considered. These uses should be regulated as special land uses within the AG Agricultural zoning district.

The current AG Agricultural zoning district requires a minimum lot size of one acre with a maximum lot area of five acres for non-agricultural single-family dwellings. The required lot width is 250 feet. Sliding scale zoning is utilized within the AG Agricultural District to limit the number of land divisions. In order to preserve the integrity of the Agricultural Preservation District, Planned Unit Development (PUDs) are not allowed in the AG Agricultural District.

Country Residential

The Country Residential land use category provides a transition between long-term agricultural lands and primarily rural residential areas. These uses are located largely west of the Agricultural Preservation area, and contains a significant number of active farms in these areas and those protected by the PA 116 farmland and open space preservation program.

This category is intended to be zoned R-1 Rural residential. Farming and single-family dwellings are permitted by right along with permitted accessory uses. Special land uses include, nature center, camps and campgrounds, day care facilities, natural resource removal, etc. The R-1 district requires a maximum lot size of 2.5 acres and a minimum lot width of 250 feet.

It is recommended by the master plan to add a maximum lot size for non-farm dwellings in the R-1 district, similar to the 5-acre cap used in the AG district. This is supported by community feedback. This will encourage new residential developments to take up less agricultural land, leaving larger continuous blocks of the "Country Residential" area available for active farms that still exist.

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are encouraged in the R-1 District, provided the density does not exceed 2.5 units per acre. To allow for creative design and the preservation of open space, the Township Board may approve a reduction in standard lot sizes and widths within a PUD.

Low-Density Residential

The Low-Density Residential land use category is intended for housing densities higher than Country Residential. This land use is located primarily along the western edge of the Township and surrounding settlement of Freeport in the southeastern corner of the Township.

This use is intended to be regulated by the R-2, Low Density Residential Zoning District. The primary use permitted by right includes single-family dwellings and farming along with accessory uses like home occupations, private gardens, greenhouses etc. Special land uses include camps and campgrounds, golf courses, country clubs, day care facilities, value-added farm uses like wineries, bakeries, wedding barns, etc.

The minimum lot area in this district is 2 acres with a minimum lot width of 200 feet. While lot sizes and widths do not vary significantly from R-1, this area does anticipate lot sizes, widths, and densities that provide a more suburban, non-farm character. In addition, PUDs are permitted in the R-2 district, and provide an opportunity for smaller lot sizes while retaining densities that will not exceed two units per acre.

Neighborhood Residential

The Neighborhood Residential land use category recognizes the settlement of Alto and the surrounding area that is or can be served by public sewer. The purpose of this land use category is to preserve the character of the settlement of Alto where residential, commercial and public land uses exist in a village-like setting. It anticipates the highest residential densities outside of the High-Density Residential future land use. Development in this area may take a village form as found currently in Alto, or an urban/suburban form. Pedestrian access is a key element, as well as nearby availability of commercial uses and public facilities such as the elementary school and the post office.

The Neighborhood Residential area is intended to be zoned R-3 Urban Residential which allows both single-family and two-family dwellings by right along with accessory uses like home occupations, personal pet facilities, storage sheds, etc. Special land uses include, adult foster care facilities, day care facilities, etc. The minimum lot size in the R-3 district is 30,000 square feet (10,000 square feet with sewer) with a lot width of 120 feet (70 feet with sewer). PUDs are permitted to provide opportunities for mixed use developments. A combination of residential, commercial, and recreational uses can provide an extension of the village fabric established within Alto.

High-Density Residential

The High-Density Residential land use category has been expanded to include both multi-family developments and manufactured housing communities in the 2026 Master Plan update due to sewer limitations. This land use category includes the area where the highest density development (Alto Meadows) currently exists. It is intended to provide areas with attached condominiums, apartments, townhouses, and manufactured home parks. Areas designated for this use must have existing or

planned access to either public or private water and sewer systems. This use explicitly excluded any properties strictly reserved for Agricultural Preservation.

This use is intended to be regulated by the R-4 Multifamily Residential and R-5 Manufactured Housing Community Zoning Districts. Permitted uses include attached single-family dwellings, multifamily residential complexes, apartments, condominiums, manufacture homes on individually platted lots, and state licensed manufactured housing communities. The maximum density is recommended from 6-8 units per acre depending on the capability of shared utility infrastructure. To preserve Bowne Township's rural character, developments within this classification must permanently reserve a minimum of 15% of the site area as dedicated open space. All projects excluding the internal layouts of manufactured homes regulated by the Michigan Manufactured Housing Commission must undergo site plan review process to ensure appropriate landscaping, screening, etc. Special land uses and site development regulations are contingent upon the individual zoning districts.

Central Business District

Located within the settlement of Alto, the Central Business District land use provides retail and service uses to Township residents, as well as public uses like parks, library and the post office. Overtime these uses may convert to commercial business if newer facilities are located elsewhere. Several locations along Bancroft were reassigned from this classification to "Neighborhood Residential" to preserve existing single-family dwellings and alleviate home insurance challenges for current homeowners in the area.

Uses in this category are regulated by the C-1, Commercial Zoning District, which allows a wide range of retail and personal service uses. A key recommendation from the 2006 plan is carried over to allow outdoor dining to enhance the village character. Special land uses include, health service clinics, upper-floor dwellings, mixed use developments, etc. There are no minimum lot area or width requirements within the C-1 district.

General Commercial

The General Commercial land use category provides for commercial uses that serve both residents and visitors passing through the Township. The General Commercial land use area is located primarily along Alden Nash (M-50) approximately one-quarter mile north and south of 64th Street, to a depth of approximately 600 feet.

This land use is regulated by the C-2, Commercial Zoning District. A wide range of retail and services uses are permitted such as, convenience stores, banks, vehicle sales, automotive service stations, etc. Special land uses include, vehicle repair establishments, drive-in restaurants, kennels, contractors' yards, etc. The minimum lot area in the C-2 district is 30,000 square feet (10,000 square feet with sewer) and a minimum lot width of 115 feet (70 feet with sewer).

Industrial

This land use category includes the only existing industrial use occupied by Magna Corporation and is served by public sanitary sewer. Areas planned for this use are located just south of settlement of Alto, where parcels are easily access by M-50 or 60th Street.

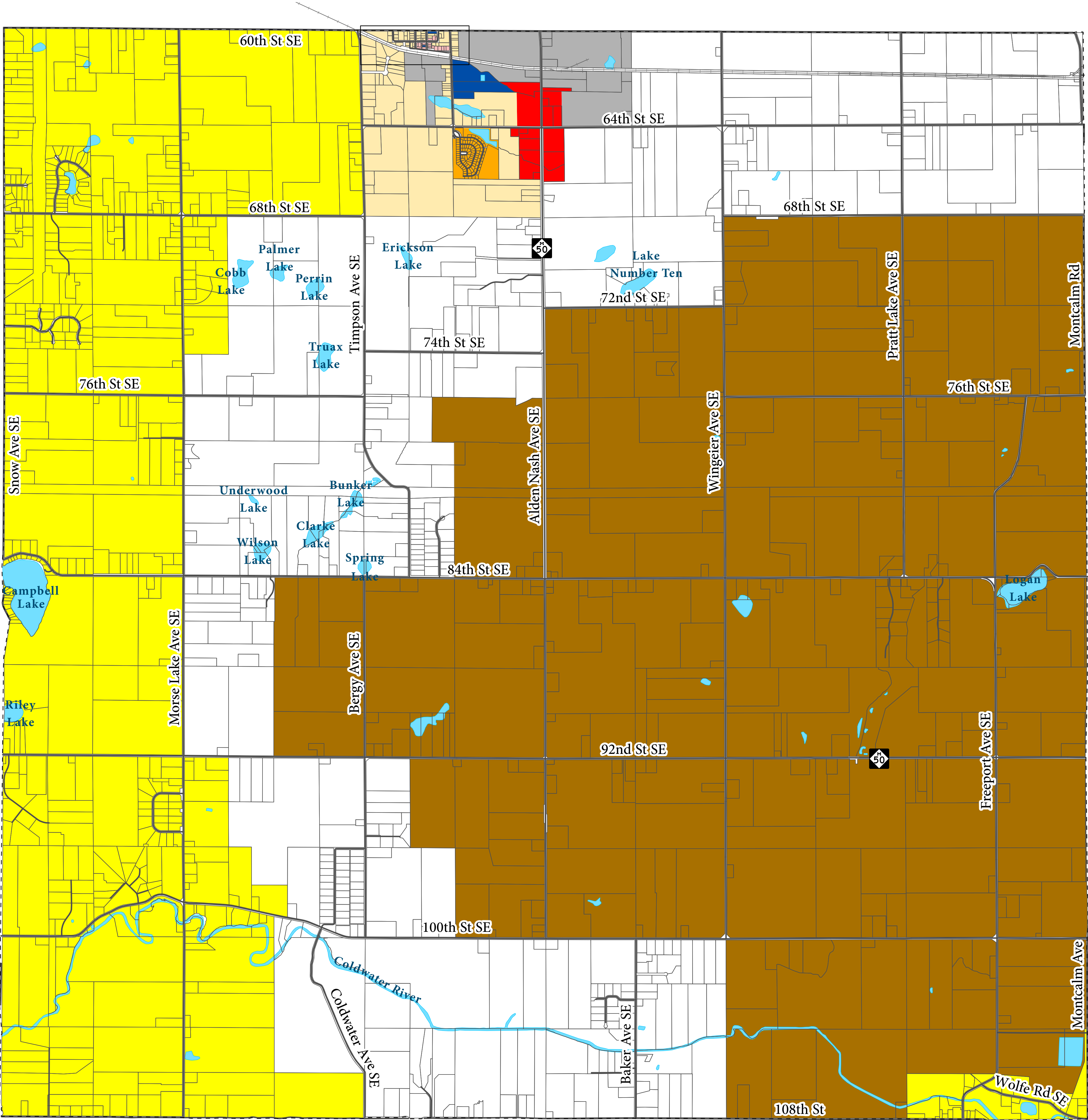
Industrial uses in the Township are regulated by the IND, Industrial Zoning District which includes, contractors' yards, distribution centers, equipment repair, greenhouses, manufacturing, machine shops, etc. Special land uses include, junk and salvage yards, and multiple uses of buildings. A recommendation of the Master Plan is to amend the Industrial zoning district to allow sales, and rentals; and storage and self-storage operations, to allow uses that already exist within the Industrial

district. The minimum lot area in this district is 40,000 square feet (10,000 square feet with sewer) and minimum lot width is 130 feet.

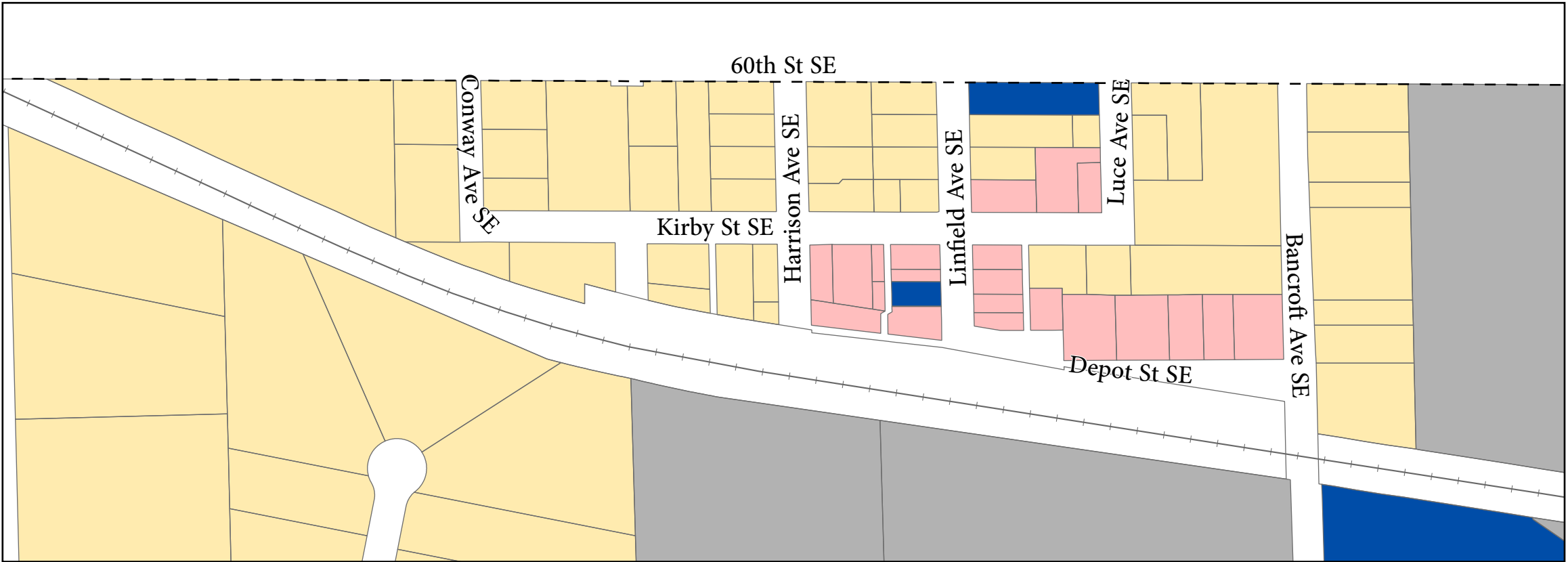
Public

This land use category designates areas specifically intended to be utilized for public purposes for the benefit of the entire community. This classification ensure that land is set aside for essential community facilities and recreational spaces. This reflects existing public uses such as government buildings, schools, cemeteries, and parks that are likely to remain as public uses for the foreseeable future.

Draft Future Land Use



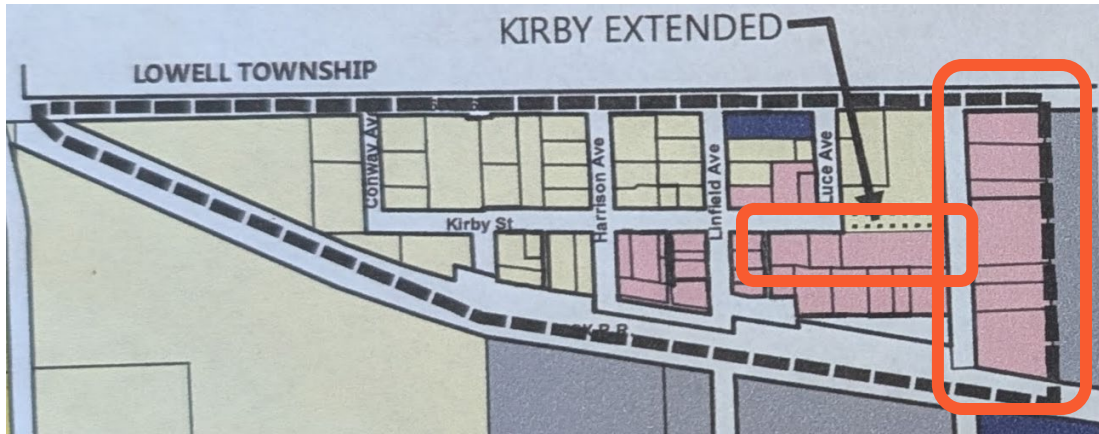
- Legend**
- Agricultural Preservation
 - Country Residential
 - Neighborhood Residential
 - Low-Density Residential
 - High-Density Residential
 - Central Business District
 - General Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Public



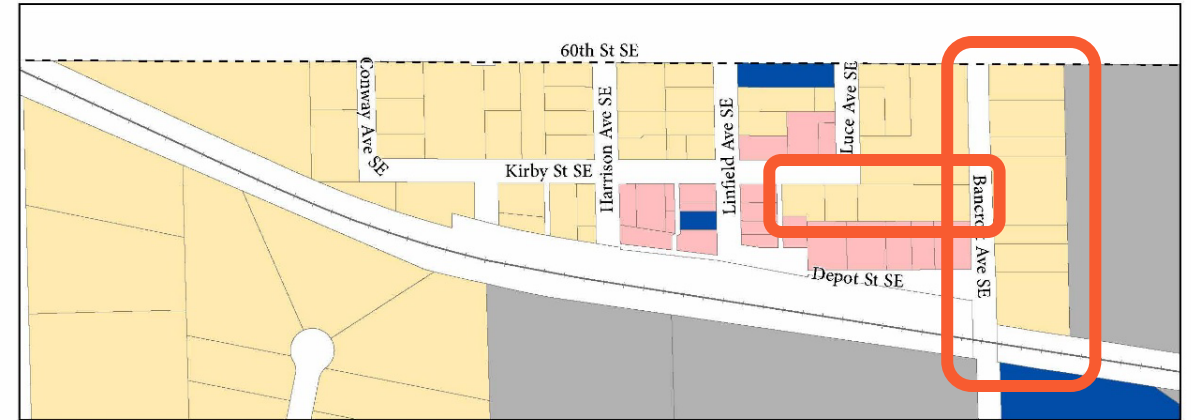
Bowne Township Master Plan Update

Future Land Use Changes

Before



After

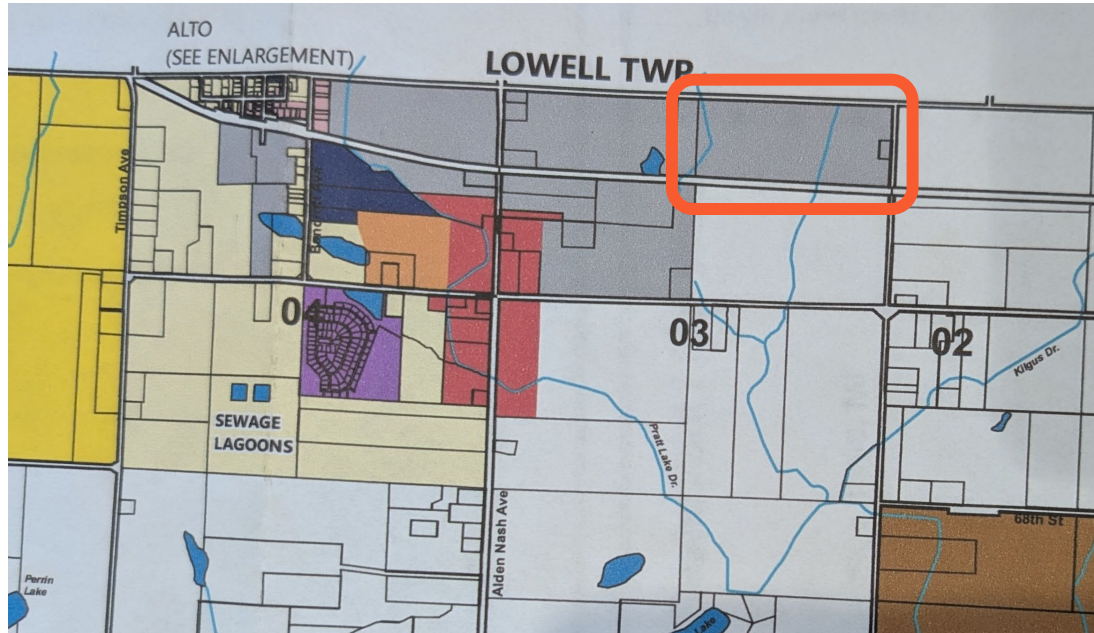


Legend

-  Agricultural Preservation
-  Country Residential
-  Neighborhood Residential
-  Low-Density Residential
-  High-Density Residential
-  Central Business District
-  General Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Public

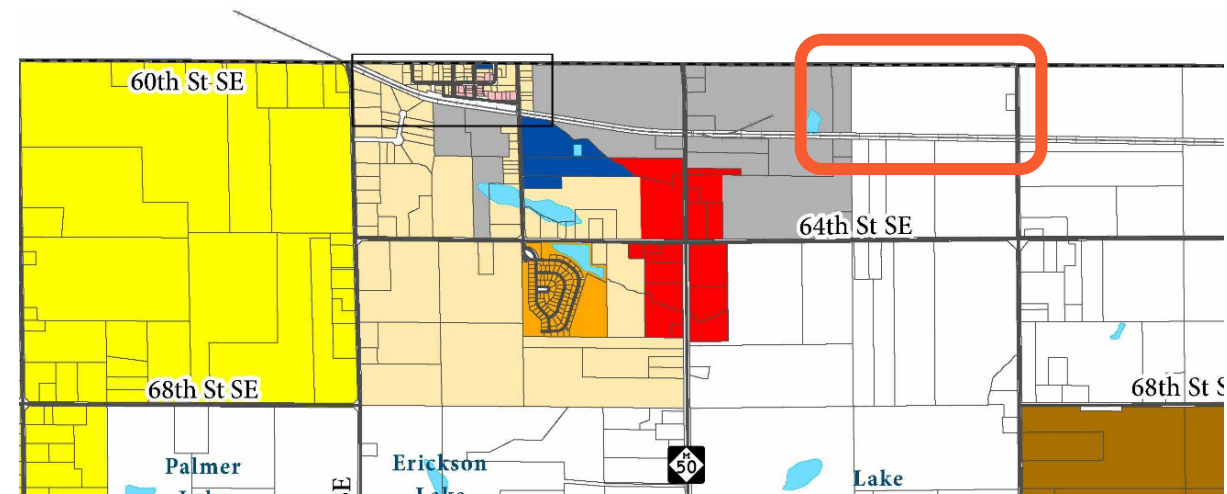
Residential properties on Bancroft were changed from Central Businesses District to Neighborhood Residential.

Before



The industrial property east of Alto Gas was changed to Country Residential as it is currently used for Agricultural Purposes.

After



Legend

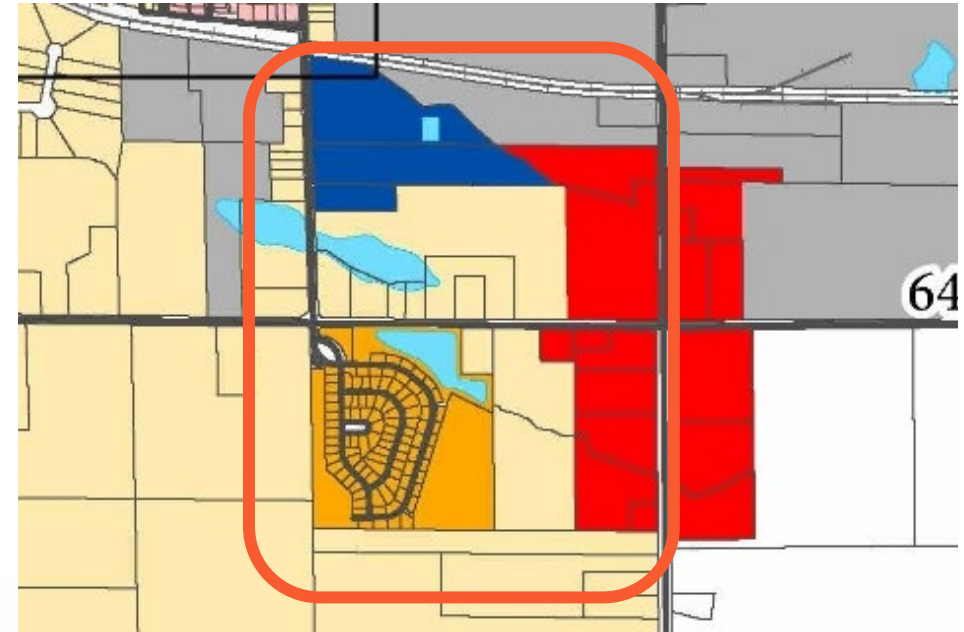
- Agricultural Preservation
- Country Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Low-Density Residential
- High-Density Residential
- Central Business District
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Public

Before



Manufactured Housing Community was merged with High-Density Residential and limited to the existing Alto Meadows development. High Density Residential north of Alto Meadows was moved to Neighborhood Residential due to sewer capacity limitations.

After



Legend

- Agricultural Preservation
- Country Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Low-Density Residential
- High-Density Residential
- Central Business District
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Public