



# Comprehensive Plan 2020

City of Alpena, Michigan



**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 2020-07  
BY THE ALPENA CITY COUNCIL  
City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan**

WHEREAS: The City of Alpena, Alpena County, Michigan established a Planning Commission under State of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, and;

WHEREAS: The City of Alpena Planning Commission is required by Section 31 of P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended, to make and approve a comprehensive plan as a guide for the development within the City, and;

WHEREAS: The City retained the services of Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) as its consultant to assist the Planning Commission in preparing this plan, and;

WHEREAS: The City of Alpena Planning Commission, in accordance with Section 39(2) of the Act, notified all required entities of the intent to develop a plan and, in accordance with Section 41(2) of the Act, distributed the final draft to adjacent communities, the Alpena County Planning Commission, and transit agencies for review and comment, and;

WHEREAS: The plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on October 13, 2020, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being published in the Alpena News on September 21, 2020, in accordance with Section 43(1) of the Act;

WHEREAS: The City of Alpena Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed plan, considered public comment, and adopted the proposed plan by resolution on October 13, 2020, and;

WHEREAS: The Alpena City Council has, by resolution 2007-08, asserted the right to approve or reject the plan;

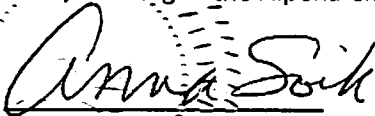
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

The content of this document, together with all maps attached to and contained herein are hereby adopted by the Alpena City Council as the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan on this 19th day of October, 2020.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Johnson Second: Councilmember Mitchell  
Ayes: Councilmember Nowak, Mayor Waligora, Councilmember Hess, Mayor Pro Tem Johnson, and Councilmember Mitchell.  
Nays: None.  
Absent: None.

**Certification**

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted at the October 19, 2020, meeting of the Alpena City Council.



City of Alpena Clerk



**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
BY THE CITY OF ALPENA PLANNING COMMISSION  
City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan**

WHEREAS: The City of Alpena, Alpena County, Michigan established a Planning Commission under State of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, and;

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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

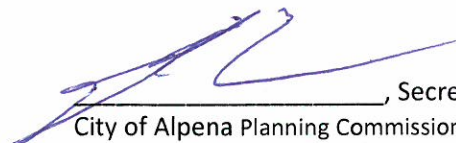
The content of this document, together with all maps attached to and contained herein are hereby adopted by the City of Alpena Planning Commission as the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan on this 13th day of October, 2020.

Motion: made by Wojda                      Second: by Lewis  
Ayes: Gilmore, VanWagoner, Sabourin, Lewis, Wojda, Kirschner  
Nays: none  
Absent: Boboltz, Austin

**Certification**

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted at the October 13, 2020, meeting of the City of Alpena Planning Commission.

  
Paul Sabourin, Chair  
City of Alpena Planning Commission

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary  
City of Alpena Planning Commission

# CITY OF ALPENA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## City of Alpena

Alpena County, Michigan

## City Council

Mayor Matt Waligora  
Mayor Pro-Tem Cindy Johnson  
Councilman Mike Nowak  
Councilwoman Amber Hess  
Councilman Danny Mitchell

## City of Alpena Planning Commission

Paul Sabourin, Chair  
Randy Boboltz, Vice-Chair  
Wayne Lewis, Secretary  
Blake Austin  
Steve Gilmore  
Gretchen Kirschner  
Clayton VanWagoner  
Matthew Wojda

Assisted by:

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments  
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P. O. Box 457  
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Adopted:

Planning Commission: October 13, 2020  
City Council: October 19, 2020





**CITY OF ALPENA  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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2018 Online Public Input Survey Results available online at:

[www.alpena.mi.us/departments/planning](http://www.alpena.mi.us/departments/planning)



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

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The purpose of the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan is to provide guidelines for future development within the community, while protecting existing development areas such as residential, recreational, institutional, commercial and industrial. The intention is to strike a balance between development and protecting key natural resources and small town character. The plan further provides a vision for the future, as expressed by the citizens of the community, and looks at a 10 to 20 year planning horizon.

The City of Alpena derives its authority to prepare a Comprehensive Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. As stated in the act, "*A planning commission shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction.....*"

The Comprehensive Plan serves many functions:

- The Plan is a general statement of the City's goals and objectives. It provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's vision for the future.
- The Plan is a guide for day to day decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission and City Council in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements and other matters relating to land use and development.
- The Plan provides for a stable, long-term decision-making basis to address desired housing, commercial and industrial land uses.
- The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, P.A. 110 of 2006 requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. It is important to note that the Comprehensive Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other City Ordinances. Zoning is only one of the many legal devices used to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private development.
- Finally, the Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the City's direction for the future.

In summation, the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan is an officially adopted document that sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It is a long range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the City of Alpena. The intent is to foster orderly change in a deliberate and responsible manner. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made. The City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan shall serve as the City's official Master Plan as authorized by P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended.

## The Planning Process

This plan presents background information on social and economic data, natural resources, existing community services and facilities, and existing land uses. The background information is used to identify important characteristics, changes and trends within the City of Alpena and county.

The City of Alpena has used various forms of public input over the three Comprehensive Plan updates. In September of 2006, the Planning Commission sponsored a community-wide visioning workshop. As a follow-up to the community-wide session, a series of ten small focus sessions were held in the community. With guidance from the community input effort, the Planning Commission established goals and objectives. Draft goals and objectives were distributed for review and comment to City Council, City Departments, residents and businesses. These goals and objectives, along with a series of maps including soils, ownership, existing land use, and zoning, provide the basis for the Future Land Use Map. The future land use map recommends locations for various types of future development within the City. For the 2013 update, the City published an online survey to gather input which resulted in 148 responses. From these survey results, goals and objectives were reviewed and modified. In 2018, the City published an online survey to gather input. The survey resulted in 208 responses, which were used to guide the Planning Commission's review and modification of the goals and objectives.

After the draft Comprehensive Plan was compiled, the Planning Commission distributed to local communities, utilities and railroads. After the required coordination effort, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and adopted the plan. The plan was transmitted to the City Council and adopted by the Council.

## Location and Regional Setting

The City of Alpena is located in the eastern side of Alpena County and borders Lake Huron (Figure 1.1). The County is located in the northeastern lower peninsula of Michigan. The City is surrounded by Alpena Township, the largest township in Alpena County.

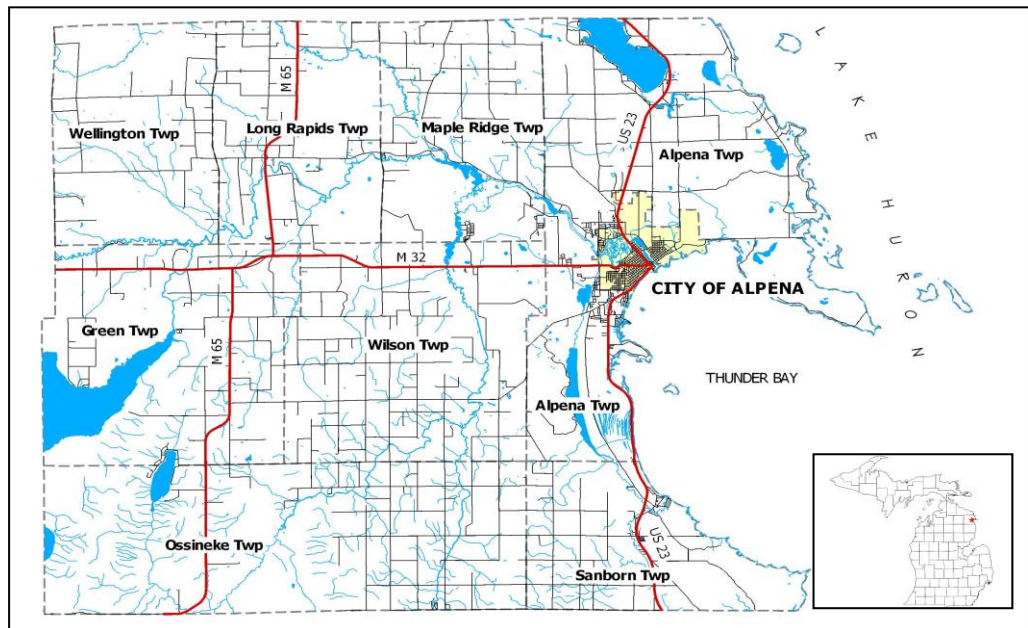


Figure 1.1 Location Map

## Brief History<sup>1</sup>

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In the spring of 1840, the Surveyor General gave contracts to survey the area originally named "Anamakee" after a Chippewa Chief who signed the Treaty of 1826 which was negotiated by Henry R. Schoolcraft. The word "Anamakee" means "Thunder" and corresponds to the French "Anse du Tonners" ("Bay of Thunder") which appears on a French map dated 1688. In September 1844, the government lands in Alpena were offered by sale by the United States. Commercial fishing attracted the first European/American settlers to the area in the mid-1830s. Lumbering was responsible for the early growth and development of the city. The Thunder Bay River was the basic transportation from logging sites to sawmills located in the city and its port on Lake Huron. Because the harbor is protected by Thunder Bay it became a commercial fishing center.

In October 1856, after selecting the mouth of the Thunder Bay River, the City founders named their community Fremont as it was the year of the Fremont presidential campaign. They brought with them a Fremont flag to honor the occasion. Late in 1857, a petition was sent to Washington asking for a Post-Office at Fremont. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January the papers arrived establishing a Post-Office. Soon after the operation of the Post Office had commenced, it was found there was another Fremont in the state and that letters went astray. By act of Legislature in February 1859, Fremont was changed to Alpena. Alpena was incorporated as a city in 1871. The population at the time was approximately 3,500.

With the Thunder Bay River, Lake Huron, and the coming of the Detroit and Mackinac Railroad in 1887, Alpena became a hub of transportation. Logging and milling activities flourished. In the early 1900's, companies related to paper production and limestone were formed. The city was laying the foundation of the diversified industries it has today. In 1899, a process for turning limestone into cement was introduced. This innovation led to the formation of the Huron Portland Cement Company and the Besser Manufacturing Company – the largest companies in their field. The addition of the Fletcher Paper Company in 1886 and Abitibi Ltd. in 1955 solidified Alpena as an industrial town. As homes, businesses, schools, and recreation began to develop and thrive, Alpena became established as the “hub” of northeast Michigan.

## The Status of Planning and Zoning

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The City of Alpena Planning Commission is a Mayoral-appointed nine-member commission which has the responsibility to prepare the Comprehensive Plan, guide planning and development in the city, and carry out certain administrative responsibilities of the Zoning Ordinance including site plan review, special land use approval, and the recommendation of zoning amendments. The City of Alpena Zoning Ordinance was adopted on January 18, 2010. There are 23 zoning districts and overlay zones in the City of Alpena.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a seven-member body appointed by the City Council. The ZBA is responsible for Zoning Ordinance interpretation, the granting of variances, and hearing and deciding appeals of decisions of the Building Official or other administrative officials in carrying out or enforcing provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

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<sup>1</sup> Information provided by George N. Fletcher Public Library, the Alpena Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, 1925 Alpena Home Coming and Visitor's Bureau, and the Alpena County Master Plan.



The City employs a full-time Planning and Development Director, who is responsible for city planning functions, assists the Planning Commission, coordinates the development and maintenance of the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The City Building Official and Building Inspector report directly to the City Manager and enforce the building code and administer the Zoning Ordinance.

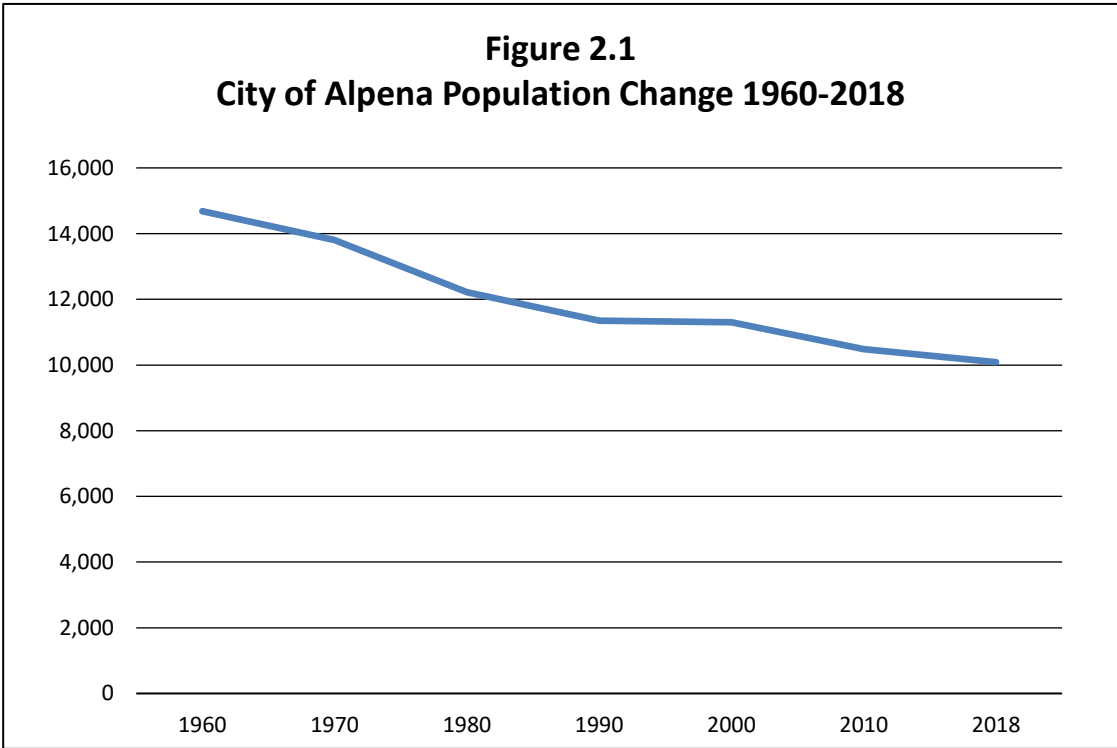
# Chapter 2

## Demographics and Housing

### Population

Although the population in the State of Michigan rose steadily from 9.2 million in 1980 to nearly 10 million in 2018, it declined by 55,183 individuals (-0.6%) from 2000-2010. During this same time period, Alpena County saw a general decrease (11.5%) in population (**Table 2.1**). The City of Alpena has also recorded a steady decline in population from 14,682 in 1960 to 10,086 individuals in 2018 (**Figure 2.1**). From 2010-2018, the City lost 3.8% of its population, which is a slower rate of decline than previous decades.

In 1960, the population of Alpena County was 28,556, and over half of those persons resided within the City of Alpena. By 2000, the County’s population had grown to 31,314, but the City of Alpena comprised only 36% of the County’s population. The City of Alpena saw its largest decrease in population (11.5%) in the 1970’s, with the rate of decline slowing to approximately seven percent in the 1980’s then to 0.4% in the 1990’s. In the 2000’s, the population decline increased to 7.3% and then declined to 3.8% from 2010-2018. While the City lost its population during 2010-2018, it still comprises 35% of the County’s population due to population declines in other areas in the County.



**Table 2.1  
Population 1980-2018**

| Municipality          | 1980 Pop.     | 1990 Pop.     | Percent Change '80-'90 | 2000 Pop.     | Percent Change '90-'00 | 2010 Pop.     | Percent Change '00 – '10 | 2018 Pop.     | Percent Change '10 – '18 | Percent Change '80 – '18 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>City of Alpena</b> | <b>12,214</b> | <b>11,354</b> | <b>-7.0%</b>           | <b>11,304</b> | <b>-0.4%</b>           | <b>10,483</b> | <b>-7.3%</b>             | <b>10,086</b> | <b>-3.8%</b>             | <b>-17.4%</b>            |
| Alpena Twp            | 10,152        | 9,602         | -5.4%                  | 9,788         | 1.9%                   | 9,060         | -7.4%                    | 8,785         | -3.0%                    | -13.5%                   |
| Green Twp             | 1,083         | 1,095         | 1.1%                   | 1,205         | 10.0%                  | 1,228         | 1.9%                     | 1,117         | -9.0%                    | 3.1%                     |
| Long Rapids Twp       | 1,006         | 1,021         | 1.5%                   | 1,019         | -0.2%                  | 1,010         | -0.9%                    | 925           | -8.4%                    | -8.1%                    |
| Maple Ridge Twp       | 1,572         | 1,514         | -3.7%                  | 1,715         | 13.3%                  | 1,690         | -1.5%                    | 1,714         | 1.4%                     | 9.0%                     |
| Ossineke Twp          | 1,607         | 1,654         | 2.8%                   | 1,761         | 6.5%                   | 1,675         | -4.9%                    | 1,839         | 9.8%                     | 14.4%                    |
| Sanborn Twp           | 2,297         | 2,196         | -4.4%                  | 2,152         | -2.0%                  | 2,116         | -1.7%                    | 2,026         | -4.3%                    | -11.8%                   |
| Wellington Twp        | 286           | 269           | -5.9%                  | 296           | 10.0%                  | 307           | 3.7%                     | 258           | -16.0%                   | -9.8%                    |
| Wilson Twp            | 2,098         | 1,902         | -9.3%                  | 2,074         | 9.0%                   | 2,029         | -2.2%                    | 1,862         | -8.2%                    | -11.2%                   |
| Alpena County         | 32,315        | 30,605        | -5.3%                  | 31,314        | 2.3%                   | 29,598        | -5.5%                    | 28,612        | -3.3%                    | -11.5%                   |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

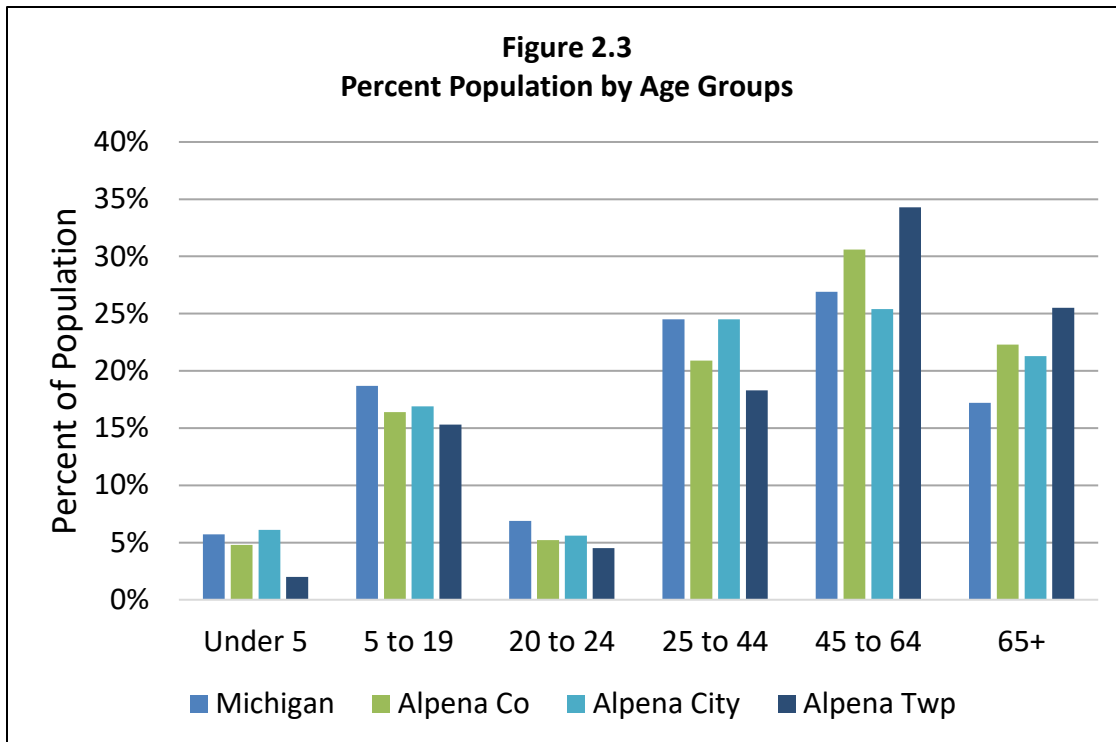
## Age Distribution

Over the last decade, the population of Michigan has grown older by 5.3 years on average. The median age for residents in the City of Alpena was 42.2 years, which is a slight decrease from 2010 (0.3 years). The County's median age is 47.8 (an increase of 2.2 years), and the State's median age is 39.8 years (**Table 2.2**). Reflective of the increasing age of Michigan residents is that adults aged 25 to 44 are no longer the largest segment of the population at the City, County or State levels (**Figure 2.3**). Adults aged 45 to 64 years now make up the largest segment of the population for City, County, and State (25.4%, 30.6% and 26.9% of the respective populations). Persons aged 25 to 44 years make up 24.5% of the City's and State's population, while in Alpena County the figures are significantly lower (20.9%). These figures illustrate the demographic trend of an aging population where retirees and young people are leaving the area (**Figure 2.5**).

Approximately 17.2% of the State's population was 65 and older in 2018, while a higher percentage of the population in the City of Alpena (21.3%) and Alpena County (22.3%) were 65 and older (**Table 2.2, Figure 2.3**). Nearly 6% of the City's population is aged 85 and older. This population segment experienced a 37.0% increase from 2010-2018 (**Table 2.3**). This population of elderly may be due in part to the presence of nursing homes, senior apartments and assisted living facilities located within the City, which tend to draw clients from outside the City boundaries.

At the other end of the age spectrum are children under the age of five (**Figure 2.4, Table 2.2**). Percentages of this age group are very similar for State (5.7%), County (4.8%) and the City (6.1%). Since the last plan update, the City has seen a 13.0% increase in this age group. The City of Alpena's Comprehensive Plan should take into consideration the needs and interests of all age groups.





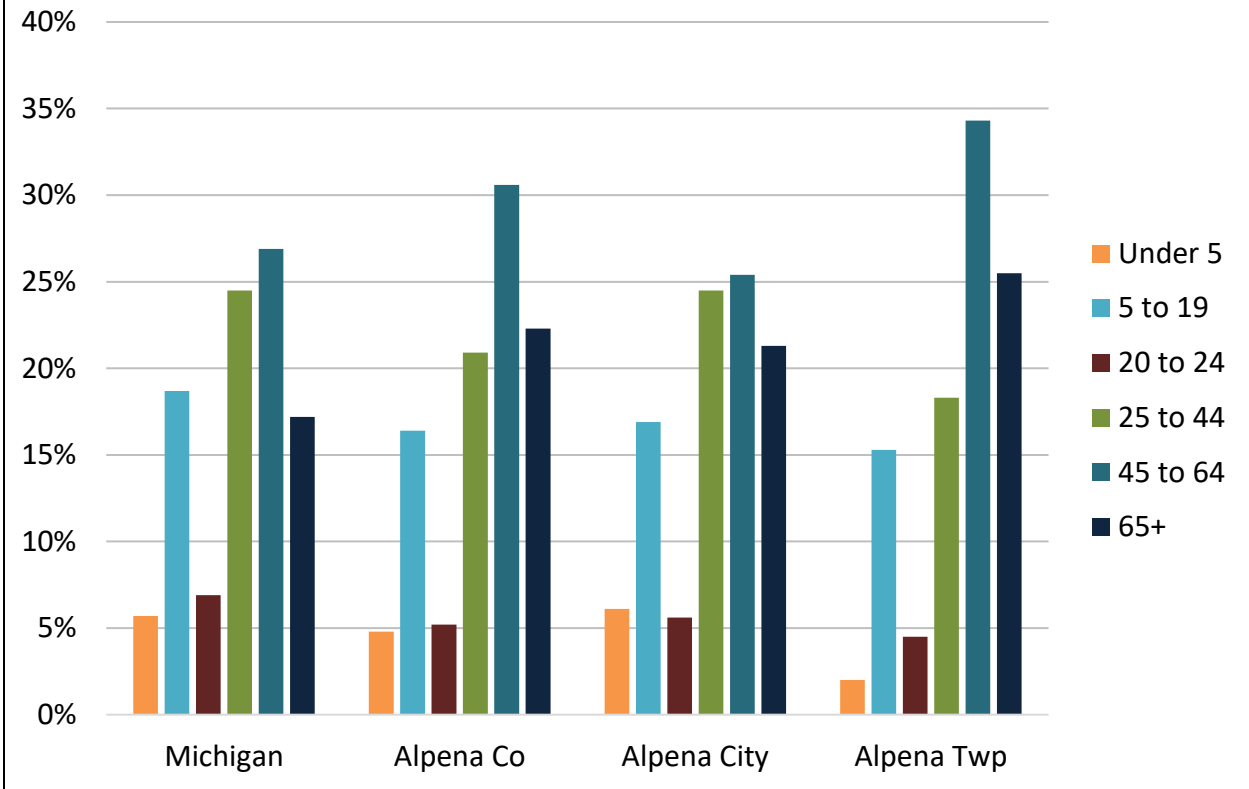
**Table 2.2**  
**Age Distribution 2018**

|                       | < 5 Yrs    | %*         | 5-19 Yrs     | %*          | 20-24 Yrs  | %*         | 25-44 Yrs    | %*          | 45-64 Yrs    | %*          | 65 Yrs & >   | %*          | Median Age  |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>City of Alpena</b> | <b>617</b> | <b>6.1</b> | <b>1,704</b> | <b>16.9</b> | <b>569</b> | <b>5.6</b> | <b>2,484</b> | <b>24.5</b> | <b>2,563</b> | <b>25.4</b> | <b>2,149</b> | <b>21.3</b> | <b>42.2</b> |
| Alpena Twp            | 177        | 2.0        | 1,350        | 15.3        | 397        | 4.5        | 1,612        | 18.3        | 3,011        | 34.3        | 2,238        | 25.5        | 52.6        |
| Green Twp             | 43         | 3.8        | 204          | 18.3        | 35         | 3.1        | 203          | 18.2        | 376          | 33.7        | 256          | 22.9        | 48.9        |
| Long Rapids Twp       | 45         | 4.9        | 86           | 9.3         | 82         | 8.9        | 156          | 16.9        | 365          | 39.4        | 191          | 20.6        | 51.8        |
| Maple Ridge Twp       | 100        | 5.8        | 365          | 21.3        | 50         | 2.9        | 383          | 22.4        | 506          | 29.5        | 310          | 18.2        | 42.9        |
| Ossineke Twp          | 177        | 9.6        | 280          | 15.2        | 89         | 4.8        | 403          | 21.9        | 476          | 25.9        | 414          | 22.6        | 44.2        |
| Sanborn Twp           | 144        | 7.1        | 449          | 22.1        | 100        | 4.9        | 420          | 20.7        | 565          | 28.0        | 348          | 17.2        | 40.3        |
| Wellington Twp        | 7          | 2.7        | 27           | 10.4        | 8          | 3.1        | 41           | 15.9        | 97           | 37.6        | 78           | 30.3        | 54.7        |
| Wilson Twp            | 64         | 3.4        | 183          | 12.2        | 146        | 7.8        | 261          | 14.0        | 752          | 40.4        | 411          | 22.1        | 51.5        |
| Alpena Co             | 1,374      | 4.8        | 4,693        | 16.4        | 1,476      | 5.2        | 5,963        | 20.9        | 8,711        | 30.6        | 6,395        | 22.3        | 47.8        |
| Michigan              | 5.7%       |            | 18.7%        |             | 6.9%       |            | 24.5%        |             | 26.9%        |             | 17.2%        |             | 39.8        |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

\*Figure shows the percentage each age grouping represents of the local unit's total population.

**Figure 2.4  
Age Distribution**

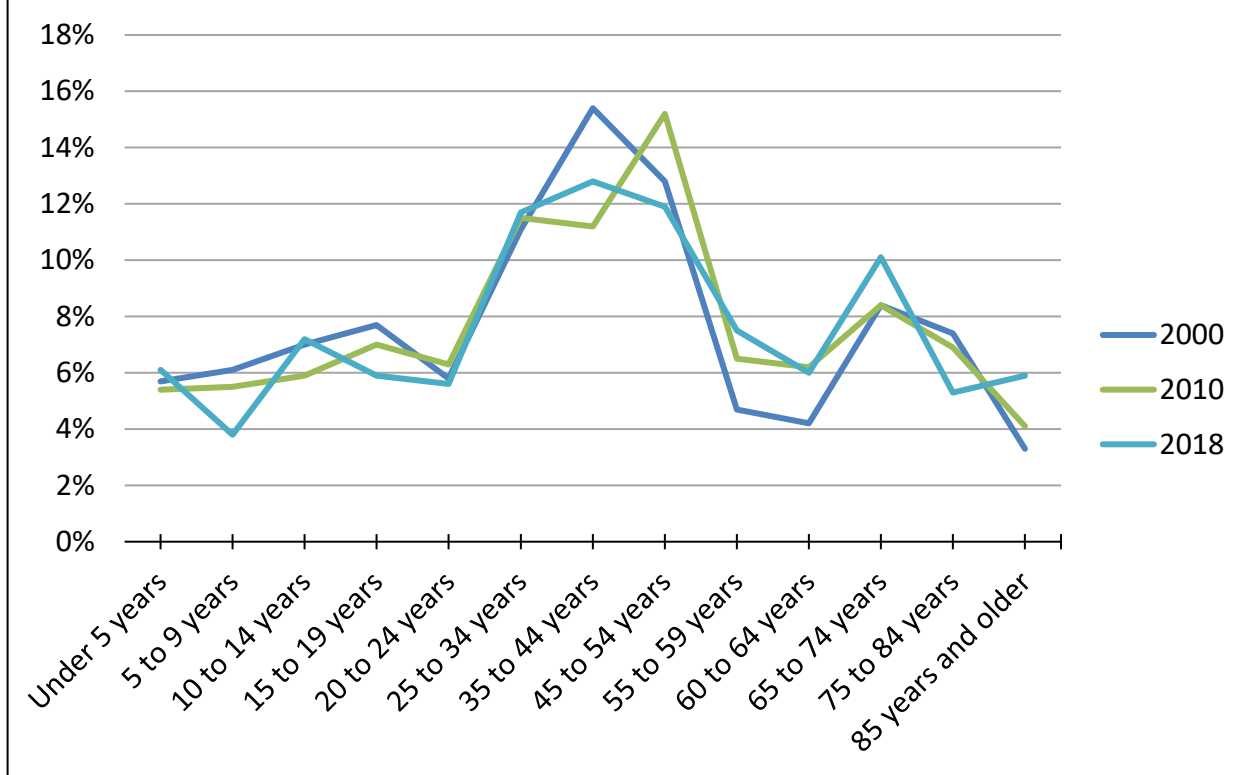


**Table 2.3  
Population Change by Age: City of Alpena**

|                         | 2010          |             | 2018          |             | Percent Change<br>2010-2018 |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Total Population</b> | <b>10,483</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>10,086</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>-3.8%</b>                |
| Under 5 years           | 561           | 5.4%        | 617           | 6.1%        | 10.0%                       |
| 5 to 9 years            | 576           | 5.5%        | 381           | 3.8%        | -33.9%                      |
| 10 to 14 years          | 616           | 5.9%        | 726           | 7.2%        | 17.9%                       |
| 15 to 19 years          | 733           | 7.0%        | 597           | 5.9%        | -18.6%                      |
| 20 to 24 years          | 664           | 6.3%        | 569           | 5.6%        | -14.3%                      |
| 25 to 34 years          | 1,208         | 11.5%       | 1,188         | 11.7%       | -1.7%                       |
| 35 to 44 years          | 1,170         | 11.2%       | 1,296         | 12.8%       | 10.8%                       |
| 45 to 54 years          | 1,592         | 15.2%       | 1,206         | 11.9%       | -24.2%                      |
| 55 to 59 years          | 684           | 6.5%        | 754           | 7.5%        | 10.2%                       |
| 60 to 64 years          | 645           | 6.2%        | 603           | 6.0%        | -6.5%                       |
| 65 to 74 years          | 876           | 8.4%        | 1,023         | 10.1%       | 16.8%                       |
| 75 to 84 years          | 726           | 6.9%        | 534           | 5.3%        | -26.4%                      |
| 85 years and older      | 432           | 4.1%        | 592           | 5.9%        | 37.0%                       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

**Figure 2.5  
Population Change by Age**



## Disability Status

Data relating to disabled status is estimated by the American Community Survey (ACS)<sup>1</sup> and is based on a self-reported sample. Over 18.3% of Alpena County’s population had a disability of some kind in 2018 (**Table 2.4**). Over half of the County’s population aged 18-64 have some type of disability with cognitive disabilities being the most common (1,376 individuals) (**Table 2.5**). The County’s population aged 65 and older saw a 12.2% increase in disabilities between 2011 and 2018 with hearing (1,160 individuals) and ambulatory difficulties (1,320 individuals) being the most common. This increase in disabilities may partly be attributed to the presence of several nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the City.

In the 18-64 age group, 2,798 individuals with reported disabilities were cognitive, self-care or independent living disabilities (**Table 2.5**). Cognitive, self-care or independent living disabilities comprise only 1,767 individuals in the 65 years and over population. However, individuals aged 65 years and over with reported ambulatory and hearing disabilities was higher than individuals aged 18-64 years (2,486 and 1,898 individuals, respectively). Nonetheless, cognitive, physical, and self-care limitations greatly influence a person’s mobility, which makes it difficult for this segment of the population to access community services and take advantage of recreational/social opportunities. These factors should be taken into consideration when planning for community facilities, such as public transit and recreation projects.

<sup>1</sup> The ACS is an ongoing statistical survey sent to approximately 250,000 addresses across the US monthly.



**Table 2.4**  
**Alpena County**  
**Disability Status of the Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population**

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Total with a disability                                 | 18.3% |
| Under 18 years with a disability (of total disabled)    | 5.3%  |
| 18 to 64 years with a disability (of total disabled)    | 50.7% |
| 65 years and over with a disability (of total disabled) | 44.0% |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)                       |       |

**Table 2.5**  
**Disability Status in Alpena County**

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Population under 5 years              |       |
| With a hearing difficulty             | 15    |
| With a vision difficulty              | 15    |
| Population 5-17 years                 |       |
| With a hearing difficulty             | 11    |
| With a vision difficulty              | 31    |
| Population 18-64 years                |       |
| With a hearing difficulty             | 612   |
| With a vision difficulty              | 430   |
| With a cognitive difficulty           | 1,376 |
| With an ambulatory difficulty         | 1,286 |
| With a self-care difficulty           | 478   |
| With an independent living difficulty | 944   |
| Population 65+ years                  |       |
| With a hearing difficulty             | 1,160 |
| With a vision difficulty              | 394   |
| With a cognitive difficulty           | 516   |
| With an ambulatory difficulty         | 1,320 |
| With a self-care difficulty           | 379   |
| With an independent living difficulty | 872   |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

## Race and Hispanic Origin

There is very little racial or ethnic diversity in the City of Alpena (**Table 2.6**). Less than four percent of the City's and a little over three percent of the County's population belong to a minority group. Although large communities of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians inhabited the Thunder Bay Area prior to the arrival of European settlers, today Native Americans make up 0.4% of the City of Alpena's population. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin make up 2.3% of the City's and 1.3% of the County's populations.

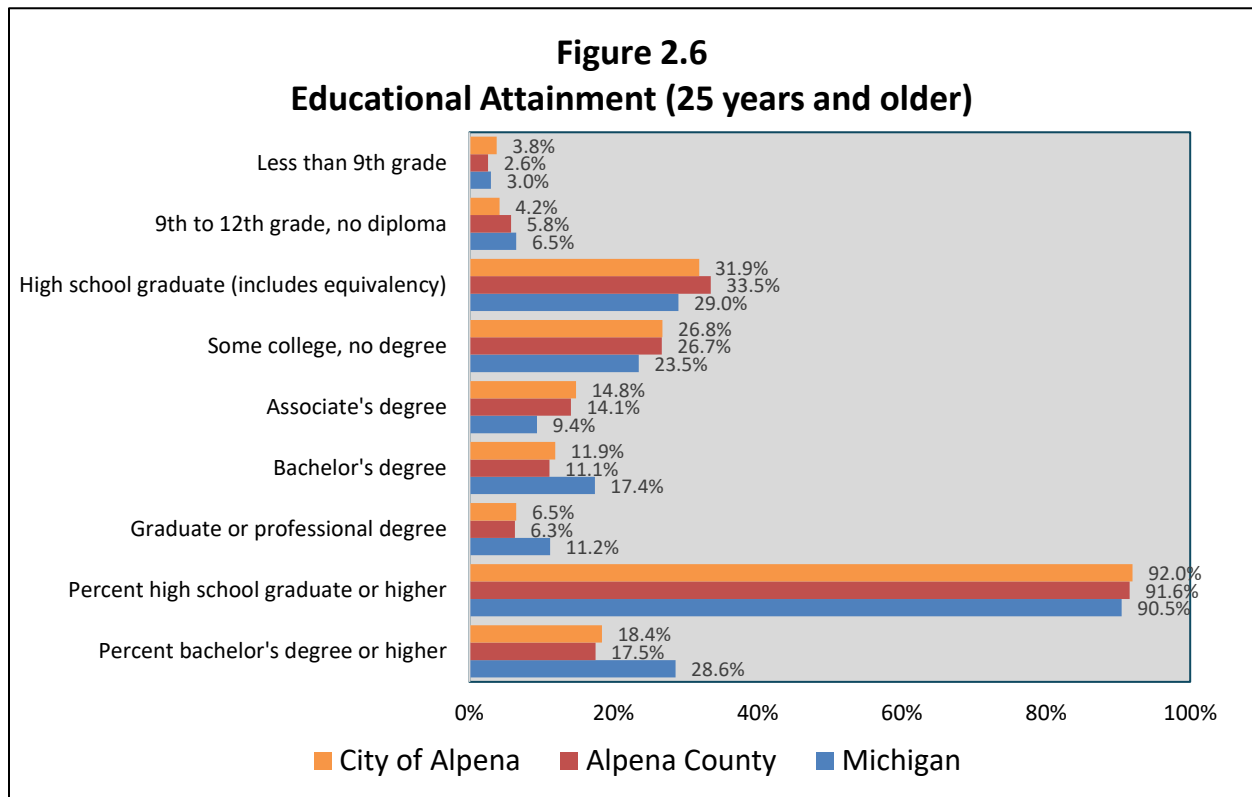
**Table 2.6  
Population by Race and Hispanic Origin - 2018**

| Race or Hispanic Origin              | City of Alpena |             | Alpena County |             | Michigan    |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| White                                | 9,706          | 96.2%       | 27,720        | 96.9%       | 78.5%       |
| Black/African American               | 111            | 1.1%        | 149           | 0.5%        | 13.8%       |
| American Indian/Alaska Native        | 38             | 0.4%        | 152           | 0.5%        | 0.5%        |
| Asian                                | 59             | 0.6%        | 141           | 0.5%        | 3.1%        |
| Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Island | 0              | 0.0%        | 20            | 0.1%        | 0.1%        |
| Some other race                      | 16             | 0.2%        | 31            | 0.1%        | 1.2%        |
| Two or more races                    | 156            | 1.5%        | 399           | 1.4%        | 2.8%        |
| Hispanic or Latino*                  | 235            | 2.3%        | 382           | 1.3%        | 5.0%        |
| <b>Total Population</b>              | <b>10,086</b>  | <b>100%</b> | <b>28,612</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)  
\*May be of any race

## Educational Attainment

When comparing the number of high school diplomas or associate degrees earned between the State of Michigan, the County, and the City, the differences are small (**Figure 2.6**). The percent of the City’s population with some college (but no degree) and college graduates with associate degrees were considerably higher than the County or the State, partly due to the presence of a large two-year community college located within the City. However, the educational gap increases dramatically for numbers earning bachelor’s degrees and higher, with Alpena County lagging behind both the City and the State. Only 17.4% of Alpena County’s population have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to the City’s 18.4% and the State’s 28.6%. Since the County’s population with a bachelor’s degree has declined over time, it may reflect retirees and college graduates leaving the county.



# Housing Characteristics

Housing characteristics for the City of Alpena and Alpena County are found in **Table 2.7**. Most notably, the County has an increasing but still relatively limited amount of seasonal housing (12.6%), an increase of three percent from 2010. In the City of Alpena, seasonal housing remains almost nonexistent at 2.3%, which is a 76.9% increase from 2010.

In all of the Townships, over 80% of the occupied housing units are owner occupied. This rate was 63.3% in the City for 2018, which is four percent lower than in 2010. Owner vacancy rates and renter vacancy rate are low in the City (0.7% and 5.9% respectively). These figures indicate there is a need for additional owner occupied and renter occupied housing to be built in the City. In order to ensure existing rental properties are maintained, the City of Alpena operates a rental inspection program. Benefits of the program include the maintenance of quality residential rental structures and a leveling of the playing field among landlords.

The types of dwellings available are another important factor in the City’s housing demographics. Single unit homes, duplexes, apartment buildings, and manufactured housing units provide living quarters for a variety of lifestyles and income ranges. **Table 2.8** tabulates the numbers of various types of housing units available in the City and County. The data indicates the City of Alpena has 74.5% of single unit homes (3.2% decline since 2010) compared to 82.6% in Alpena County (1.1% increase since 2010). The City has significantly higher percentages of 2 unit and 3-4 unit homes than Alpena County. The City also has approximately double the percentage of 5-9 unit structures (3.6% vs. 1.9% respectively). These differences are likely reflective of the presence of nursing homes, affordable apartment buildings and assisted living facilities located within the City. The data also indicates the City of Alpena has virtually no manufactured housing units (13 units) compared to Alpena County (1,000 units). Manufactured housing units comprise the largest percentage (6.2%) of housing structures, aside from single unit structures, in Alpena County.

| Municipality          | Total Housing Units | Total Occupied Housing Units | Percent of Owner Occupied | Percent of Renter Occupied | Total Vacant Housing Units | Percent of Seasonal * | Homeowner Vacancy Rate (%) | Renter Vacancy Rate |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>City of Alpena</b> | <b>4,996</b>        | <b>4,507</b>                 | <b>63.3</b>               | <b>36.7</b>                | <b>489</b>                 | <b>2.3</b>            | <b>0.7</b>                 | <b>5.9</b>          |
| Alpena Twp            | 5,224               | 4,227                        | 81.9                      | 18.1                       | 997                        | 9.6                   | 6.0                        | 5.8                 |
| Green Twp             | 843                 | 459                          | 96.9                      | 3.1                        | 384                        | 40.2                  | 5.5                        | 0.0                 |
| Long Rapids Twp       | 660                 | 434                          | 95.4                      | 4.6                        | 226                        | 22.6                  | 0.0                        | 0.0                 |
| Maple Ridge Twp       | 879                 | 661                          | 89.9                      | 10.1                       | 218                        | 16.8                  | 0.0                        | 0.0                 |
| Ossineke Twp          | 1,086               | 680                          | 87.6                      | 12.4                       | 406                        | 31.2                  | 4.9                        | 0.0                 |
| Sanborn Twp           | 1,016               | 763                          | 81.0                      | 19.0                       | 253                        | 17.6                  | 3.3                        | 0.0                 |
| Wellington Twp        | 240                 | 126                          | 84.9                      | 15.1                       | 114                        | 37.9                  | 1.8                        | 0.0                 |
| Wilson Twp            | 1,100               | 860                          | 89.4                      | 10.6                       | 240                        | 13.9                  | 0.0                        | 0.0                 |
| Alpena County         | 16,044              | 12,717                       | 77.5                      | 22.5                       | 3,327                      | 12.6                  | 3.2                        | 5.0                 |

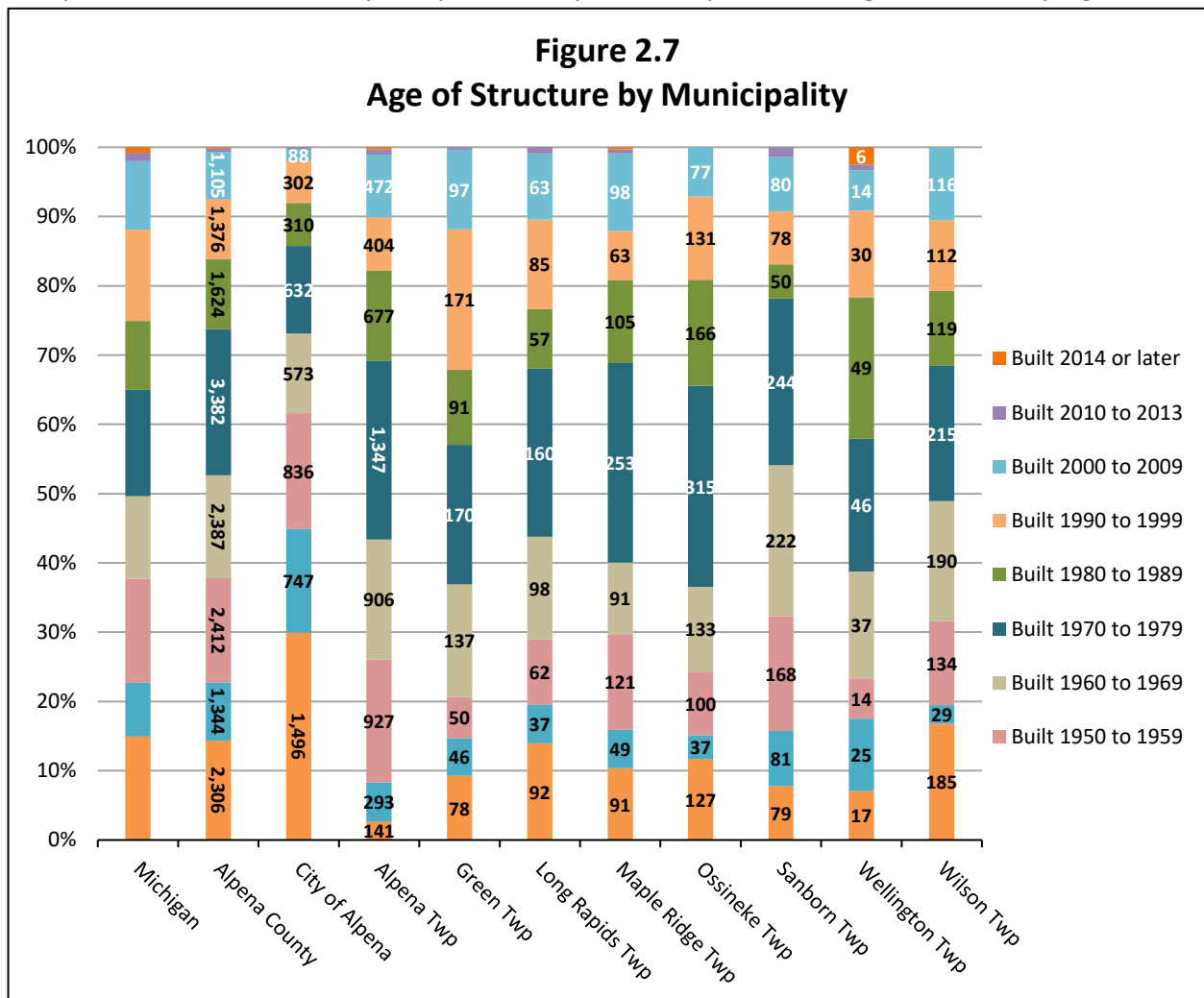
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)  
 \*Figure shows the seasonal housing units as a percentage of the municipality’s total housing units.

**Table 2.8  
Housing Units in Structures**

| Housing Units in Structures        | City of Alpena |             | Alpena County |             |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>         | <b>4,996</b>   | <b>100%</b> | <b>16,044</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Single unit                        | 3,724          | 74.5%       | 13,243        | 82.6%       |
| 2 units                            | 364            | 7.3%        | 474           | 3.0%        |
| 3-4 units                          | 342            | 6.8%        | 447           | 2.8%        |
| 5-9 units                          | 180            | 3.6%        | 303           | 1.9%        |
| 10-19 units                        | 83             | 1.7%        | 182           | 1.1%        |
| 20 or more units                   | 290            | 5.8%        | 395           | 2.5%        |
| Manufactured housing unit or other | 13             | 0.3%        | 1,000         | 6.2%        |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

Information found in **Figure 2.7** compares the year housing units were built by jurisdiction. Generally, housing units older than 50 years may need some repairs and renovations. Data indicates the City of Alpena has the largest percentage of older housing units within the county; 61.6% of the City’s housing stock was built before 1960 (85.7% before 1980). Conversely, 37.7% of the County’s housing stock was built prior to 1960, with only 12.6% built before 1940. By comparison, the State has only 37.4% of its entire housing stock built prior to 1960. Both the City of Alpena and Alpena County have housing rehabilitation programs that



help lower-income homeowners undertake needed repairs on their houses. The City of Alpena has been the recipient of federal housing renovation funds as it continues to support renovation of its older housing stock.

The percentage of household income spent on housing costs is often looked at in order to measure the possible need for additional affordable housing stock. Widely accepted standards hold that for housing to be considered affordable, no more than 30% of a household’s gross income should be spent on housing costs. **Table 2.9** indicates owner occupied housing is generally affordable throughout most of the County. In Alpena County, nearly 23.5% of households pay more than 30% of their Gross Rent as a Percentage of Income (GRAPI) toward housing costs. In the City, 18.4% of households pay more than 30% GRAPI toward housing costs. Comparatively, both of these percentages are lower than the statewide average of 24.0%. As such, over 75% of all owner-occupied households in the City and the County had monthly owner costs less than 30% of their household incomes.

| <b>Table 2.9</b>                                     |                             |                         |                             |                         |                             |                         |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Owner Costs by Percentage of Household Income</b> |                             |                         |                             |                         |                             |                         |
| <b>Municipality</b>                                  | <b>Less than 20%</b>        |                         | <b>20-29.9%</b>             |                         | <b>30% or more</b>          |                         |
|  | <b>Number of Households</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> | <b>Number of Households</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> | <b>Number of Households</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> |
| <b>City of Alpena</b>                                | <b>926</b>                  | <b>56.2</b>             | <b>419</b>                  | <b>25.4</b>             | <b>304</b>                  | <b>18.4</b>             |
| Alpena County  | 2,797                       | 50.8                    | 1,418                       | 25.7                    | 1,293                       | 23.5                    |
| Michigan   | 857,621                     | 51.2                    | 414,436                     | 24.8                    | 401,920                     | 24.0                    |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)

While affordability for those purchasing a home does not seem to be an issue in either the City or the County, there does seem to be a shortage of affordable rental housing (**Table 2.10**). Over 47% of households in the City and 44.1% of households in the County pay over 30% of their income for rent. However, both percentages are lower than the State average of 49.6%. The possibility of constructing more affordable rental housing in the City should be considered in the near future.

| <b>Table 2.10</b>                             |   |                         |                 |                         |                       |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Rent by Percentage of Household Income</b> |   |                         |                 |                         |                       |                         |
| <b>Municipality</b>                           | <b>Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in 2018</b> |                         |                 |                         |                       |                         |
|   | <b>Less than 15%</b>  | <b>Percent of Total</b> | <b>15-29.9%</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> | <b>30% or greater</b> | <b>Percent of Total</b> |
| <b>City of Alpena</b>                         | <b>171</b>  | <b>11.1</b>             | <b>644</b>      | <b>41.7</b>             | <b>729</b>            | <b>47.2</b>             |
| Alpena County                                 | 346   | 13.6                    | 1,080           | 42.4                    | 1,124                 | 44.1                    |
| Michigan                                      | 140,907   | 13.5                    | 385,679         | 36.9                    | 518,287               | 49.6                    |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018)



# Chapter 3

## Economic Profile

### Overview

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Since its early years, the economic base for the City rested on its close proximity to abundant natural resources. Strategically sited at the mouth of the Thunder Bay River and along the shores of Lake Huron, it was the optimum location to process raw materials into a marketable product and then ship the product off to distant markets. Resource based industries, starting in the late 1800's, were the driving force of economic growth. Starting around 1980, large employment-based heavy industry underwent a manpower reduction as modern automated systems displaced the workforce.

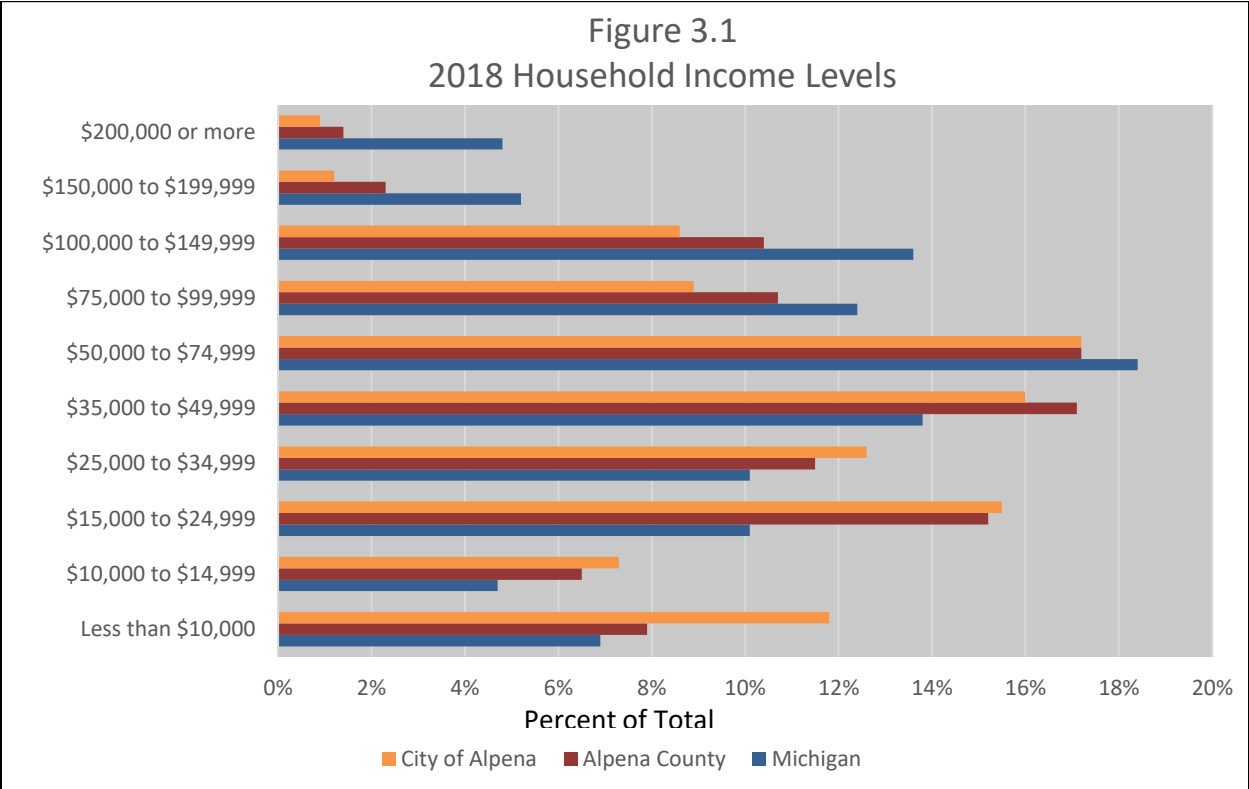
The 1990's saw the community focus on new efforts to diversify the local economy. Today, Alpena serves as the commercial and healthcare hub for a four-county area. National retailers and service providers have opened and created employment. Healthcare services have produced the largest growth. In 2016, the Alpena Regional Medical Center joined MidMichigan Health and changed its name to MidMichigan Medical Center – Alpena. The facility has grown from a local primary care county-based hospital into a regional secondary healthcare center. The Medical Center has an annual operating revenue of over \$125 million, providing well-paid and stable jobs. Total annual operating expenses (including salaries, wages, benefits, medical supplies, and other fees) total over \$119 million. In 2017, the Medical Center was recognized as a Top Rural Community Hospital and received Michigan's Quality Improvement Organization Governor's Award for Excellence.

Education, small-specialized industries and tourism are other sources of new jobs and economic development. Alpena Community College has averaged 1,972 students since 2000 (peaking at 2,077 students in 2009; with a low of 1,853 students in 2004). Fairly steady enrollment has allowed the college to create more jobs and train many people to take advantage of new technology, healthcare, marketing, and new industrial applications. Likewise, organizations like the Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Alpena Downtown Development Authority, and the Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce have created and promoted many successful tourist events that include the Michigan Brown Trout Festival, Great Lakes Lighthouse Festival, Maritime Festival, and other similar events that attract tourism dollars to the community's motels, eateries and specialty shops. Efforts are being made to attract new technology and specialized industries to new industrial and commercial parks, as well as Renaissance Zones in the City and at the Alpena County Regional Airport.

Local Property Taxes and State Revenue Sharing Funds are the primary source of local government revenue. The City of Alpena will collect 16.1066 mils for operations in fiscal year 2021, which is the same as fiscal year 2020. This tax revenue funds a projected budget of \$9.904 million for fiscal year 2020-2021, with a fund balance of \$2.7 million. The City also will levy 1 mil for Dial-A-Ride operations and an additional 1.9812 mils in the Downtown Development District area. The County currently levies 4.8004 mils, which have been rolled back from 5.4 mils allowed under State Law by the Headlee Amendment. This has limited County government by restricting expansion of non-mandated services, unless provided by voter approval (EMS millage, 911 surcharge, Senior Citizen millages, etc.). The County also levies 1 mil for library services, 1 mil for jail operations, 0.9720 mils for ambulance services, 0.55 mils for senior services, 0.2100 mils for veterans' services and 0.5 mils for recreation.

# Income and Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as all the people who occupy a housing unit. Over 34% of the households in the City of Alpena and nearly 30% of the households in Alpena County earn less than \$25,000 a year compared to 21.7% of households for the State (**Figure 3.1**). Since the 2011 ACS 5-year household income data, households earning less than \$10,000 in the City of Alpena has increased from 10.8% to 11.8%.



Median estimated 2018 household income for the City of Alpena is \$37,706 which is 26% lower than the State's average of \$50,803 and 37% lower than the national average of \$60,293. Alpena County has the third lowest median household income out of the eight counties in Northeast Michigan (**Table 3.1**).

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| United States         | \$60,293        |
| State of Michigan     | \$54,938        |
| Otsego County         | \$52,645        |
| Crawford County       | \$47,443        |
| Presque Isle County   | \$46,439        |
| Cheboygan County      | \$46,161        |
| Montmorency County    | \$42,305        |
| Alpena County         | \$41,991        |
| Oscoda County         | \$40,255        |
| Alcona County         | \$39,735        |
| <b>City of Alpena</b> | <b>\$37,706</b> |

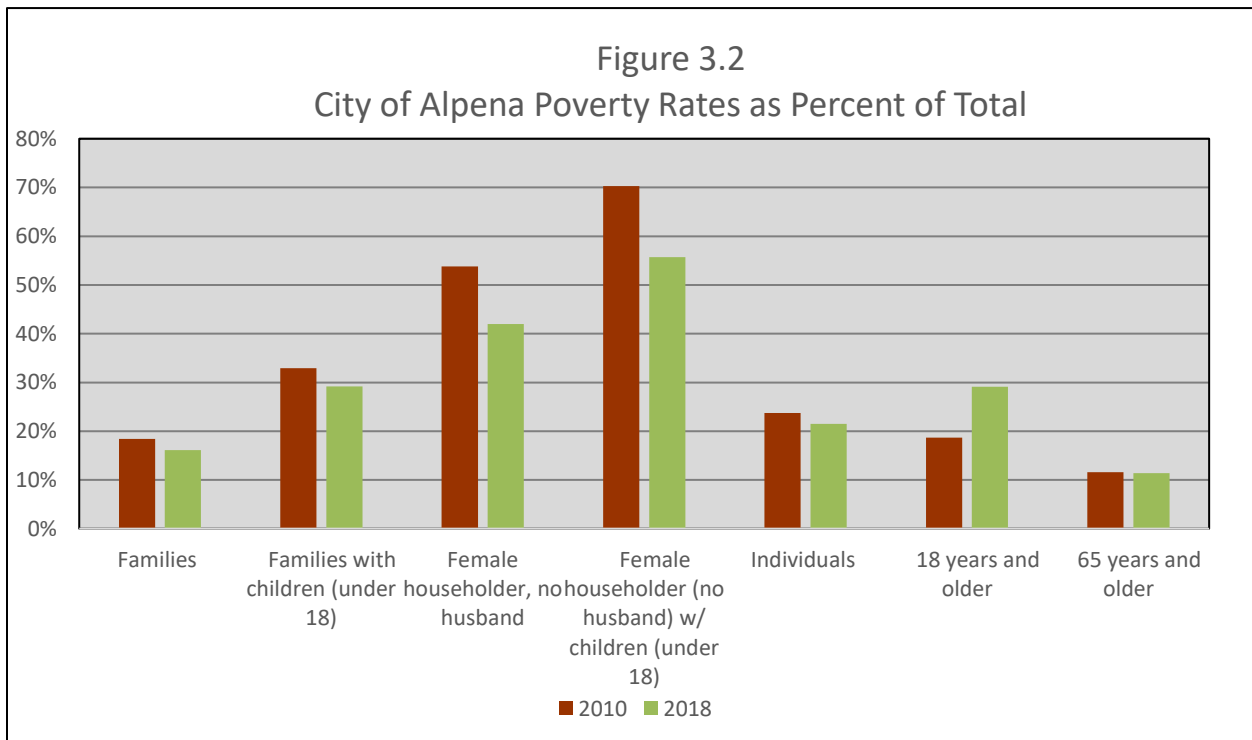
Source: American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimate

Lower income levels correlate with higher rates of poverty. The estimates for 2018 indicate that about 10% of families live below the poverty line in the State of Michigan, but nearly 16% of families live below the poverty line in the City of Alpena. The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then all family members or unrelated individuals living in that household are classified as being "below the poverty level."

The U. S. Census Bureau breaks the total number of individuals living in poverty into various categories, such as *Families*, *Families with Children*, or *Female Head of Household*. During the decade from 2000-2010, the data shows a marked increase in the number of individuals living in poverty. However, there has been a noticeable change to this trend. **Table 3.2** shows the poverty distribution in the State, County, and City for 2010 and 2018. Although the City of Alpena still has higher poverty rates than the County and the State, there is no longer a marked increase. In fact, there has been a decrease in poverty rates since 2010 for households where females are the heads of households including the subgroup of female heads of households with children under 18 (**Table 3.2, Figure 3.2**). The subgroup category, “female heads of household with dependent children,” has the highest rate of living below the poverty line at the City, County, and State levels. The total number of families living below the poverty line in the City of Alpena was 16.1%, a 2.3% decrease since 2010. The number of families with dependent children (29.2%) and individuals (21.5%) living in poverty are also higher than those recorded for the State.

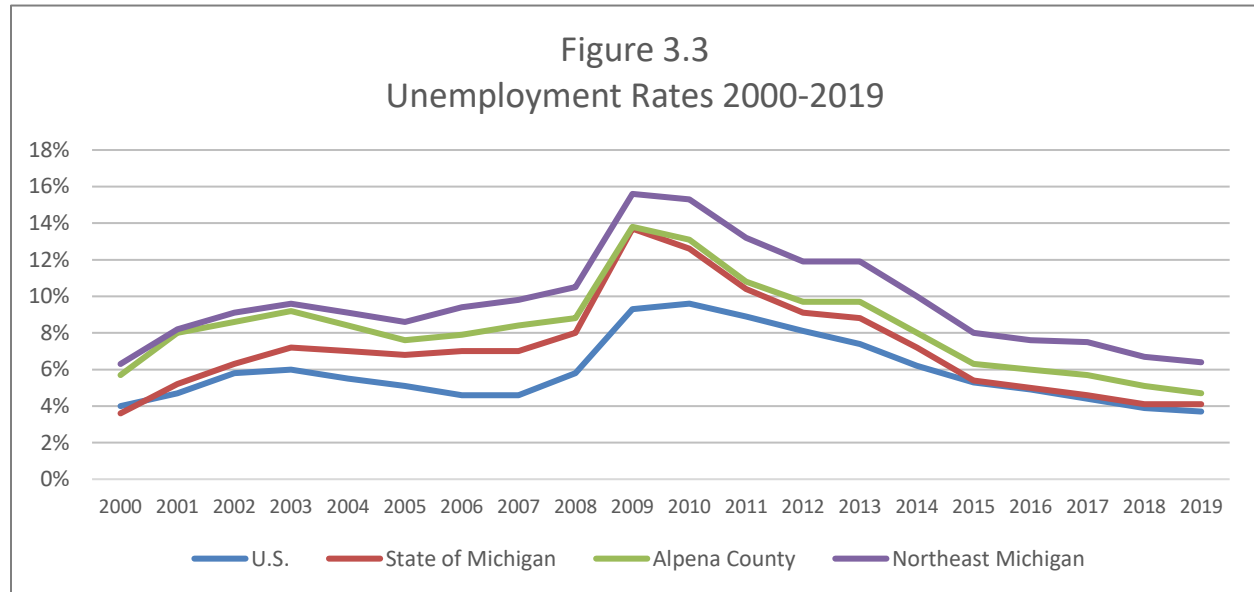
| Table 3.2<br>Poverty Distribution (as percent of total) – 2018 |                |      |               |      |                   |      |
|--|----------------|------|---------------|------|-------------------|------|
| Living Below Poverty Level                                     | City of Alpena |      | Alpena County |      | State of Michigan |      |
|  | 2010           | 2018 | 2010          | 2018 | 2010              | 2018 |
| Families   | 18.4           | 16.1 | 11.7          | 10.1 | 10.6              | 10.4 |
| With children (under 18)                                       | 32.9           | 29.2 | 22.5          | 18.3 | 17.0              | 17.5 |
| Female householder, no husband                                 | 53.8           | 42.0 | 46.3          | 32.4 | 31.8              | 29.8 |
| With children (under 18)                                       | 70.3           | 55.7 | 62.8          | 46.3 | 41.1              | 40.7 |
| Individuals  | 23.7           | 21.5 | 15.9          | 14.4 | 14.8              | 15.0 |
| 18 years and older   | 18.7           | 29.1 | 13.5          | 18.1 | 13.0              | 20.8 |
| 65 years and older   | 11.6           | 11.4 | 8.6           | 8.0  | 8.3               | 8.3  |

Source: U. S. Census Bureau (2010) and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2018



## Labor Force and Unemployment

Alpena County and all of Northeast Michigan have had higher unemployment rates than the State for the majority of the past two decades (**Figure 3.3**). Unemployment rates for the County and region have been consistently above 7% between 2001 and 2015, when the county dipped to around 6%, which is higher than the State, but better than the region. Rates peaked in 2009, when the region had an average unemployment rate of 15.9% and Alpena County had an average unemployment rate at 13%. Since then, rates have declined significantly with the county at 4.7% and the region at 6.4% in 2019. The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly increased unemployment in 2020, however the lasting economic effects are not known at this time.

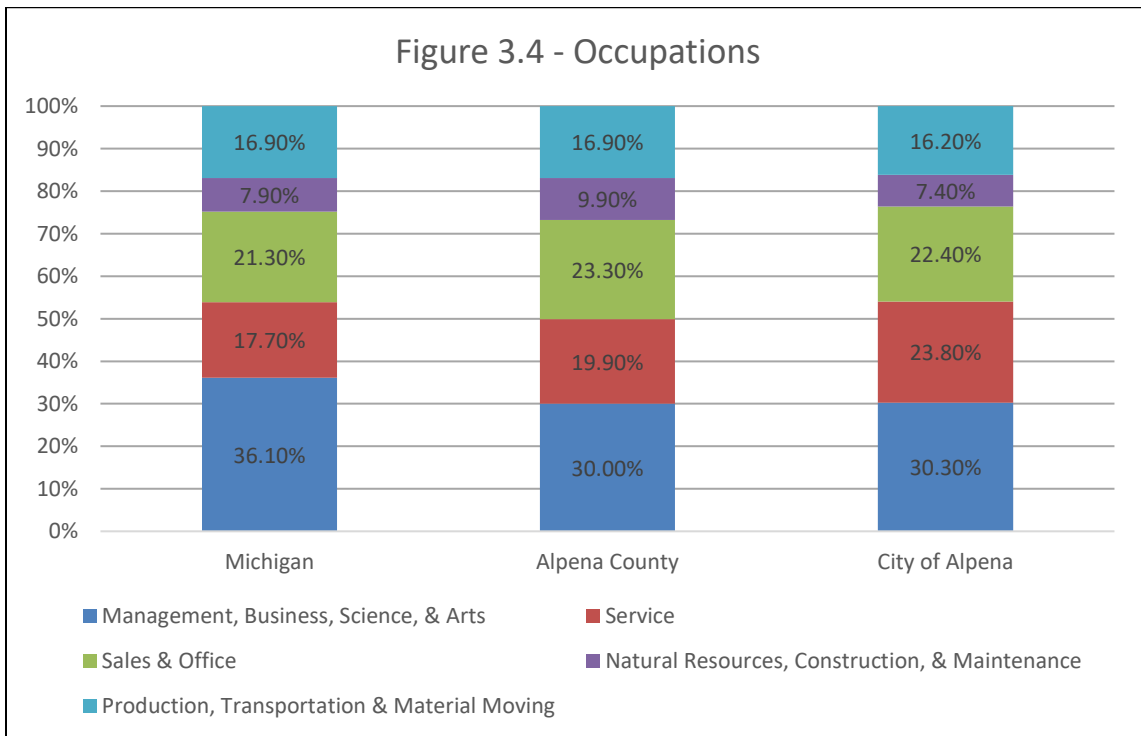


Source: Office of Labor Market Information (*data not available for the City of Alpena*)

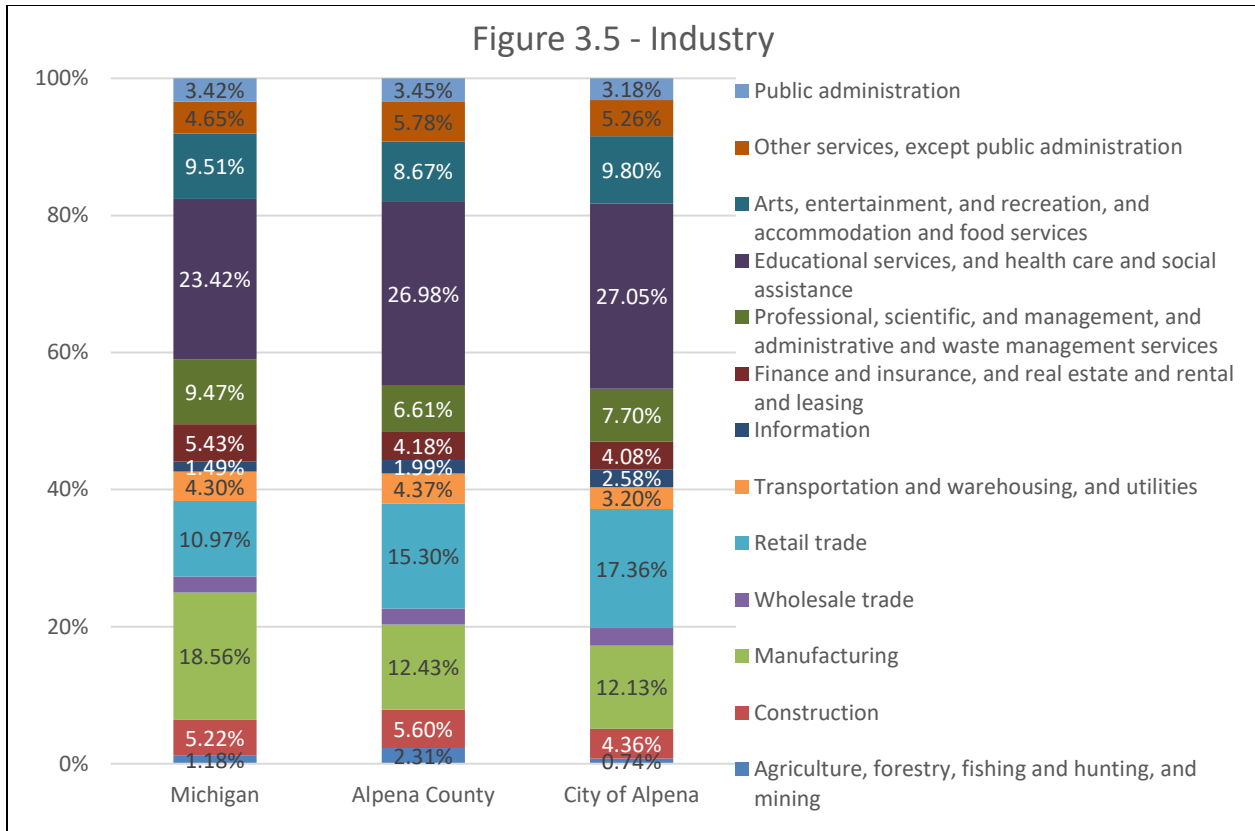
**Table 3.3** shows the percent of the population in the labor force is fairly similar for the City and the County (56.5% and 55.9% respectively), but both percentages are lower than the State’s labor force (61.5%). **Figure 3.4** shows the percentage of workers in different occupations remain fairly consistent at all three levels, but some differences can be noted when the type of work prevalent at State and local levels is taken into consideration. In 2018, the top three occupations in the State and County included management and professional jobs, sales and office occupations, and service jobs (**Figure 3.4**). Since the 2000 Census, service jobs became the third largest occupation sector in the State. In the City, the top three occupations included management and professional jobs (30.3%), sales and office occupations (22.4%), and service jobs (23.8%) (**Figure 3.4**). This shows that over 76% of the workforce is employed in these occupations. Generally, these jobs require an advanced degree and provide a higher pay scale than retail, service, and manufacturing jobs. **Figure 3.5** depicts a more detailed breakdown of this information. Comparing the employment statistics (**Table 3.3**), poverty statistics (**Table 3.1, Figure 3.2**), household income levels (**Figure 3.1**), and unemployment rates (**Figure 3.3**) shows that the economic distress is higher for the City and the County than for the State.

| Table 3.3<br>Employment Statistics – 2018 |                |       |               |       |                   |
|---|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------------------|
|   | City of Alpena |       | Alpena County |       | State of Michigan |
| <b>Population 16 years and over</b>       | 8,241          | 100%  | 23,893        | 100%  | 100%              |
| <b>Employment Status</b>                  |                |       |               |       |                   |
| <b>Labor Force Participation Rate</b>     | 4,656          | 56.5% | 13,556        | 55.9% | 61.5%             |
| <b>Employed</b>                           | 4,334          | 52.6% | 12,519        | 52.4% | 58.2%             |
| <b>Unemployed</b>                         | 552            | 6.7%  | 1,433         | 6.0%  | 5.3%              |

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

According to the 2018 American Community Survey, 75.3% of the residents in the City work in the private sector, which has decreased from 80.6% in 2010 (**Table 3.4**). Approximately 8.5% work for a unit of government, which has decreased from 11.3% in 2010 and workers classified as self-employed has decreased from 8.1% in 2010 to 3.9% in 2018.

| Table 3.4<br>Employment Statistics for Class of Worker: City of Alpena |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| Class of Worker  | Number | Percent |
| Private Wage & Salary Workers  | 3,264  | 75.3%   |
| Government Workers   | 369    | 8.5%    |
| Self-employed Workers (not incorporated business)                      | 168    | 3.9%    |
| Private Not for Profit Wage & Salary Workers                           | 536    | 12.4%   |
| Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates                |        |         |



## Economic Sectors

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Looking at Alpena County as a whole, the major sectors which make up the county's economy are health care, industrial, retail, service, governmental and agricultural. **Table 3.5** shows the area's business patterns and **Table 3.6** shows how the patterns have changed between 2009 and 2018. A brief analysis of each sector is found in the following sections.

### Health Care & Social Assistance

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is one of the largest economic sectors in the City of Alpena. Over 2,600 people are employed countywide at 85 establishments, making up a payroll of just over \$109 million, an increase between the years 2009 and 2018. In this same timeframe, the number of firms in this sector increased by 3.

### Construction

Consolidation of firms was a theme between 2009 until 2018. In the construction sector, there was a consolidation of firms (-11%), but an increase in total employees.

### Industrial Development

Data found in **Table 3.5** shows the county's manufacturing sector had the third largest number of employees (1,163) in 2018. Until the mid-1980's, Alpena County's economy was centered in the manufacturing sector with a few large industries making up a majority of the industrial base. Although the large industrial plants are still a vital component to the regional economy, the recent trend has been towards the development of smaller businesses with fewer employees. Between 2009 and 2018, the number of manufacturing firms increased by 27%, total employees by 18%, and annual payroll increased by 25%.

The manufacturing sector was made up of 52 separate establishments. **Table 3.7** shows 15 facilities had less than five employees and approximately half of the establishments have less than ten employees. This indicates the area is not dependent on one or two manufacturers for all of the area's employment in that sector.

### Retail

Alpena County, especially the City of Alpena and Alpena Township, serves as a regional shopping destination for residents of nearby counties. The importance of retail trade for the area's economy is shown in **Table 3.5**. As of 2018, this sector was comprised of 139 establishments and employed 1,819 persons, which is the second largest number of employees by sector. **Table 3.7** shows 51 retail establishments employ less than five individuals. In 2018, 68% of retail establishments employed less than ten individuals.

### Government

The government sector makes up another important economic sector of the county. **Table 3.4** shows that governmental employment comprises about 8.5% of total employment, the second largest employment classification. The City of Alpena, Alpena County, and Alpena Township account for the majority of governmental workers within the county. Governmental employees also make-up a large segment of the highly-skilled, professional worker category. Engineers, planners, administrators, and information technology workers are examples of the type of governmental worker that constitute the "knowledge worker" classification.

**Table 3.5  
Alpena Area Business Patterns**

|  | Number of employees | First-quarter payroll (\$1,000) | Annual payroll (\$1,000) | Number of establishments |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total for all sectors  | 10,211              | 94,563                          | 370,707                  | 814                      |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                               | 22                  | 167                             | 570                      | 10                       |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction                            | 17                  | 231                             | 1,261                    | 3                        |
| Utilities  | 66                  | 1,209                           | 5,118                    | 6                        |
| Construction   | 567                 | 5,494                           | 23,584                   | 81                       |
| Manufacturing  | 1,377               | 19,487                          | 68,941                   | 52                       |
| Wholesale trade  | 560                 | 7,948                           | 26,426                   | 33                       |
| Retail trade   | 1,819               | 11,500                          | 48,478                   | 139                      |
| Transportation and warehousing   | 214                 | 2,280                           | 9,244                    | 30                       |
| Information  | 165                 | 1,418                           | 5,841                    | 15                       |
| Finance and insurance  | 330                 | 4,271                           | 14,816                   | 39                       |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                                       | 123                 | 645                             | 2,817                    | 20                       |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services                         | 280                 | 4,940                           | 14,929                   | 36                       |
| Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services | 272                 | 1,676                           | 8,258                    | 36                       |
| Educational services   | 30                  | 71                              | 333                      | 7                        |
| Health care and social assistance  | 2,690               | 26,133                          | 109,497                  | 85                       |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation                                      | 99                  | 416                             | 2,430                    | 13                       |
| Accommodation and food services  | 992                 | 3,234                           | 14,460                   | 75                       |
| Other services (except public administration)                            | 517                 | 2,930                           | 11,762                   | 103                      |
| Industries not classified  | 44                  | 84                              | 325                      | 30                       |

Source: County Business Patterns, U.S. Census Bureau 2018 Does not include public sector jobs.

**Table 3.6**  
**Alpena Area Business Patterns - Percent Change 2009-2018**

| Industry code description  | Paid employees                           | First-quarter payroll (\$1,000) | Annual payroll (\$1,000) | Total establishments |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Total for all sectors</b>   | 5%                                       | 38%                             | 22%                      | -2%                  |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting                               | (too few firms to list in 2009)          |                                 |                          | 66%                  |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction                            | 37%                                      | -26%                            | -18%                     | 0%                   |
| Utilities  | 0%                                       | 18%                             | 17%                      | 50%                  |
| Construction   | 64%                                      | 86%                             | 52%                      | -11%                 |
| Manufacturing  | 18%                                      | 51%                             | 25%                      | 27%                  |
| Wholesale trade  | 23%                                      | 90%                             | 42%                      | -11%                 |
| Retail trade   | -0.5%                                    | 18%                             | 16%                      | -8%                  |
| Transportation and warehousing   | -24%                                     | 27%                             | 6%                       | 8%                   |
| Information  | -16%                                     | 3%                              | -6%                      | -38%                 |
| Finance and insurance  | -13%                                     | 40%                             | 14%                      | -17%                 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                                       | 14%                                      | 25%                             | 40%                      | 0%                   |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services                         | 32%                                      | 210%                            | 104%                     | -20%                 |
| Management of companies and enterprises                                  | (too few firms to list in 2009 and 2018) |                                 |                          |                      |
| Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services | 39%                                      | 52%                             | 64%                      | 38%                  |
| Educational services   | 15%                                      | -27%                            | 17%                      | -11%                 |
| Health care and social assistance  | -6%                                      | 15%                             | 7%                       | -6%                  |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation                                      | 48%                                      | 69%                             | 82%                      | 0%                   |
| Accommodation and food services  | 8%                                       | 49%                             | 43%                      | 3%                   |
| Other services (except public administration)                            | -4%                                      | 57%                             | 16%                      | -9%                  |

Source: County Business Patterns - U.S. Census Bureau – 2010 and 2018

**Table 3.7  
Alpena Area Businesses by Size of Establishments as of 2018**

| Industry code description   | Total | 1 to 4 | 5 to 9 | 10 to 19 | 20-49 | 50-99 | 100-249 | 250-499 | 500-999 |
|---|-------|--------|--------|----------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Total for all sectors</b>  | 814   | 405    | 167    | 139      | 71    | 21    | 7       |         |         |
| <b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</b>                               | 10    | 9      | 0      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction</b>                            | 3     | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Utilities</b>  | 6     | 3      | 0      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Construction</b>   | 81    | 53     | 14     | 6        | 7     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Manufacturing</b>  | 52    | 15     | 7      | 15       | 8     | 4     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Wholesale trade</b>  | 33    | 9      | 9      | 7        | 6     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Retail trade</b>   | 139   | 51     | 44     | 28       | 11    | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Transportation and warehousing</b>   | 30    | 15     | 7      | 6        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Information</b>  | 15    | 4      | 5      | 3        | 3     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Finance and insurance</b>  | 39    | 18     | 12     | 5        | 3     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Real estate and rental and leasing</b>                                       | 20    | 16     | 0      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Professional, scientific, and technical services</b>                         | 36    | 16     | 7      | 10       | 3     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services</b> | 36    | 25     | 0      | 6        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Educational services</b>   | 7     | 5      | 0      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Health care and social assistance</b>  | 85    | 31     | 20     | 21       | 5     | 4     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</b>                                      | 13    | 6      | 3      | 0        | 0     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Accommodation and food services</b>  | 75    | 31     | 10     | 16       | 13    | 5     | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| <b>Other services (except public administration)</b>                            | 103   | 67     | 22     | 9        | 5     | 0     | 0       | 0       | 0       |

Source: County Business Patterns - U.S. Census Bureau - 2018

## Tourism

With over 13,000 acres of lakes, 300 miles of streams and tributaries and 61 miles of Lake Huron shoreline, Alpena County's water resources are a major tourism attraction with fishing and hunting playing a vital role in the economy. The tourism sector is a subset of both the retail and service sectors of the county's economy. However, it is difficult to find exact numbers regarding the impact of tourism on an economy.

In addition to water activities, the City of Alpena offers recreational opportunities in a natural setting, including Island Park and the 350-acre Wildlife Sanctuary. An 18.5 mile Bi-Path travels through the majority of Alpena's scenic parks and beaches as it winds through the City and along the Thunder Bay River and the Lake Huron shoreline. Alpena County also has two state parks, two state forest campgrounds, three county campgrounds and four commercial campgrounds, with a combined total of 412 campsites.

Spending at tourism-related business is at its highest between June and September, peaking in July. Tourism spending declines in the fall and then has a significant increase in December. Receipts are at their lowest levels in January and February and then begin to increase again in the spring.

Golf courses and tennis courts provide outdoor recreation. The Thunder Bay Recreation Center and Northern Lights Ice Arena provide a combination of indoor recreation. Two live performance theatres and provide indoor entertainment. Two movie theatres in downtown Alpena are currently not open for business but have future development potential. The Besser Museum of Northeast Michigan, the Alpena County George N. Fletcher Library, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, and the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center offer cultural and historical opportunities. Tourists arriving along the City's major corridors will also view historic homes that have been restored and preserved. Many of these homes are typical of the early lumbering era and date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Organizations in Alpena County sponsor several annual festivals and other activities. These special events attract large groups of tourists to the City. Annual festivals held in the City include the Michigan Brown Trout Festival, Art on the Bay, the Great Lakes Lighthouse Festival, the Alpena Blues Festival, the Maritime Festival, and many others. The Alpena County Fair also takes place within the confines of the City limits at the Alpena County Fairgrounds.

### **Maritime Heritage Tourism**

Maritime Heritage Tourism has become a significant economic driver in the Alpena area. Almost 94,000 people visited the Maritime Heritage Center in 2017. Alpena Shipwreck Tours launched in 2011. Owned by John Madigan of Picture Rocks, Apostle Island, and Sleeping Bear Dunes Boat Tours, the tours were enthusiastically received.

### **Trails**

The North Eastern State Trail (NEST) was completed in 2011. Users can walk, bicycle, horseback ride or snowmobile 71 miles from Alpena to Cheboygan. The trail runs from Woodward Avenue in the City of Alpena to Lincoln Street in the City of Cheboygan where it merges with the North Central State Trail, which runs south 45 miles to Gaylord or northwest 16 miles to Mackinaw City. The NEST has a 10' wide packed crushed limestone surface with two foot shoulders, new safety signs, access control features and mile marker posts. The trail use, determined by the DNR, is for all non-motorized users year round and snowmobiles from December 1 through March 31. This project was collaborative between two state departments, local governments and a non-profit organization. The Top of Michigan Trails Council (TOMTC)

led the effort to help assemble a \$3.1 million funding package, which included gaining 5% of the project costs from local governments, individuals and organizations. The Michigan Department of Transportation completed the engineering and project oversight while the Michigan Department of Natural Resources oversaw the project implementation and will continue to manage and maintain the facility. The trail now creates a link across Northeast Michigan on the former Detroit to Mackinaw Railroad connecting Alpena, Posen, Hawks, Millersburg, Onaway, Aloha and Cheboygan.

Other notable trail systems within Alpena County include Norway Ridge Pathway, Rockport Trails, Chippewa Hills Pathway, and a snowmobile trail system throughout the county.

### **Alpena Area Convention & Visitors Bureau – Official Destination Marketing Organization for Alpena**

The Alpena Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is the official tourism destination marketing organization for the Alpena Area, including the City of Alpena. The CVB manages a diverse portfolio of marketing partnerships, advertising programs, and publicity throughout the year for the purpose of increasing business and leisure travel to the Alpena area for the benefit of increased revenue at local restaurants, retail stores, and lodging properties, which in turn provides a mechanism for improving local infrastructure and increases in tax revenue for local governments. Highlights include the CVB-hosted Major League Fishing television series, which filmed their early 2018 season in Alpena. This program is America's #1 ranked outdoor sport show on TV and provides the CVB (and Alpena) with the equivalent of \$500,000 in marketing coverage for the community on the Outdoor Channel, CBS, and the Discovery Channel. Alpena was also featured on PBS in the U.S. and Canada, CBS – Chicago market, and various other channels featuring outdoor recreation. Site visits hosted by the CVB for group travel to Alpena were up 66% in 2018. Social media followership increased by 34% in 2018. The CVB pays for many programs that market the Alpena Area including display, digital and video advertising, trade show representation, Pure Michigan cooperative marketing, Michigan DNR partnership program to market fishing and trails, MLive media marketing program; content creation for publication in magazines and newspapers, and interviews for state-wide radio, print, television and podcasts. As a result, the 2018 summer tourism season saw a 14.9% increase in overnight lodging from 2017.

### **Opportunity Assessment/Branding**

In 2011, Destination Development International (DDI) was hired to conduct an Opportunity Assessment product development program to give the community an objective look through the eyes of a visitor. The second phase, Destination Brand Camp, took place in 2012. This program resulted in a specific, identifiable brand and marketing plan to allow the CVB and the community to market the Alpena area more effectively. This brand – Alpena: Sanctuary of the Great Lakes – is now being utilized to identify Alpena as the haven from the stresses of everyday life and a culturally-rich place to relax, rejuvenate, and inspire.

### **U.S. 23 Heritage Route**

The U.S. 23 Heritage Route extends 200 miles from Standish to Mackinaw City and is a tourism-focused promotional program. Each county along the route has an active Heritage Route Team and participates in an overseeing Management Council. The Alpena County Heritage Route Team consists of volunteers interested in tourism and history. Each year, the county teams and the Management Council work toward implementing projects, which are stated in the U.S. 23 Heritage Route Management Plan. A landmark project has been the award-winning website, [www.heritage23.com](http://www.heritage23.com), which provides an interactive one-stop shop of things to see and do along the countywide Heritage Route corridor. In addition, the Heritage Route publishes maps and brochures highlighting recreational amenities. Therefore, the U.S. 23 Heritage Route program assists with promotion of public and private recreational facilities in the county.



# City of Alpena Economic Development Activities

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There are a number of economic development activities administered by the City. Staff responsible for these efforts includes the City Manager, City Planning and Economic Development Director and City Engineer. Programs include brownfield redevelopment, renaissance zones, infrastructure improvements, and the use of CDBG grants.

## Brownfield Redevelopment

The Alpena City Council established an Authority for Brownfield Redevelopment with the adoption of Resolution 1997-7 on March 17, 1997, pursuant to the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Michigan Public Act 381. The Council designated its incorporated boundaries as the boundaries of the brownfield zone. The City is considered a “core community” by the State and is able to offer financial assistance through the brownfield program for cleanup and revitalization activities on three categories of eligible properties (blighted property, contaminated property and functionally obsolete property). Costs associated with cleanup and redevelopment of an eligible property is funded through Tax Increment Financing.

Alpena developed a Brownfield Redevelopment Plan in 2001. The plan identified eight perspective eligible properties. Projects have been developed for the former Fletcher Paper Mill property at 318 W. Fletcher Street (site of the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center project and Fletcher Street Brewing Company project), Lafarge Midwest, Alpena Site at 1435 Ford Avenue, and Dean Arbor Ford on U.S. 23 North. Brownfield Redevelopment activities have yielded tangible successes and supported economic growth in the core of the City, particularly along the waterfront.

## Renaissance Zones

At one time there were up to seven Renaissance Zones designated by the State in Alpena County. Although they have all since expired, these were economic development tools utilized to spur growth on particular properties. The Renaissance Zone designation promotes economic development through tax exemptions from State Income Tax, the Single Business Tax, General Property Tax (not including debt retirement and special assessments), and the Education Tax for eligible businesses. Business property owners and residents located in a Renaissance Zone are exempt from State taxes for a period of up to 15 years. Although that time period begins at the time of the State designation, extensions can be requested. There was one Renewable Energy Renaissance Zone to assist the Alpena Biorefinery, but it was revoked in 2016 due to compliance issues.

Other sites that utilized the Renaissance Zone program within the city of Alpena include:

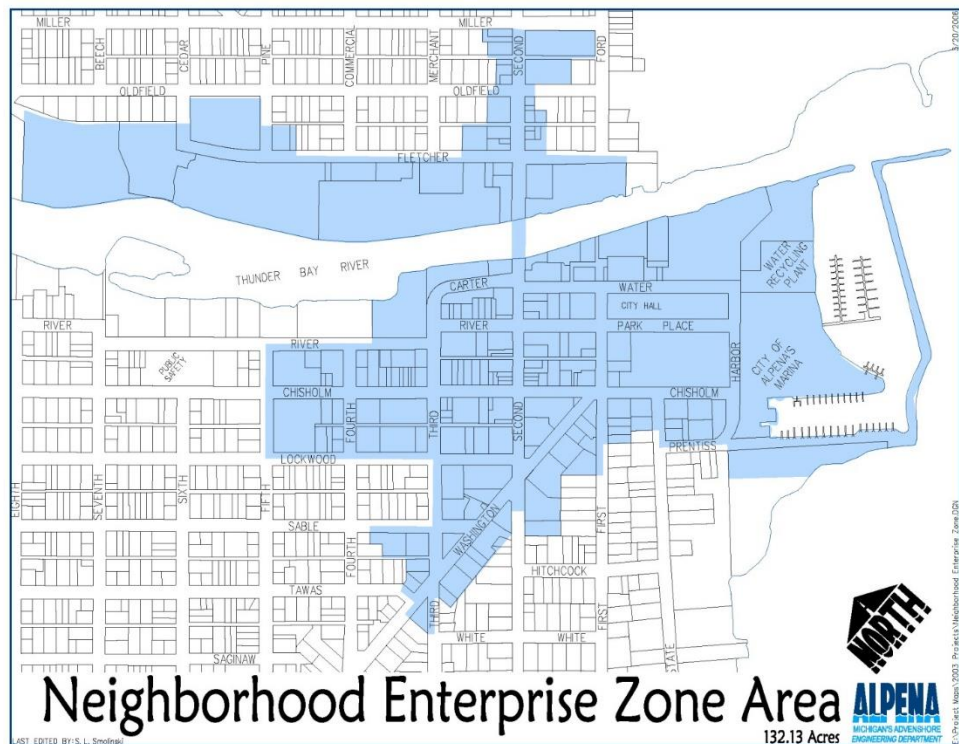
- Commerce Industrial Park Sub Zone 1 (expired in 2014), a 21.76 acre light industrial park owned by Target Alpena Development Corporation, a Michigan Certified Business Park.
- Oxbow Park Sub Zone 2 (expired in 2017), a 39.7 acre former City landfill was owned by the City of Alpena but sold to a private developer in 2002.
- National Guard Armory Site Sub Zone 3 (expired in 2017), a historic structure dedicated in the 1920's as Memorial Hall, in honor of the veterans of World War I. In the 1950's, this 0.70 acre site became a state-owned National Guard Armory Building.
- Southwest Residential Site Sub Zone 4 (expired in 2014), a city-owned 14.85 acre site originally platted in 1893.

## Residential Programs

Alpena has initiated several residential rehabilitation and development programs. MSHDA grants through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program support the Downtown Rental Development Area and Lincoln School Neighborhood Target Area projects. The purpose of the Downtown Rental Development program is to increase the downtown's residential population by creating rental housing units for moderate and market rate income households in vacant or underutilized areas of the upper floors of existing commercial buildings (retail, office or institutional use) within a designated portion of the City's downtown. Increasing residential populations in business districts tends to increase business activity and growth, while creating a healthy, more vibrant downtown.

Under the Downtown Residential Rental Development Program MSHDA provides 70% of the cost, up to \$35,000 to develop new residential rental units in vacant or underutilized downtown buildings. The City applies for funding every two years based on interest of downtown property owners. Thirteen units have been constructed with five more planned.

The City has also established Neighborhood Enterprise Zones under P.A. 147 of 1992. Neighborhood Enterprise Zones promote neighborhood revitalization and encourages owner-occupied housing and new investment in core communities. The revitalization and new construction programs focus on the central business district to encourage a mixed-use development pattern.



## Fiber Optic Plan – NEMiFC

In January 2005, the Alpena City Council's Vision Statement and Goals document included the development of a "wired city" and the relocation of all new or reconstructed utilities underground. This led to the development of a plan to develop a fiber optic conduit network that would not only provide the backbone for high-speed telecommunications (voice, video, and data transfer), but would also provide a readymade system within which to place new or relocated aerial utilities.

The City pursued the sharing of these resources within the public/nonprofit sector through the creation of a fiber optic consortium. The City of Alpena, Michigan Works!, Alpena County, Alpena Community College, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Northland Library Cooperative, and Alpena Regional Medical

Center were the charter members of this consortium. The consortium's purpose is to enhance voice, video and data communications among all public/non-profit entities and develop a redundant network throughout the greater Alpena area to ensure reliability of service. To further the development of this fiber optic network, the City also adopted a policy to develop this underground conduit system as part of other road construction projects within the City.

To accelerate the development of both the network and the consortium, the City applied for and received a 2006 Center for Regional Excellence designation from the State of Michigan. This designation included a \$25,000 micro-grant, which targeted network development in three key target zones (City Hall/City Marina/Northland Library Target Zone; the Community Development Building Target Zone; the ARMC/Civic Center Target Zone). All construction projects were completed within one year and educational activities were completed by the end of 2007.

In 2011 the group reorganized under a new name, the North East Michigan Fiber Consortium (NEMiFC). NEMiFC amended its Articles of Association and By-Laws in order to add additional members, gain the ability to own its own fiber optic networks, apply for grant funding and offer more support to its members. NEMiFC also developed a policy by which its members can install and own fiber and choose to lease dark fibers to other entities to support the maintenance and expansion of the broader fiber network.

## **Economic Development Organizations**

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Housed under the umbrella of the Alpena Chamber of Commerce, Target Alpena Development Corporation is the primary economic development organization in the county. Both the City of Alpena and Alpena Township also have Economic Development Corporations (EDC), formed under Act 347. Sporadically, issues arise that require tax-exempt bonds and the EDC's are used as the mechanism to obtain them.

The Alpena Chamber of Commerce and Michigan State University Extension partner with other organizations to promote general economic development in the area. Other more specialized economic development entities include Alpena's Downtown Development Authority and the Alpena Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

### **Target: Alpena Development Corporation**

Founded in 1989, Target Alpena Development Corporation (Target Alpena) is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation that was established for economic development purposes in Alpena County. It is the primary conduit for economic activity in Northeast Michigan including a partnership with Presque Isle County that started in 2014. Target Alpena is supported entirely by voluntary contributions from financial institutions, businesses, individuals, governmental entities, foundations, utilities, and grants. Target Alpena operates in partnership with the Alpena Chamber of Commerce.

North Industrial Park was created by the Greater Alpena Industrial Corporation. In the mid-1990's the corporation was absorbed by Target Alpena which received the assets of the corporation and assumed the responsibility of recruiting business into the industrial park. Since that time, Target Alpena filled eight of the remaining nine lots. In a cooperative effort with the City, Target Alpena also developed the Commerce Industrial Park. Development of the park was financed by lot sales in North Industrial Park, a Rural Development grant, and a CDBG infrastructure grant.

Target Alpena activities focus on the following areas:

1. Business development and assistance using a regional, collaborative perspective.
2. Job creation through retention and expansion of local businesses, attraction of new compatible businesses, and business start-ups.
3. Providing assistance to governmental entities on issues, such as grant programs concerning infrastructure and transportation, revitalization projects and other relevant economic development issues.
4. Ongoing marketing and promotion of Alpena to cultivate growth potential for the Alpena area.
5. Education on current economic trends and policies as they relate to Alpena.
6. Providing financial assistance to area businesses through the Alpena County Revolving Loan Program and the Target Alpena Micro Revolving Loan Program.
7. Linking businesses by facilitating networking.
8. Developing new markets.
9. Liaison to state and federal governments.

Target Alpena's Revolving Loan Fund Programs have played a key role in economic growth in the community. Target Alpena's small business loan portfolio coupled with its partnership with the Small Business Development Center has enabled hundreds of new business startups and existing business expansions both in the city and across Northeast Michigan.

## Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce

The Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce is an organization that serves and represents its business members. It is a 501(c)(6) structured to be a lobbying organization. Founded over 90 years ago and officially incorporated in 1947, the organization has a long history of community involvement and creating a stimulus for community growth. Its mission statement is *"by serving our members, the Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce actively champions' economic development and the advancement of the community's quality of life."* The chamber partners with local governments, Alpena Community College, Target Alpena, the Alpena Downtown Development Authority, and the Alpena Convention and Visitors Bureau to work towards its mission. Services for members include a group health care plan, reduced credit card processing fees, insurance discounts for cars and homes, and a small business loan program through a local bank. The Chamber works to create a positive business climate in Northeast Michigan, is a member of the Northern Michigan Regional Chamber Alliance, promotes Alpena, and provides networking and affordable education opportunities to its members.

The 2012 merging of the Chamber and Target Alpena:

- ◆ presents a stronger relationship with a variety of partners
- ◆ is a full service stop for entrepreneurs and existing businesses looking for assistance
- ◆ has a more streamlined approach to assisting business start-ups and expansions
- ◆ has a combined financial audit
- ◆ builds a stronger effort for economic development in the region
- ◆ has a more efficient internal system

## Alpena Downtown Development Authority

The Alpena City Council adopted Ordinance No. 110 on April 21, 1980, creating a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) under Public Act 179 of 1975. The intentions were to strengthen the downtown business district, promote economic growth and revitalization, encourage commercial revitalization, and historic preservation. The DDA provides the community with the necessary legal, monetary, and organizational tools to revitalize economically distressed areas either through public-initiated projects or with private development projects. The initial DDA district covered the core downtown area. Since that time, the boundaries have been expanded to include properties along Washington Street, Fifth Street and the old Fletcher Paper Mill site on the Thunder Bay River. In July 1981, the first Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan were adopted for the DDA. These plans were amended in January 2005. Traditional brick and mortar projects as well as historic preservation activities have remained key elements of the DDA's initiatives.

In 2013, the DDA was selected as an Associate Member of the Michigan Main Street Program. According to the organization:

*The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a community-driven, comprehensive strategy that encourages economic development through historic preservation in ways that are appropriate for today's marketplace. The four points include:*

- *Design: Enhancing the downtown's physical environment by capitalizing on its best assets including historic buildings, and creating an inviting atmosphere through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, streetscapes and landscaping. The Main Street program also focuses on instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems and integrating long-term planning.*
- *Economic Restructuring: Strengthening a community's existing economic base while also expanding and diversifying it. By helping existing businesses expand and recruiting new businesses to respond to today's market, the Main Street program helps convert unused spaces into productive properties and sharpens the competitiveness of business enterprises.*
- *Promotion: Marketing a downtown's unique characteristics to residents, visitors, investors and business owners. The Main Street program develops a positive, promotional strategy through advertising, retail activities, special events and marketing campaigns to encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.*
- *Organization: Involving all of the community's stakeholders, getting everyone working toward a common goal and driving the volunteer-based Main Street program. The fundamental organizational structure consists of a governing board and four standing committees. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director or Main Street manager. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly defines responsibilities; it builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.*

The DDA works to promote activities in the business district by selling the image and promise of Downtown to all prospects by marketing the district's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses, and visitors. An effective promotion strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns.

The parking committee continues to review the downtown parking plan for all day and two hour parking. The two hour parking zones were established to guarantee a regular turn-over in the most convenient spaces on the streets and in parking lots, so visitors can be assured a convenient parking space will be available when they come to downtown.

In Fall 2004, the DDA initiated a Façade Grant Program that provides a 50% match from a minimum award of \$500 up to a maximum award of \$5,000 for exterior renovations of store fronts and backs. Renovations must be made in the historical context of the building. A design committee meets with the landowner to review and approve proposed renovations. Grant applicants must provide a matching amount for their grant request based on a dollar for dollar basis. An applicant's proposed improvement project total can exceed \$ 10,000; however, the DDA's participation is still limited to a maximum amount of \$5,000.

The DDA worked with the City of Alpena to initiate the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) and the downtown rental rehab grant program. In addition, the DDA offers a downtown business support team and provides a retail incentive program. A program called Downtown Dollars incentivizes gift cards, which can be given to promote more downtown shopping.

In Fall 2017, the DDA completed a Strategic Plan & Market Analysis that included a survey of households' shopping activities. The plan indicated the following:

- Overall Economy- natural resource and extraction, wholesaling, transportation and logistics, medical, retail, and recreation and entertainment were all identified as weak sector groups compared to similar communities.
- Research and Development Potential- Alpena has rich opportunities for wildlife and natural resources research in the area surrounding Thunder Bay River, particularly in relation to the NOAA International Research Laboratory and Northern Michigan Unmanned Aerial Systems Consortium. The area's prevalent agricultural sector has potential for an increased research and development sector, particularly in pharmaceuticals and food systems research.
- Housing- While the recession contributed to a significant decline in new housing builds, the majority of issued new building permits continue to be for single-family dwellings as opposed to attached residential. Without the attraction of one or more large employment generators, major shifts in the current residential permitting pattern remain unlikely. An increasing share of the Alpena area and larger market residents desire a different housing pattern in the future that Downtown can provide. Creating the desired active walkable environment and housing downtown may facilitate the purchase of existing homes by young child-bearing age families elsewhere in Alpena.
- Non-retail Goods and Service-related Office Space- In addition to traditional non-retail goods and service-related office space, there is untapped potential for new industrial/emerging tech uses that can be safely integrated into a modern living environment. It is anticipated Downtown can capture between 56,000-69,000 square feet of traditional non-retail space by 2020 alone,



with as much as double that amount of occupied space through capitalizing on uses associated with emerging technologies.

- Commercial Demand and Retail Spending- market activity is comprised of both locals who live and spend money in the area, and those who live outside the area but choose to spend money here. Downtown Alpena is expected to capture roughly 250,000 square feet of retail goods and related services.
- Entertainment Spending- Area residents spend an estimated \$48 million on entertainment activities annually, roughly 15% of which includes spending associated with food service such as live music performances, smaller clubs, and similar venues.

## Redevelopment Ready Community

In June 2018, the City of Alpena received official designation as a Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC). This program works with Michigan cities, villages, and townships to ensure the city is ready for growth. An RRC certified community attracts and retains businesses, offers superior customer service and has a streamlined development approval process making pertinent information available around-the clock for anyone to view.

## Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) was created in 1984 under Public Act 59 of 1984. The organization is funded primarily from a five percent assessment on rooms in hotels with 10 or more rooms. The organization markets Alpena County and the eastern coastal areas of Presque Isle County to bring visitors into the region. The CVB works with convention groups to provide a “packaged” event experience. Marketing is accomplished through a visitor’s guide, web site, travel writers, participation in the Pure Michigan campaign, and other media. Marketing strategies focus on maritime heritage, parks and trails, and local attractions. The bureau partners with other community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and DDA. As the community has expanded its tourism base, the Convention and Visitors Bureau has taken on an increasingly important role in economic development and function as a “Destination Marketing Organization.”

## Economic Summary

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### Summary Statistics from the Edward Lowe Foundation

The Edward Lowe Foundation provides job data for counties through the Your Economy website. In the data sets below, it should be noted that “resident” refers to stand-alone establishments in the local area or one that reports to another business in the same region. The resident sector is subdivided into employment stages with the number in parenthesis denoting the number of employees. “Nonresident” refers to establishments that are located in the area but are headquartered out-of-region. “Noncommercial” refers to educational institutions, post offices, government agencies and other nonprofit organizations. According to **Table 3.8**, from 2010-2016, jobs in Alpena County increased by 30% and sales increased by 33.3%.

**Table 3.8**  
**Alpena County Jobs Summary**  
2010-2016

| JOB                       | 2010   | Percent of Total | 2016   | Percent of Total | Percent Change |
|---------------------------|--------|------------------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| ALL                       | 15,291 | 100              | 19,898 | 100              | 30%            |
| Self-Employed (1)         | 342    | 2.2              | 455    | 2.3              | 33%            |
| Stage 1 (2-9 Employees)   | 4,267  | 27.9             | 6,011  | 30.2             | 41%            |
| Stage 2 (10-99 Employees) | 6,824  | 44.6             | 8,245  | 41.4             | 21%            |
| Stage 3 (100-499)         | 2,908  | 19               | 3,337  | 16.8             | 15%            |
| Stage 4 (500+ Employees)  | 950    | 6.2              | 1,850  | 9.3              | 95%            |
| RESIDENT                  | 10,568 | 69.1             | 14,126 | 71.0             | 34%            |
| NONRESIDENT               | 2,954  | 19.3             | 3,692  | 18.6             | 25%            |
| NONCOMMERCIAL             | 1,769  | 11.6             | 2,080  | 10.5             | 18%            |

During the same timeframe, the total number of establishments increased by 34% and there was growth in all sizes of establishments (**Table 3.9**). The highest levels of growth occurred in Stage 2 companies (37%), except for very large Stage 4 companies, which increased from 1 to 2 establishments. The data implies a shift from larger employers to smaller, more locally based employers, which has been a long-term trend.

**Table 3.9**  
**Establishments Summary**  
2010-2016

| BUSINESSES                | 2010  | Percent of Total | 2016  | Percent of Total | Percent Change |
|---------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|------------------|----------------|
| ALL                       | 1,794 | 100              | 2,405 | 100              | 34%            |
| Self Employed             | 342   | 19.1             | 455   | 18.9             | 33%            |
| Stage 1 (2-9 Employees)   | 1,135 | 63.3             | 1,556 | 64.7             | 37%            |
| Stage 2 (10-99 Employees) | 301   | 16.8             | 376   | 15.6             | 25%            |
| Stage 3 (100-499)         | 15    | 0.8              | 16    | 0.7              | 7%             |
| Stage 4 (500+ Employees)  | 1     | 0.1              | 2     | 0.1              | 100%           |
| RESIDENT                  | 1,440 | 80.3             | 1,951 | 81.1             | 35%            |
| NONRESIDENT               | 143   | 8.0              | 192   | 8.0              | 34%            |
| NONCOMMERCIAL             | 211   | 11.8             | 262   | 10.9             | 24%            |

This shift is further reflected by analyzing the sales summary for the same timeframe (**Table 3.10**). Total sales increased by 65%. No sector experienced a decline in sales between 2010 and 2016. The noncommercial sector experienced significantly less growth in sales when compared to commercial sectors

(1% and 83% respectively). Stage 3 establishments had sales declines of 63.1%. Interestingly, Stage 2 and Stage 4 establishments showed the fewest losses in sales and non-resident establishments showed increasing sales during this timeframe.

| SALES                     | 2010     | % of<br>TOTAL | 2016     | % of<br>TOTAL | %<br>Change |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------|----------|---------------|-------------|
| ALL                       | \$2.6B   | 100           | \$4.3B   | 100           | 65%         |
| Self Employed             | \$57.1M  | 2.2           | \$76.4M  | 1.8           | 34%         |
| Stage 1 (2-9 Employees)   | \$904.5M | 34.9          | \$1.4B   | 33.7          | 55%         |
| Stage 2 (10-99 Employees) | \$1.0B   | 40.1          | \$1.7B   | 39.3          | 70%         |
| Stage 3 (100-499)         | \$491.4M | 18.9          | \$860.6M | 20.1          | 75%         |
| Stage 4 (500+ Employees)  | \$100.7M | 3.9           | \$220.6M | 5.2           | 119%        |
| RESIDENT                  | \$1.9B   | 72.0          | \$3.0B   | 70.4          | 58%         |
| NONRESIDENT               | \$710.9M | 27.4          | \$1.3B   | 29.2          | 83%         |
| NONCOMMERCIAL             | \$15.0M  | 0.6           | \$15.2M  | 0.4*          | 1%          |

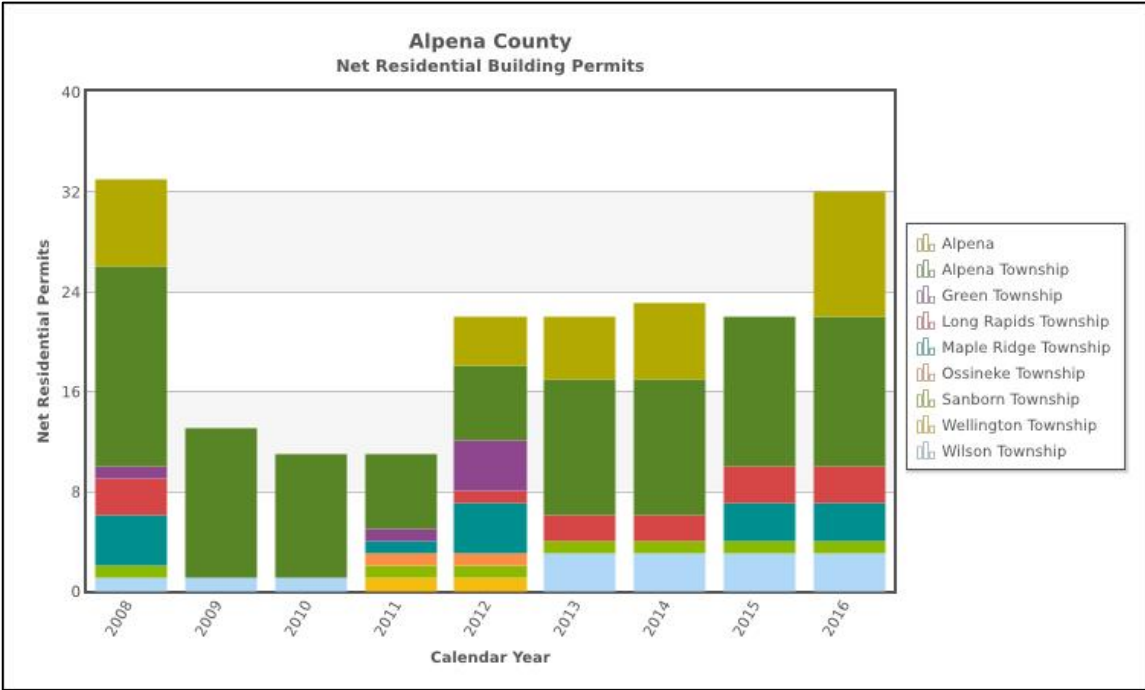
Breaking down sales per business, the greatest growth from 2010-2016 occurred in the larger Stage 3 businesses (64%) (Table 3.11). There was minimal growth in sales by self-employed businesses (0.5%).

| SALES                     | 2010          | 2016          | %<br>Change |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| SALES PER BUSINESS        | \$1,446,192   | \$1,780,272   | 23%         |
| Self Employed (1)         | \$167,032     | \$167,813     | 0.5%        |
| Stage 1 (2-9 Employees)   | \$796,957     | \$926,915     | 16%         |
| Stage 2 (10-99 Employees) | \$3,457,425   | \$4,472,601   | 29%         |
| Stage 3 (100-499)         | \$32,760,800  | \$53,789,938  | 64%         |
| Stage 4 (500+ Employees)  | \$100,700,000 | \$110,292,000 | 10%         |
| RESIDENT                  | \$1,297,644   | \$1,544,938   | 19%         |
| NONRESIDENT               | \$4,971,028   | \$6,521,698   | 31%         |
| NONCOMMERCIAL             | \$71,104      | \$58,069      | -18%        |

# Building Activity

In 2009, the number of building permits issued in Alpena County took a sharp hit; however, in 2016, the numbers have recovered to near 2008 levels (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6 - Building Permits



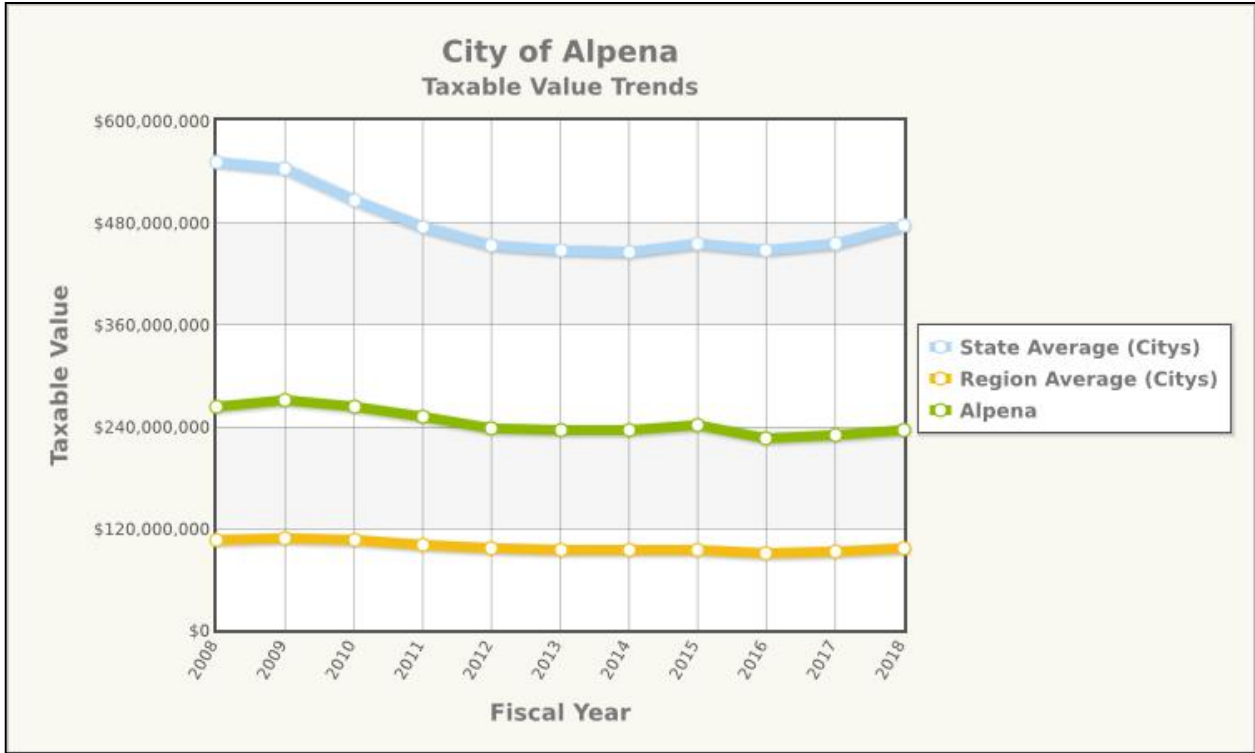
# Land Values

The City Assessor’s Office reports on the taxable values of properties in the community. Taxable value includes real property (land and buildings) and personal property (equipment, furniture, and fixtures, etc.). Compared to other municipalities in Northeast Michigan, Alpena had the highest taxable values in 2020. Taxable growth was relatively flat in the 1980’s but showed a steady increase in value from about 1991 to 2002, when there was a loss of taxable value, likely due to plant closings. Growth returned after 2002, but at a lower rate. Since 2010, the City of Alpena taxable valuation has gone up and down but, overall, has decreased by 6%. Figure 3.7 illustrates the history of taxable value in the community, region, and state.

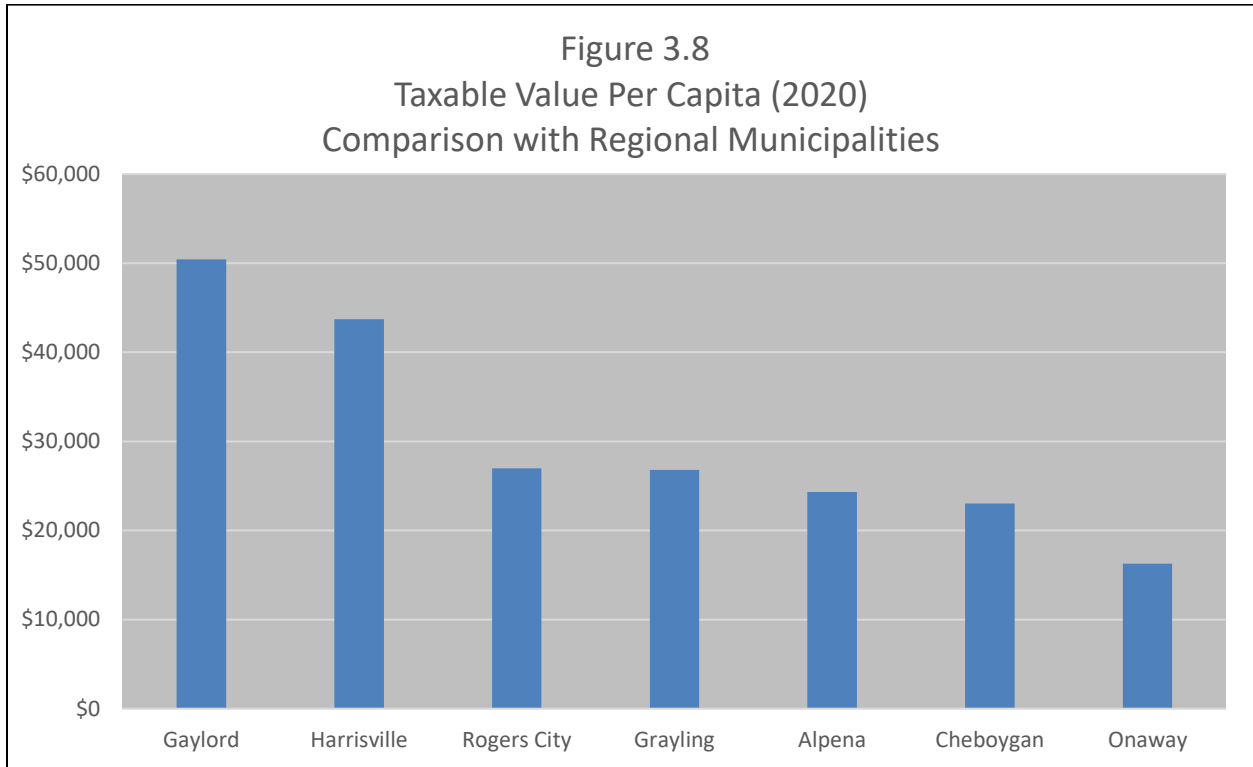
**Table 3.12**  
**2017 Taxable Values**

| Municipality | Taxable Value  |
|--------------|----------------|
| Alpena       | \$ 245,369,635 |
| Gaylord      | \$ 184,897,041 |
| Cheboygan    | \$ 108,848,239 |
| Rogers City  | \$ 72,692,412  |
| Grayling     | \$ 49,474,432  |
| Harrisville  | \$ 17,307,344  |
| Onaway       | \$ 12,739,851  |

Figure 3.7 – Taxable Value Trends



**Figure 3.8** illustrates the regional taxable values for other municipalities per capita for 2020. Gaylord has a taxable value that is significantly higher than other cities in Northeast Michigan.



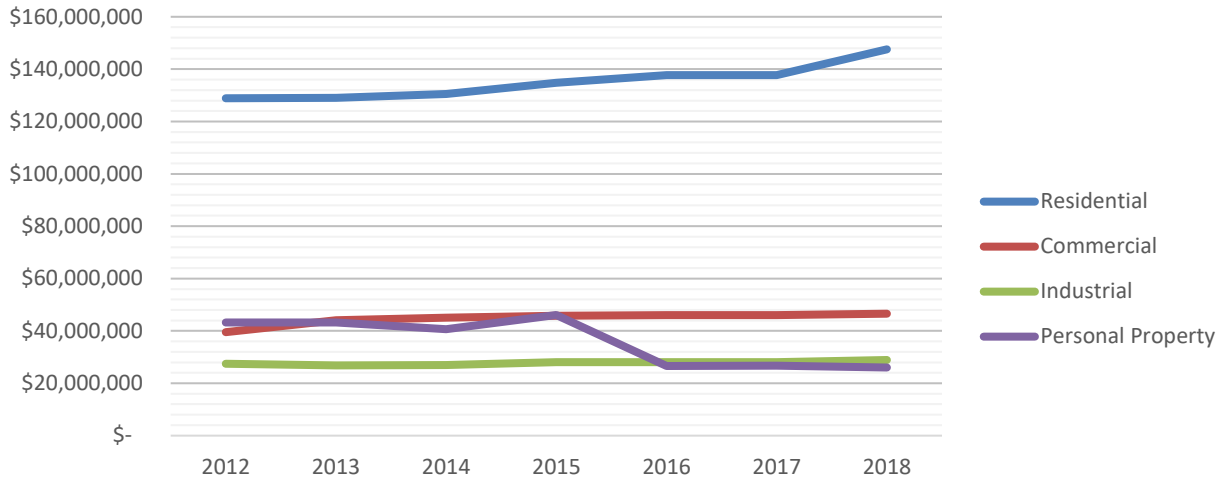
## State Equalized Value (SEV)

By analyzing the State Equalized Value (SEV), characteristics of property values can be obtained. Within the City of Alpena, SEV values between 2012 and 2016 show some interesting trends (**Figure 3.9**). During this timeframe, Industrial Property values remain generally level. The greatest percentage increase is with commercial valuation (18%). Most of that increase occurs between 2012 and 2013 with an 11% increase in one year. Values in all three categories are higher in 2012 than in 2000. Personal property SEV values, however, increase significantly (-40%) with a significant drop occurring between 2015 and 2016.

**Figure 3.10** illustrates changes in SEV values for all of Alpena County between 2000 and 2020. During this period, Alpena Township experienced the steepest growth in SEV values but also the sharpest decline. SEV values in Alpena Township peaked in 2008; by 2011 values had declined to around 2005 levels. However, the trend since 2018 has been upward.

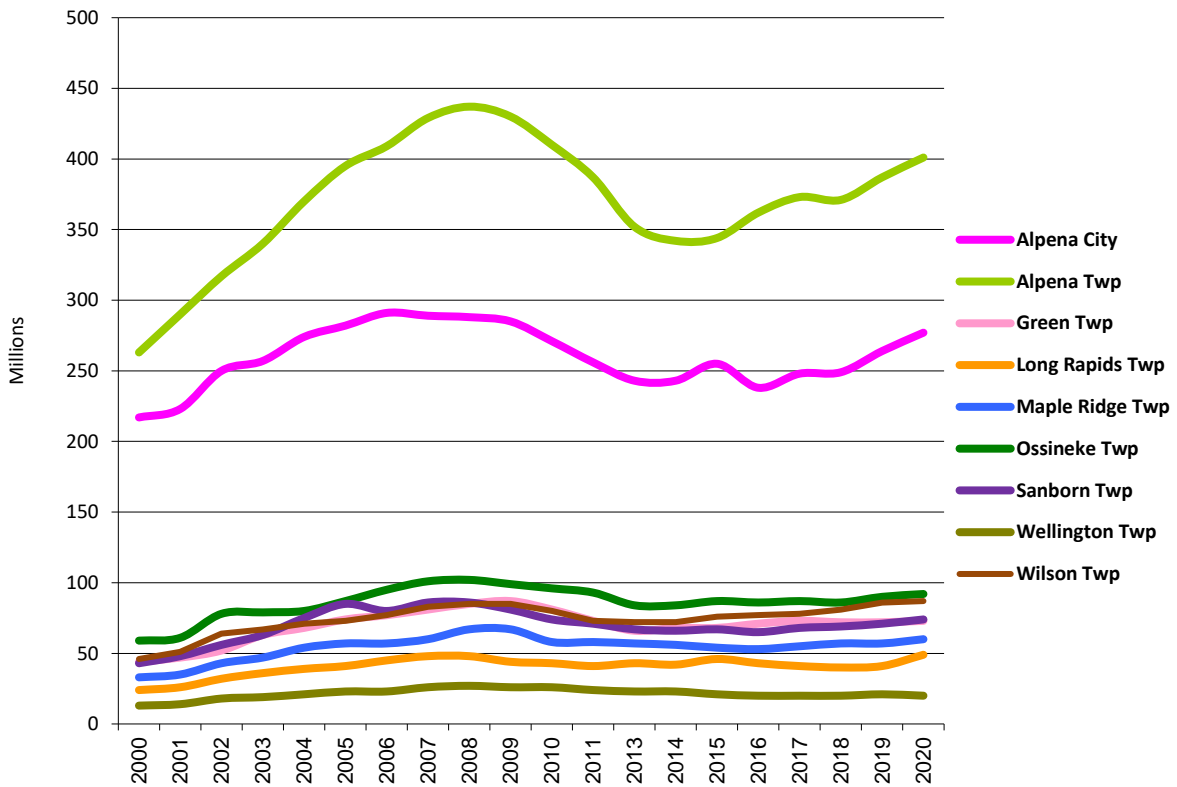
The City of Alpena followed a similar, but much shallower growth curve. SEV values in the City peaked in 2006 and by 2011 had declined to around 2003 levels. An upward trend has been happening since 2018. All other communities followed a similar pattern, but on a much smaller scale.

### Figure 3.9 City of Alpena SEV 2012-2018



SOURCE: MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

### Figure 3.10 - SEV by Municipality





# City of Alpena Finances

Munetrix ([www.munetrix.com](http://www.munetrix.com)) is an online system which displays fiscal data for local units of government in order to provide transparency and an understanding of local unit finances to the public. Information provided in this section was generated from F65 forms to give a summary of the City of Alpena’s financial health (Northeast Michigan Council of Governments sponsored the Munetrix data). This section is intended to give a summary of the financial health of the City of Alpena.

## Revenue

Revenue is generated from tax dollars received from residents and businesses, which are generated from the millage rate multiplied by property valuations. Revenue is also generated from other sources such as State and Federal grants, permits, and fees. **Figure 3.11** shows the sources of revenue for the City of Alpena. The largest revenue source is property taxes and other services.

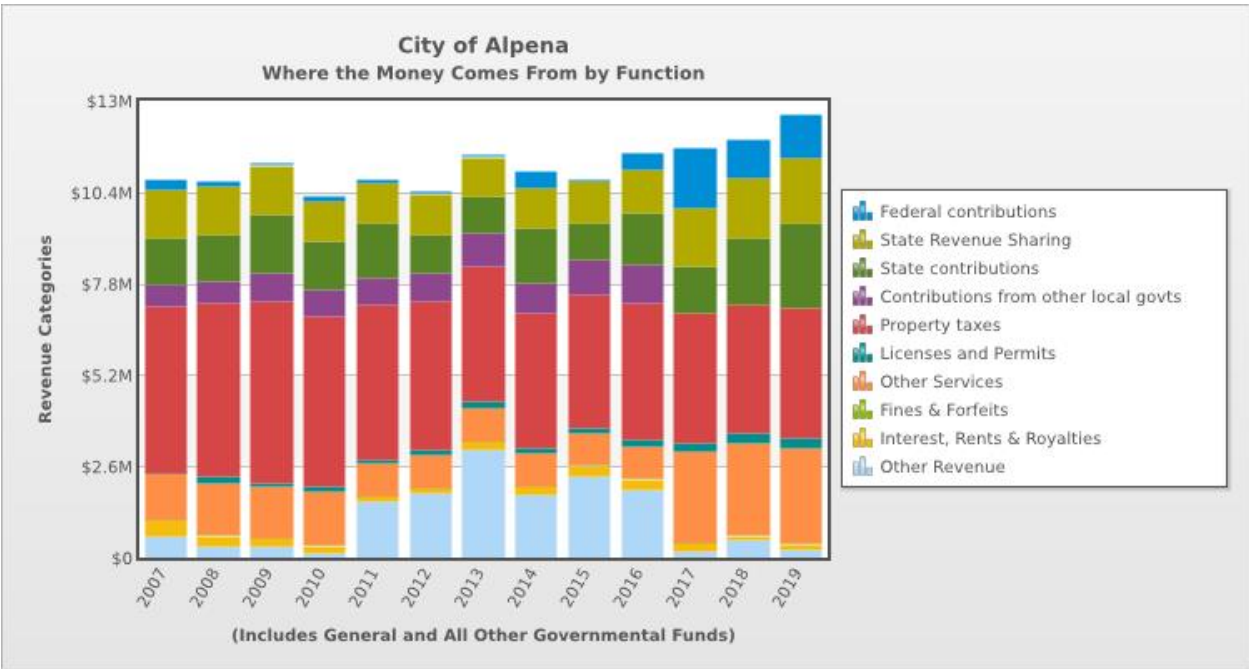
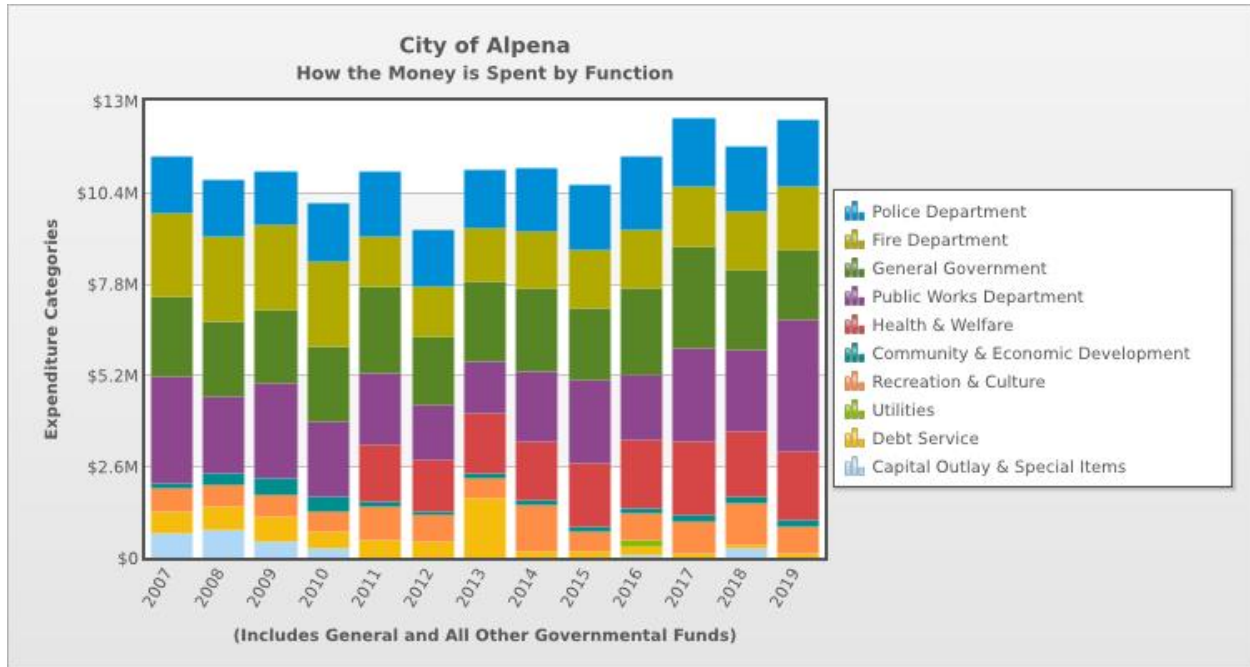


Figure 3.11: City of Alpena Revenue Breakdown

## Expenditures

As a service provider for the City, expenses cover the costs associated with operating the City Government. In 2019, Public Works, General Government, Health and Welfare, and the Police and Fire Departments comprised the largest areas of expenditure (**Figure 3.12**).

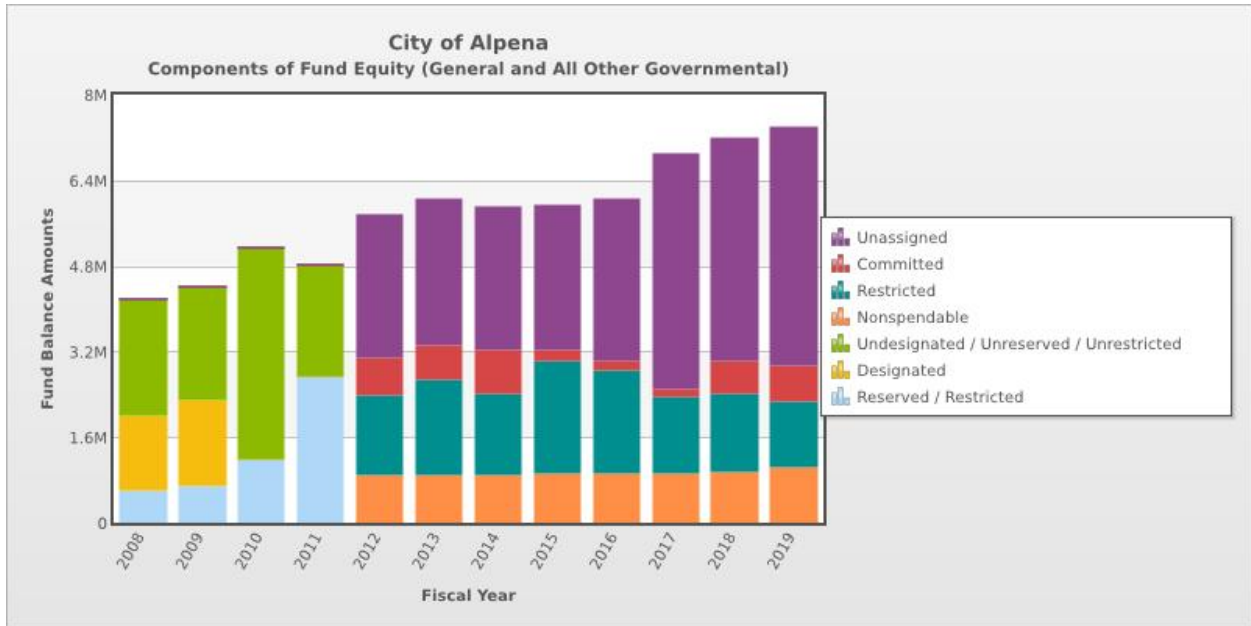


**Figure 3.12: Expenditures**

## Fund Equity

Fund balance is an accounting term in which total liabilities are subtracted from total assets to get the Fund balance. Fund balance is not solely cash but can include other assets. **Figure 3.13** shows components of fund equity for the City. The fund balance has fluctuated in either direction year to year.

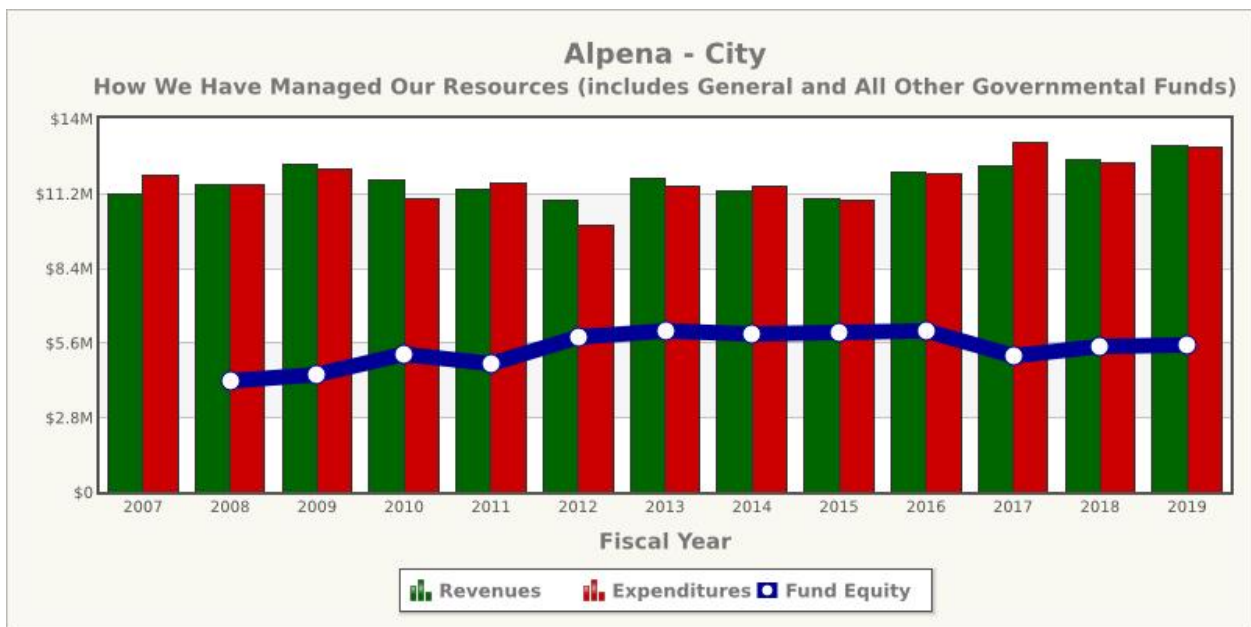
If the city is receiving more revenue than it needs to pay its bills its fund balance (net worth) will increase. If the city is paying out more money on its bills than it is receiving, then its fund balance will go down. If the fund balance goes down far enough, it creates a negative fund balance called a deficit. Beginning in 2012, accounting procedure changes dictated the categories of fund balance increase from 3 to 5 and the names changed, thus the difference in chart colors.



**Figure 3.13: Components of Fund Equity**

### Cash Investments

Another sign of a community’s fiscal health is how well it manages its cash reserves and invests these funds. **Figure 3.14** illustrates revenues versus expenditures versus fund equity between 2007 and 2019. There were four out of the last thirteen years where expenditures exceeded revenue. Fund equity remained somewhat consistent between 2012 and 2016, then dropping off between 2016 and 2017. In 2017, the city witnessed the highest level of expenditures. Further analysis of **Figure 3.14** suggests the city remains in generally good fiscal health.



**Figure 3.14: Fund Equity**

## Spending Per Capita

Figure 3.15 shows the spending per capita on services for citizens in selected communities within the NEMCOG region. In 2018, the spending per capita for the City of Alpena was \$1,261 per capita, which is average. Four communities (Rogers City, Cheboygan, Gaylord and Onaway) were below average spending, while two cities (Harrisville, and Grayling) were above the average.

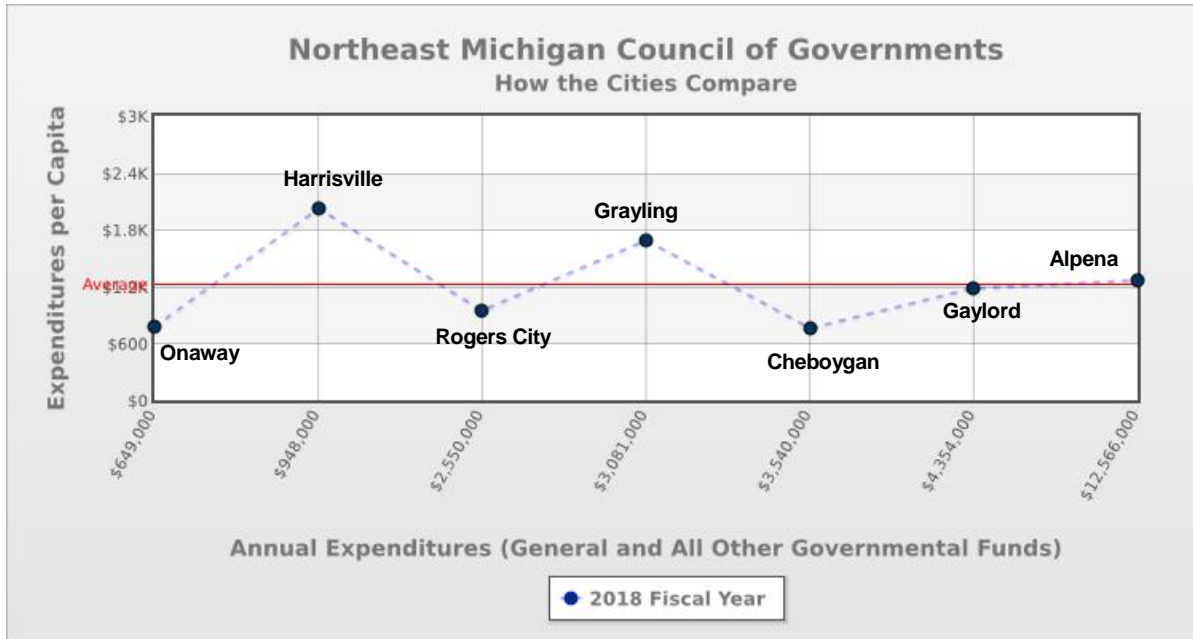


Figure 3.15: Spending Per Capita - 2018

## Financial Stress

The "Stress Meter" provides an overview of Indicator Scores used by the State of Michigan to calculate the financial stress of a municipality. The Indicator Score gives an overall picture of the soundness of local governments, the trend of stability over time, and allows the identification of local units that are most in need of help. Scores are generated based on the criteria of population growth, real taxable value growth, large real taxable

value growth, general fund expenditures as a percent of taxable value, general fund operating deficit, prior general fund operating deficit, size of general fund balance, fund deficits in current or previous year, and general long-term debt as a percent of taxable value. The lower the number, the more fiscally sound a local unit is determined to be. There are three score categories: Fiscally Neutral (stress scores of 0-4), Fiscal Watch (stress scores of 5-7), and Fiscal Stress (stress score of 8-10) (**Table 3.13**). The State Department of Treasury uses these indicator scores to determine those communities in Michigan which are under the most extreme financial stress. **Table 3.14** shows the fiscal scores for the City of Alpena. Between 2011 and 2016, the City has never exceeded the *Fiscally Neutral* category. **Figure 3.16** shows the indicator scores for all municipalities in Alpena County. The graph shows a rather stable indicator score of low risk.

| Points from Scale | Category         | State Action   |
|-------------------|------------------|--|
| 0-4               | Fiscally Neutral | No State action needed   |
| 5-7               | Fiscal Watch     | Unit of local government is notified of its relatively high score and is placed on a watch list for the current and following year.                          |
| 8-10              | Fiscal Stress    | Unit of local government is notified of its high score, is placed on a watch list for the current and following year, and receives consideration for review. |

Source: Munetrix, 2012

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 2019 | 1 |
| 2018 | 1 |
| 2017 | 2 |
| 2016 | 2 |
| 2015 | 1 |
| 2014 | 2 |
| 2013 | 1 |
| 2012 | 3 |
| 2011 | 1 |

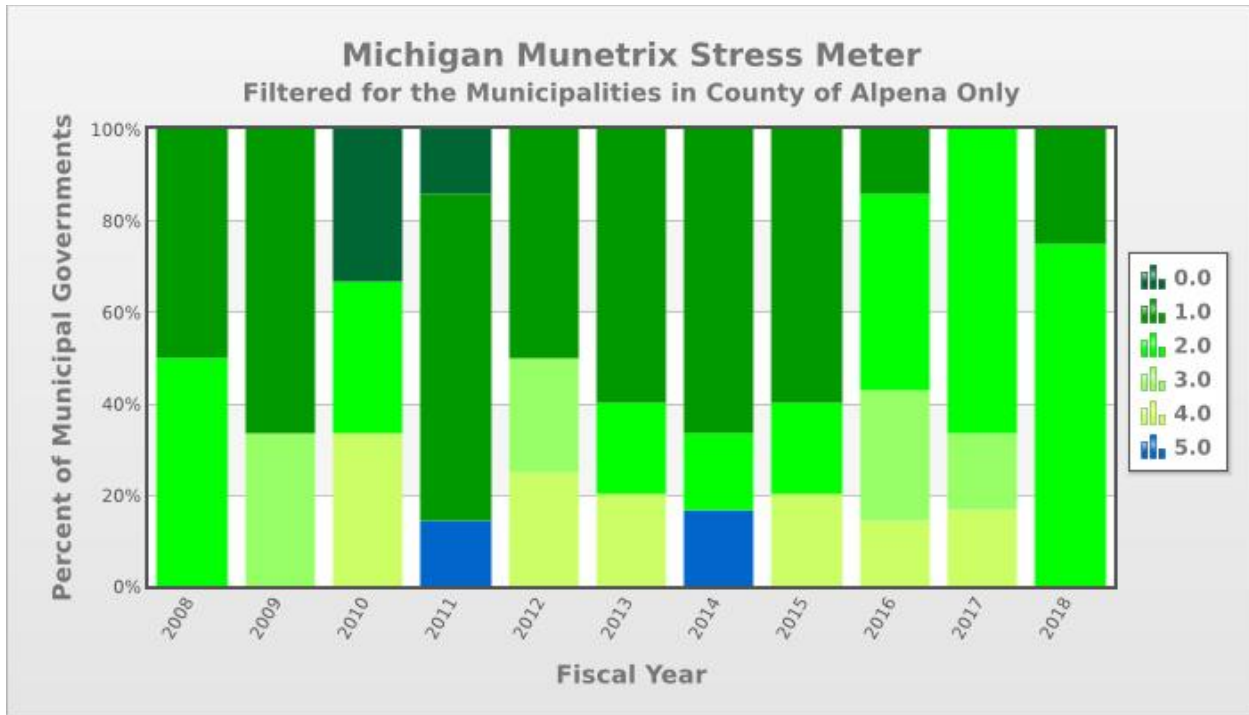


Figure 3.16: Fiscal Stress Meter

## Fiscal Distress Indicator Factors

### Population Growth

It can be argued there is a correlation between population loss and fiscal problems. Population loss can result in a general weakening of a locality's economy and could be caused by a loss of a major employer, demographic shift or other factors. Local governments are often unable to reduce expenditures to match a growth decline or loss of revenue due to departing taxpayers. This first indicator measures population change. If a unit lost population from the previous year it scores a 1, otherwise it is assigned a 0. **Figure 3.17** clearly shows the City of Alpena's overall decline in population since 2006.

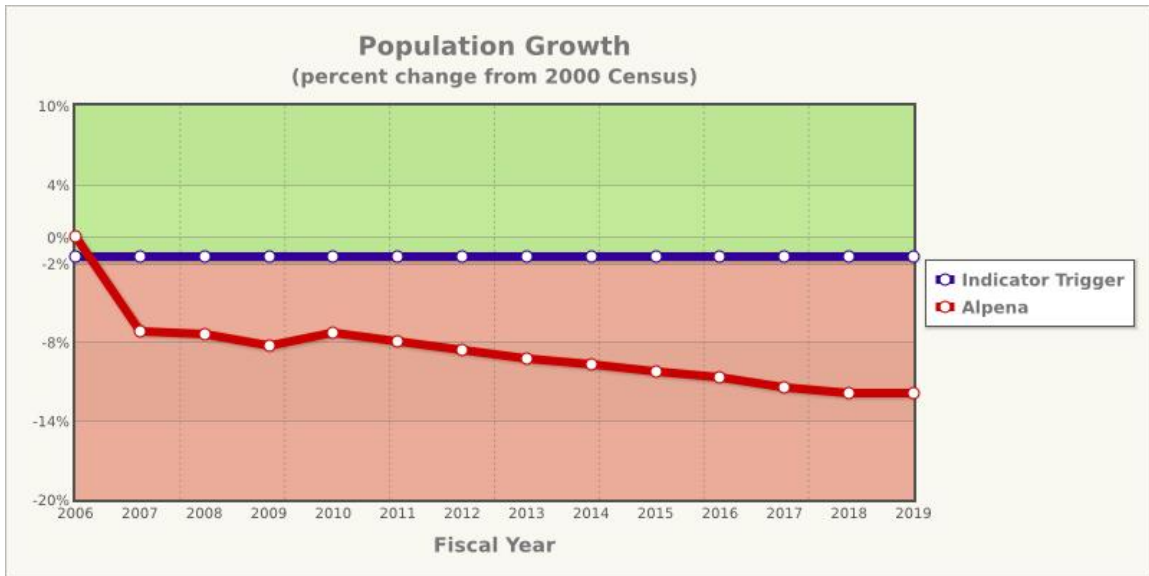


Figure 3.17: Population Growth Indicators

**General Fund Expenditures as Percent of Taxable Value**

This indicator assesses the size of a unit's public sector relative to its ability to generate revenues. A unit that scores relatively high on this variable indicates a unit that has a large public sector relative to the size of its tax base. Units with high scores on this indicator may wish to decrease this ratio through cutting expenditures, providing more efficient delivery of services, and/or attracting new residents or businesses that will increase the tax base. This indicator has no time lag and deals solely with data from within the same year. **Figure 3.18** suggests the City of Alpena efficiently utilizes its resources and reflects the increasing expenditures relative to the taxable value.

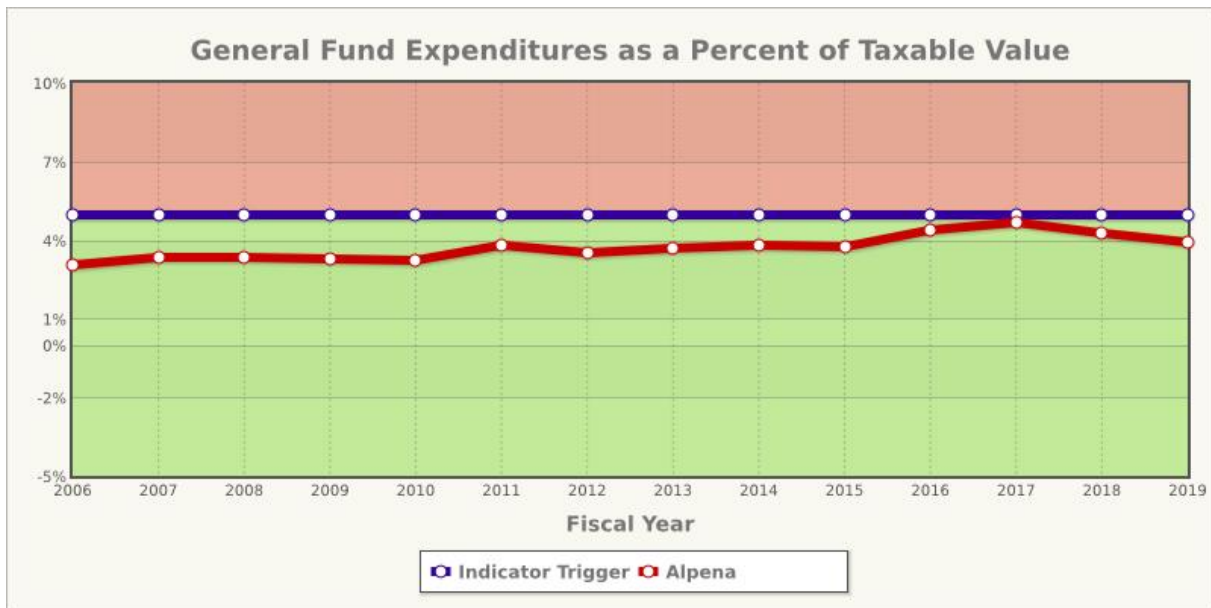
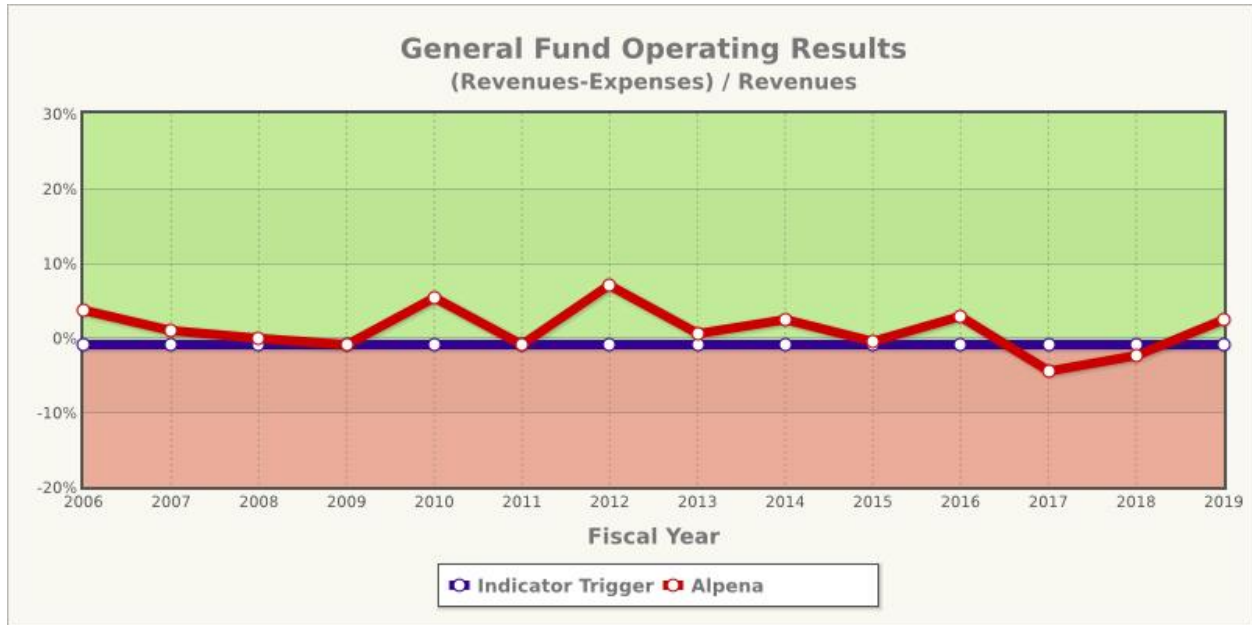


Figure 3.18: Expenditures as a Percent of Taxable Value



### Operating Results

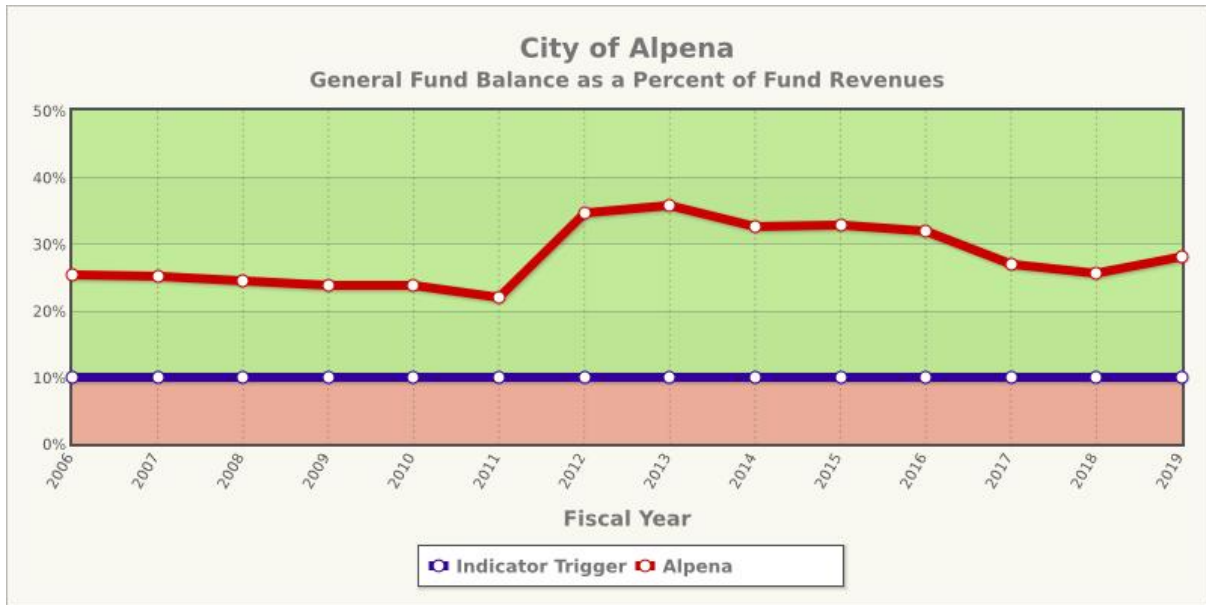
This variable is computed by subtracting general fund expenditures from general fund revenues for a given year. This figure is then divided by general fund revenues. If the resulting number is less than -0.01, this indicates a unit has a nontrivial operating deficit and this unit received a score of 1. If the unit does not have a general fund operating deficit, or if this deficit is trivial, the unit is given a 0. **Figure 3.19** shows the City of Alpena does not have issues related to an operating deficit, but expenditures did exceed revenues in 2017.



**Figure 3.19: Operating Deficits**

### Size of Fund Balance

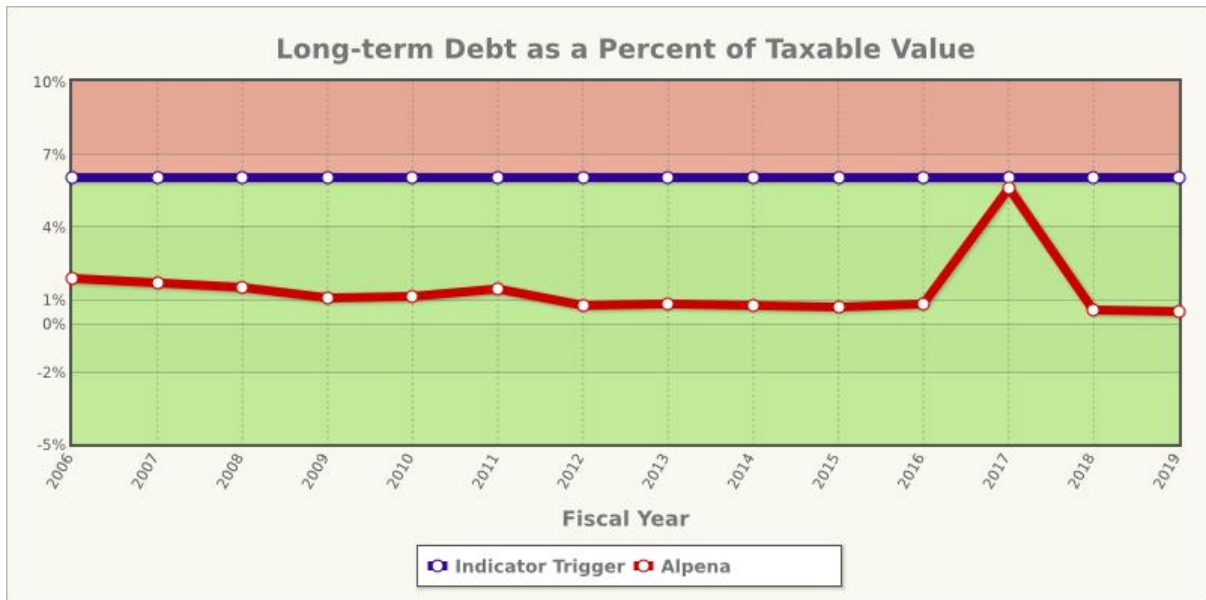
Most units maintain a positive fund balance, and it is a sign of fiscal distress if the fund balance is negative. Units typically find it beneficial to keep the fund balance from declining too greatly as this inhibits their ability to cope with unexpected circumstances in either the revenue or expenditure stream. The actual variable constructed for this indicator is the general fund balance as a proportion of general fund revenue. If a unit maintains a general fund balance less than 13% of its general fund revenue, it scores a 1. Conversely a general fund balance above the 0.13 level scores a 0. The City of Alpena has an established policy that governs the amount of Fund Balance that must be retained. **Figure 3.20** shows the City is following this policy and its levels of Fund Balance are adequate.



**Figure 3.20: Fund Balance as a Percentage of Revenues**

**Long-Term Debt as a Percent of Taxable Value**

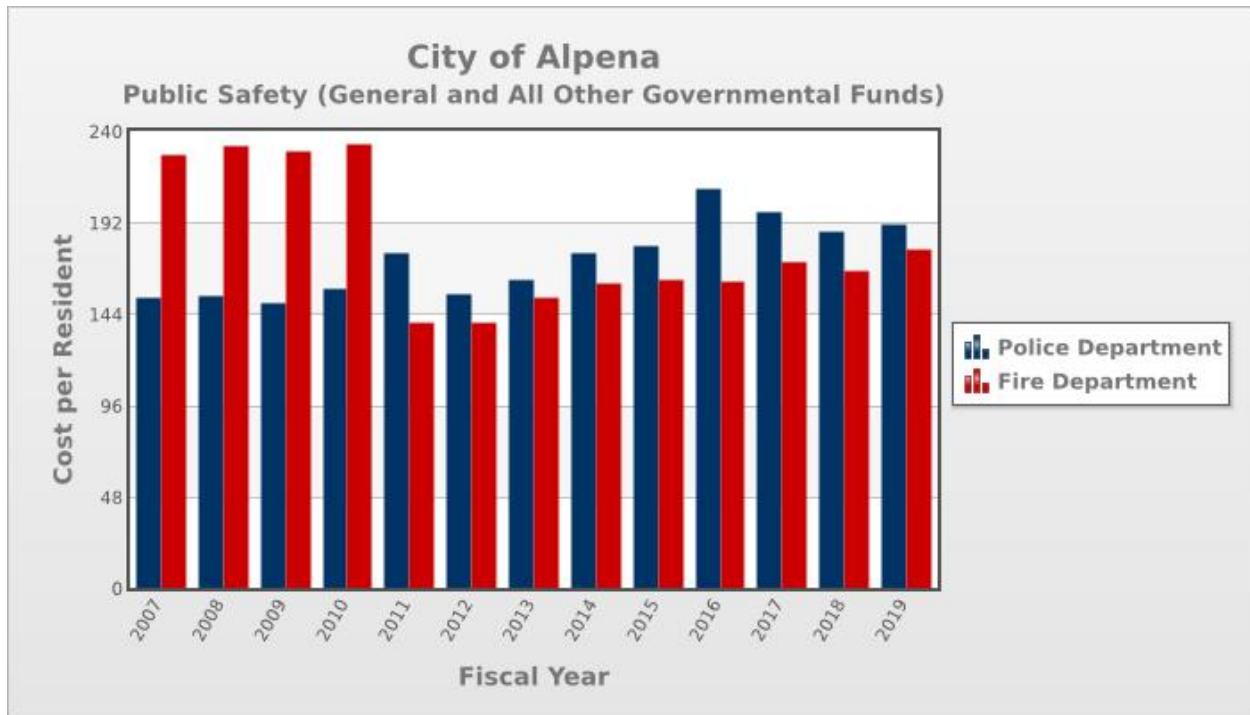
Large debt levels relative to the ability of a unit to generate revenue are a clear sign of fiscal distress. This variable is constructed by taking general long-term debt and dividing it by the taxable value of the unit. Any unit with a debt to taxable value ratio above 6% is scored a 1 and those beneath it a 0. **Figure 3.21** shows the City does not have any significant long-term debt issues that will impact its ability to generate revenue.



**Figure 3.21: Long Term Debt**

## Public Safety Cost per Resident

The City of Alpena provides services to the community; approved expenses cover the costs associated with running the government, providing services, keeping the community clean, safe and maintaining the quality of life. In most units of government, police and fire services are the most expensive operations to maintain, as both services are very labor and equipment intensive. **Figure 3.22** shows that the cost per resident for police and fire services has remained fairly steady. However, in 2011 the *Per Resident* cost of fire services dramatically fell and has since been lower than that of police services.



**Figure 3.22: Public Safety Cost per Resident**

## Crime Statistics

Crime statistics provide a measure for the success or failure of certain criminal justice policies. They also provide important information on how best to allocate municipal resources. From a societal perspective, they provide indicators against which to measure criminal justice performance and therefore a way in which accountability can be measured. **Figure 3.23** shows the overall numbers of crimes has recently risen in the City of Alpena. The most common type of crime has been Property Crimes, which dropped in 2012 and continues to decrease on average and is now lower than the “Other” category of crimes. Crimes Against Persons dropped slightly in 2012 and has remained stable over the past few years. Since 2008, societal crimes were at their highest level in 2018.

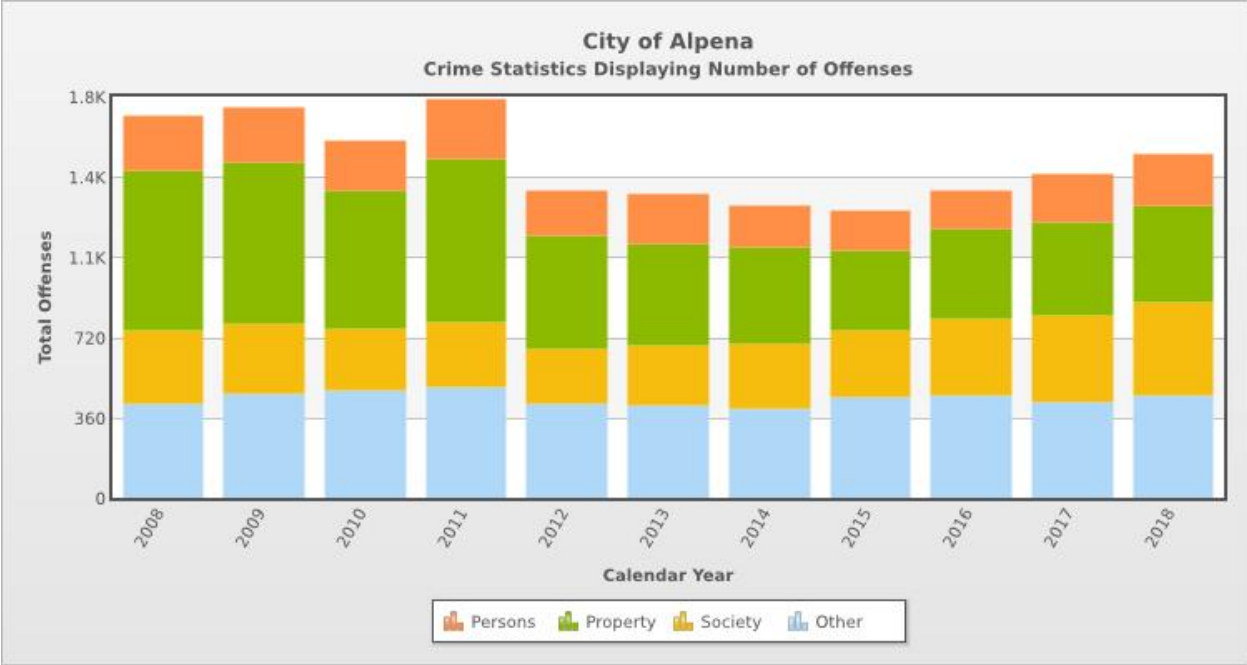


Figure 3.23: Crime Statistics

# Chapter 4

## Community Services and Facilities

Community services and facilities play an important role in maintaining and improving the quality of life in the City of Alpena. The location and level of some services, such as public water, public wastewater, and fiber optic lines, determine the types and intensities of development within a community. This chapter will provide information on the wide range of community services and facilities available in the City. **Figures 4.3 and 4.4**, found at the end of the chapter, show the locations of community facilities and city-owned lands, respectively.

### Educational System

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Alpena Public Schools (**Table 4.1**), which serves the entire County and a small portion of Presque Isle County, is part of the Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District; which is comprised of Alpena County, Montmorency County, and Alcona County. According to the “Standard and Poor’s School Evaluation Services,” Alpena Public Schools had a 2018 enrollment of 3,937 students and a student to teacher ratio of 19.76. Alpena Public Schools had an operating expenditure of \$5,995 per student for 2017-2018 according to the Michigan Department of Education. All Alpena Public Schools buildings and facilities are linked by a fiber optic network.

The number of students in the public schools has been declining over the past 32 years. From 1980 to 2018 the total number of public and parochial K-12 students in Alpena County has significantly decreased. Enrollment during this period dropped by 49% from 7,655 students enrolled in 1980, to 3,937 enrolled in 2018. The school district enrollment has continued to steadily decrease since 1980 with an addition 313 less students since 2012. Given the current age distribution in Alpena County, the downward trend in school enrollment is likely to continue. The location and enrollment of private schools in Alpena are shown in **Table 4.2**.

Alternative educational choices are available in the Alpena area. Three private schools are available in Alpena including Immanuel Lutheran School, All Saints School, and Seventh Day Adventist School. Home schooling is another education option that has grown in popularity. Bingham Arts Academy, a no-cost charter school closed in 2014.

### ACES Academy

ACES Academy (Alternative Choices for Educational Success) is housed in the former Oxbow Elementary School in Alpena. ACES Academy offers adult and alternative education, as well as community education programs. Its Alternative Education component serves students who have difficulty with the regular program at the Alpena High School. The Adult Education program helps adults earn a high school diploma equivalent (GED). In 2015-2016, 121 full and part time high school students were enrolled at ACES.

**Table 4.1  
Alpena Public Schools**

| School                               | School Type       | Location                              | Enrollment<br>2011-2012 | Enrollment<br>2015-2016 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Besser School</b>                 | Elementary        | 375 Wilson St – City of Alpena        | 348                     | 425                     |
| <b>Ella White School</b>             | Elementary        | 201 N. Ripley – City of Alpena        | 402                     | 465                     |
| <b>Hinks School</b>                  | Elementary        | 7667 U.S. 23 N. – Alpena Twp.         | 193                     | 156                     |
| <b>Lincoln School</b>                | Elementary        | 309 W. Lake St. City of Alpena        | 162                     | 173                     |
| <b>Sanborn School</b>                | Elementary        | 12170 U.S. 23 S. Sanborn Twp.         | 205                     | 183                     |
| <b>Wilson School</b>                 | Elementary        | 4999 Herron Rd. – Wilson Twp.         | 261                     | 225                     |
| <b>Thunder Bay Junior High</b>       | Middle School     | 3500 West Third Ave – Alpena Township | 995                     | 881                     |
| <b>Alpena Senior High</b>            | Secondary         | 3303 South Third St. – City of Alpena | 1286                    | 1309                    |
| <b>Aces Academy</b>                  | Alternative       | 700 Pinecrest Street – City of Alpena | 173                     | 121                     |
| <b>Pied Piper Opportunity Center</b> | Special Education | 444 Wilson Street – City of Alpena    | 34                      | 23                      |

**Source: National Center for Educational Statistics**

**Table 4.2  
Private Schools**

| School                              | School Type | Location                           | Enrollment<br>2011-2012 | Enrollment<br>201-2016 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>All Saints School</b>            | K-6         | 500 N. 2nd Ave. – City of Alpena   | 102                     | 81                     |
| <b>Seventh Day Adventist School</b> | K-7         | 4029 US 23 – City of Alpena        | 9                       | 6                      |
| <b>Immanuel Lutheran School</b>     | PreK-8      | 355 Wilson Street – City of Alpena | 102                     | 79                     |

**Source: National Center for Educational Statistics**

## Pied Piper Opportunity Center

Pied Piper Opportunity Center is owned and operated by the Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona Educational Service District. The school serves students who are Moderately Cognitively Impaired, Severely Cognitively Impaired, Severely Multiply Impaired, and Autistic Impaired. Students range in age from 3 to 26 years. Pied Piper, located on Wilson Street, provides individualized instructional programs in personal care, independent living, language, and physical, vocational, academic, and social-emotional education to special needs students. Pupils are served at the center, at home, or in the hospital.

## Alpena Community College

Alpena Community College (ACC) is located on 700 acres of land in the City of Alpena. ACC operates two major campuses plus outreach activities in various area public schools. The Main Campus is in the City Alpena and the Huron Shores campus is located at the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda, Michigan. Founded in 1952, ACC will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Accredited by the Michigan Commission on College Accreditation in 1959, ACC was also awarded full accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1963. It has remained continuously accredited, with ten specific programs in applied science, nursing, and community corrections being accredited.

In 2016, enrollment was 2155 students and 324 students earned degrees. ACC has 50 full-time and 145 part-time faculty. ACC 75 programs of study and offers degree completion programs, vocational training and community enrichment classes to residents of Alpena County and all of northeast Michigan. The Madeline Briggs University Center (MBUC) at Alpena Community College houses offices of accredited four-year institutions that are cooperating with ACC to make completion programs for selected bachelor and master's degrees available in Northeast Michigan. The MBUC houses the offices of Ferris State and Northwood universities. Ferris State University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies, with Organizational Engagement or Social Science Management options. Northwood University has an on-site program center offering a Bachelor of Business Administration programs, with focuses on Accounting, Computer Information Management, Health Care Management, and Management. Collaborative transfer programs with U. of M. Flint Nursing school, Madonna University Social Work, Lake Superior State University Business and Accounting and Eastern Michigan Technology Management provide more opportunities for local students.

Campus services include veteran's assistance, financial aid, a bookstore, The Learning Center, Stephen Fletcher Library, and the Women's Resource Center. The privately owned "College Park Apartments" are located nearby to provide student housing.

## Northeast Michigan Career and Technical Education Center

Housed by the Alpena High School, the Tech-Ed Center provides a wide range of career and technical programs to students from Alpena, Alcona, Hillman, Atlanta, Posen and Rogers City high schools and to those from the ACES Academy. Adults may also participate in programs that range from studies in agriculture to computer specialists.

## Libraries & Museums

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### George N. Fletcher Library

The George N. Fletcher Library is centrally located in downtown Alpena. Established in 1967, it serves Alpena County from a facility that was constructed in 1974 and fully remodeled in 1997. In 2002, the library was expanded into an adjacent building. This addition can be accessed from the second floor of the library via an enclosed walkway with surrounding windows, which afford a view of the adjacent street and plaza area below.

Library services include books, magazines, newspapers, compact discs, audiotapes, films, videocassettes, digital libraries and an art lending library. Inter-library loan services and computers with Internet access are available for public use. Programs are offered for both children and adults. Special services include; the READ (adult literacy program), Job Launch (resume writing, etc.), Books and Brown Bags (lunch hour book review), and the Foundation Grants Center. Authors, musicians, artists, and other specialty speakers are featured frequently. Additionally, the library has informational programs on specific topics, Internet training, computer classes and other exhibits. For children, the library offers story hours, a summer book

club, and many other individual programs. Visually and physically impaired individuals can be accommodated by the library's special materials circulation.

For the calendar year 2017, the library had 69,000 books, 108 magazine subscriptions, 7 newspaper subscriptions, 1,900 videos, 1,837 compact discs- including audiobooks and music, patrons have access to over 3,000 downloadable audiobooks, 8,000 eBooks, and 130 digital magazine titles. The library provides access to 7 databases for research and educational purposes, in some cases both on and offsite.

Special Collections include the Michigan Room where numerous Michigan reference materials (i.e., law, history, and environment) and general materials (i.e., industry, maritime, sports, and wildlife) are available. In addition, genealogy sources with extensive Alpena County records, as well as records from surrounding counties are also available. The Foundation Center Collection includes private & public foundations listings, grants & funding sources, and how-to books.

In 2004, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserve approved an agreement with the Library to jointly manage the Thunder Bay Sanctuary Research Collection, one of the premiere collections on Great Lakes history in the world. The collection includes over 1,000 published works, 65,000 photographs, 56 linear feet of vertical files, 40 feet of periodicals, 60,000 data cards, 100 navigation charts, and 350 shipbuilding plans. Topics of the collection include wooden shipbuilding technology, Great Lakes ports and waterways, docks, cargoes, ships, shipbuilders, machinery and rigging, notable maritime personalities, and shipwrecks. A special feature of the collection is a card index listing most of the ships on the Great Lakes before the turn of the century, a roster of some 15,000 vessels, complete with descriptive data and highlights of the ships' careers and their ultimate losses. In addition to providing the historical basis for the Sanctuary's archeological research, the collection allows Great Lakes historians and Library patrons' access to documents and photographs not previously available to the public. This collection is available online.

## **The Stephen Fletcher Library**

The Stephen Fletcher Library is located on the campus of Alpena Community College. Offering a full range of library services, it is available to the public as well as to students enrolled at the college. On site computers provide library patrons with Internet access. Inter-library loans offer additional resources for research and other educational purposes.

## **The Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan**

The Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan is the only museum in Northeast Michigan accredited by the American Association of Museums. Located in the north part of the City, it is the regional center for art, history and science in northeast Michigan. The Besser Museum offers changing exhibits, lectures, workshops and classes in art, history and science. Besser Museum's galleries feature artworks by painters, photographers, potters and other artists drawn from across the area, state and country. Permanent history exhibits include Great Lakes Indian artifacts, lumbering and farming implements, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century decorative arts, an 1890's Avenue of Shops, and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century arts and graphics. The museum has a planetarium, Foucault pendulum, and eight historic structures on the grounds. Guided tours and planetarium programs are available year round.

On the grounds of the Besser Museum is a group of historic buildings that have been developed into an interactive display. These buildings include the Maltz Exchange Bank, Green School, McKay Cabin and



Spratt Church. These buildings, all significant to the area's history, are open to the public during special Museum events, such as, the annual Fall Harvest Day, an observance on the first Saturday in October. A 1928 commercial fishing tug, the Katherine V. also graces the grounds. A new interactive exhibit is the Lafarge Fossil Park. The Fossil Park exhibit is a simulated limestone quarry that contains fossil material generously donated by Lafarge Alpena Plant and Specification Stone Products of Alpena. Open to the public, this display allows you to learn about the unique features of rocks and rock formations, plus allows an individual to dig in the exhibit and keep all the Devonian fossils they find.

## **Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserve**

On October 7, 2000, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserve designation was finalized and it became the thirteenth National Marine Sanctuary in a system that extends from American Samoa to Massachusetts. The Thunder Bay NMS/UP protects a nationally significant collection of over 150 shipwrecks, spanning over a century of Great Lakes shipping history. Thunder Bay NMS/UP represents the first Great Lakes sanctuary, the first fresh water sanctuary, the first sanctuary to focus solely on a large collection of underwater cultural resources, and the first sanctuary located entirely in state waters.

The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve (TBNMS/UP) encompasses 448 square miles of Northwest Lake Huron. The landward boundary of the sanctuary/preserve is marked by the northern and southern limits of Alpena County, and the sanctuary extends east from the lakeshore to longitude 83 degrees west.

Lake Huron's cold, fresh waters have created a remarkable state of shipwreck preservation that is unmatched by the other sanctuaries' saltwater environments. Thunder Bay's collection of shipwrecks represents the diversity of vessels that navigated the Great Lakes in the 19th and 20th centuries. These sunken ships reflect transitions in vessel architecture and construction while conveying stories of Great Lakes transportation and commerce. Documented shipwrecks are located at depths ranging from 12 feet to as deep as 180 feet. Some of the wrecks remain largely intact while other sites are only remnants of vessels' boilers, engines, rudders, windlasses, and anchors. However, the documented wrecks are only a small section of the total wreckage believed to have occurred.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the State of Michigan have established a partnership to cooperatively manage the sanctuary's underwater cultural resources. A 15-member Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) representing the local community provides recommendations to NOAA and the State of Michigan concerning sanctuary development. The SAC will continue to advise the sanctuary/preserve manager about management issues. Sanctuary activities will focus on resource protection, education, and research. Priority activities include placing mooring buoys at identified shipwrecks, initiating an inventory and documentation of shipwrecks, and developing a maritime heritage education program.

The Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center is a 20,000-square-foot facility that highlights the maritime heritage of the Great Lakes and the shipwrecks of Thunder Bay. The facility features a maritime heritage "discovery center" featuring more than 8,000 square feet of exhibits on the Great Lakes, shipwrecks, archaeology, and maritime history.

The Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, which also has interpretive shipwreck displays relating to the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, has been developed in a refurbished building within the old

Fletcher Paper Mill property along the Thunder Bay River. The exhibits feature a life-size hand-built replica of a portion of a 1800s Great Lakes schooner, a recreation of a shipwreck site, artifact lab, and hundreds of interpretive learning opportunities.

## Cemeteries

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Evergreen Cemetery, located on Washington Avenue near the west entrance to the City, was dedicated to the City in September 1859, and is 61 acres in size. The historic entrance gate was constructed in August 1907. Burials in Evergreen Cemetery total 20,000 – 30,000. The mausoleum, built in the 1930's contains 138 burial crypts, all of which are owned. The cemetery averages 83 burials per year. There is enough undeveloped land in the cemetery for future burials to last over 50 years. All developed areas of the cemetery are under irrigation. The Grace Lutheran and Hebrew cemeteries are located within the cemetery grounds and are also operated and maintained by the City.

Holy Cross Cemetery, located across Washington Avenue from Evergreen Cemetery is a Catholic cemetery and is operated and maintained by several area Catholic churches.

## Medical Facilities

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MidMichigan Medical Center-Alpena is a 139-bed acute care facility located in the City of Alpena. MidMichigan Medical Center-Alpena is the federally-designated rural Regional Referral Center for northeast Michigan and part of the University of Michigan Health Systems. The hospital has an emergency department equipped to provide services for minor injuries and illness to trauma. Air and ambulance service is available for patients requiring care not available locally. There are two medical/surgical units that can provide care for adult and pediatric patients. MidMichigan Medical Center-Alpena and other local medical providers also offer a wide variety of specialized medical services. Examples include a hyperbaric chamber, kidney dialysis, specialized cancer treatments, behavioral treatment, and treatments for sleep disorders, as well as other services.

District Health Department #4 service area includes Alpena, Cheboygan Montmorency and Presque Isle Counties. Services are provided through four major divisions; Personal Health Services; Home Health Services; Environmental Health Services and Health Education. Health Department offices are located in Alpena, Cheboygan, Atlanta and Rogers City.

Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health provides support services to developmentally disabled persons as well as persons needing mental health services. The Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health service area covers Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties. In addition, a VA clinic is located near downtown Alpena which provides primary care to veterans.

## Parks & Recreation

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The City of Alpena has made it a priority to offer numerous recreational options to its residents and visitors. Alpena boasts 23 city-owned parks and/or pocket parks spanning throughout the city. In addition, other publicly-owned recreational facilities exist within the city limits, including the Alpena County Fairgrounds, Plaza Pool and Tennis Courts, Northern Lights Arena (owned by Alpena County), APlex (owned by the Park Family Foundation), Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, two pocket parks

owned by the Alpena Downtown Development Authority, the Alpena Housing Commission’s Kurrasch Park and the privately owned Rotary Island Mill Park.

Bay View, Thomson, Blair Street, Starlite Beach, and Mich-e-ke-wis parks are the five City parks located on Lake Huron. Four of the five parks (excluding Bay View) comprise the prime swimming beaches within the City. North Riverfront, South Riverfront, LaMarre, Eleventh Avenue Boat Launch, Water Tower, and Washington Avenue parks are six of the nine City parks located on the Thunder Bay River. North Riverfront Park is a primary boat launch location downstream of the Ninth Avenue Dam, while the Eleventh Avenue Boat Launch is the primary launch site upstream of the dam. South Riverfront Park has deepwater dockage for large boats. Water Tower Park also houses Riverside Skate Park.

Island, Duck, and Sytek parks are three City parks located on the Thunder Bay River. They are collectively part of the Wildlife Sanctuary, a 600-acre natural ponding-area upstream of the Ninth Avenue Dam. Veteran’s Park is a small pocket park in the downtown area. Avery Park is a Victorian-style pocket park located in the downtown area across the Second Avenue Bridge. McRae Park is a large neighborhood park on Alpena’s “northside.” It contains multiple Little League and baseball fields.

The Alpena Bi-Path is an 18.3 mile in city non-motorized trail that connects neighborhoods, commercial area, parks and schools. It also connects directly with the Michigan Department of Natural Resource’s (DNR) 70 mile North Eastern State Trail (NEST) that goes to Alpena, improved in 2013 and the 22 mile Alpena to Hillman Trail, phase 1 to M-65 is planned for construction in late 2020 and into 2021 and will extend from Franklin Street in Alpena westerly to the carpool lot located on M-32 in Herron.

The City recently built a trailhead facility that connects the Bi-Path to the NEST. Both DNR trails allow for snowmobiles from December 1 to March 31. The Maritime Heritage Trail is a history-oriented walking tour along the Thunder Bay River and it utilizes part of the Bi-Path.

Refer to the City of Alpena Parks & Recreation Plan for more detailed descriptions of City parks.

## Publicly-Owned Facilities/Land

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### City Hall

Alpena City Hall was constructed in 1908 and has remained the center of City municipal government ever since. City Hall houses all City services and departments with the exception of the Public Safety and Public Works departments.

Built in a beautiful Georgian architectural style and constructed of Bedford limestone, City Hall was dedicated a State Historic Landmark in 2002. In the 1940’s, the cupola, which was part of the original building design was removed.

**1908**



**2002**



## Public Safety Facility

The Alpena Public Safety Facility opened in 1992 and consolidated all Police, Fire, and Ambulance services into one building. Previously, the City Police Department had been located at Alpena City Hall, while the Fire and Ambulance departments were located at two separate fire stations, located on both sides of the Thunder Bay River. The facility contains vehicle storage bays, administrative offices, training rooms, equipment rooms, interview rooms, equipment and evidence storage rooms, and living quarters for City firefighters.

In 2005, the City purchased an adjacent building next to the Public Safety Facility. This building is now being used as a storage facility for the DARE program and has additional vehicle and equipment storage for both the police and fire departments. The building also houses some switching equipment for the City's computer network.

## DPW Service Center

In late 2005, the City of Alpena began operations at a new 32,000 sq. foot Department of Public Works Service Center at its Long Lake Avenue Storage Facility. This new structure replaced the much smaller DPW Garage on Campbell Street that began operation in the late 1940's. The new facility contains administrative offices, a conference room, modern kitchen and locker room facilities; parts storage, a carpenter shop, a modern mechanics bay, and a large vehicle storage area. Extensive improvements were also conducted to the site and other outbuildings.

**Table 4.3  
Public Facilities**

| Facility                    | Type of Facility | Location                   | Ownership      |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| City Hall                   | Public Building  | 208 North First Ave.       | City of Alpena |
| Public Safety Facility      | Public Building  | 501 W. Chisholm Street     | City of Alpena |
| DPW Service Center          | Public Building  | 1015 Long Lake Ave.        | City of Alpena |
| Water Treatment Plant       | Public Building  | 1300 State Avenue          | City of Alpena |
| Water Recycling Plant       | Public Building  | 210 Harbor Drive           | City of Alpena |
| City of Alpena Marina       | Marina           | Lake Huron                 | City of Alpena |
| Eleventh Avenue Boat Launch | Recreation       | Eleventh Avenue            | City of Alpena |
| Bay View Park               | Recreation       | State Avenue<br>Lake Huron | City of Alpena |
| Thomson Park                | Recreation       | State Avenue<br>Lake Huron | City of Alpena |
| Blair Street Park           | Recreation       | State Avenue               | City of Alpena |

|  |                        |  |                                  |
|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|  |                        | Lake Huron   |                                  |
| <b>Mich-e-ki-wis Park/Starlite Beach</b>                                       | Recreation             | State Avenue<br>Lake Huron                                 | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>North Riverfront Park</b>   | Recreation             | Fletcher Street<br>North side of Thunder Bay River         | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>South Riverfront Park</b>   | Recreation             | Water Street<br>South side of Thunder Bay River            | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Island Park</b>   | Recreation             | Long Rapids Road<br>Thunder Bay River                      | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Duck Park</b>   | Recreation             | Chisholm Street & Long Rapids<br>Road<br>Thunder Bay River | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Sytek Park</b>  | Recreation             | Bagley Street<br>Thunder Bay River                         | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Avery Park</b>  | Recreation             | Second Avenue  | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>LaMarre Park</b>  | Recreation             | Eighth Avenue & River Street<br>Thunder Bay River          | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>McRae Park</b>  | Recreation             | North Second Avenue & Hueber<br>Street                     | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Kurrasch Park</b>   | Recreation             | Fourth Avenue  | Alpena Housing<br>Commission     |
| <b>Water Tower/ Riverside Skate<br/>Park</b>                                   | Recreation             | Ninth Ave. & Oldfield Street                               | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Veteran's Park</b>  | Recreation             | Second Avenue & Washington<br>Avenue                       | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Chisholm Street Park</b>  | Recreation             | Chisholm Street  | Alpena DDA                       |
| <b>Washington Avenue Park</b>  | Recreation             | Washington Avenue & Eleventh<br>Avenue                     | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Alpena County Fairgrounds</b>   | Recreation             | Eleventh Avenue  | Alpena County                    |
| <b>Alpena Plaza Pool &amp; Tennis<br/>Courts</b>                               | Recreation             | Alpena Senior High School (Third<br>Avenue)                | Alpena County                    |
| <b>A-Plex</b>  | Recreation             | Woodward Avenue  | Park Family Foundation           |
| <b>Northern Lights Arena</b>   | Recreation             | Woodward Avenue  | Alpena County                    |
| <b>George N. Fletcher Library</b>  | Library                | First Avenue &<br>Park Place                               | Alpena County                    |
| <b>Thunder Bay Underwater<br/>Preserve &amp; National Marine<br/>Sanctuary</b> | Archeological<br>Sites | Thunder Bay  | U.S. Government - NOAA           |
| <b>Great Lakes Maritime<br/>Heritage Center</b>                                | Museum                 | Fletcher Street  | U.S. Government - NOAA           |
| <b>Rotary Island Mill Park</b>   | Recreation             | Thunder Bay River (between Sixth &<br>Seventh Avenues)     | Alpena Rotary Club               |
| <b>Evergreen Cemetery</b>  | Cemetery               | Washington Avenue  | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Alpena Civic Theater</b>  | Public Building        | River Street   | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Culligan Plaza</b>  | Public Square          | Washington Avenue & Chisholm<br>Street                     | City of Alpena                   |
| <b>Alpena County Road<br/>Commission Facility</b>                              | Public Building        | Bagley Street  | Alpena County Road<br>Commission |
| <b>Alpena Regional Trailhead</b>   | Recreation             | Woodward Avenue  | City of Alpena                   |

|                                    |            |   |                                 |
|------------------------------------|------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Eleventh Avenue Boat Launch</b> | Recreation | 11 <sup>th</sup> Avenue   | City of Alpena                  |
| <b>Alpena Youth Soccer Fields</b>  | Recreation | Woodward Avenue   | Alpena Youth Soccer Association |
| <b>Thomas Stafford Dog Park</b>    | Recreation | Fletcher Street<br>North side of Thunder Bay River<br>(North Riverfront Park) | City of Alpena                  |

Source: City of Alpena Recreation Plan

## Downtown Development Authority

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The Alpena Downtown Development Authority was established in 1980, enabled by Michigan Public Act 197 of 1975, City of Alpena ordinance, and governed by bylaws. The DDA is guided by its Strategic Plan which was developed through many months of study and public input sessions. The final market analysis and strategic plan was updated and finalized in 2017 and continues to be the guiding document which guides the DDA when establishing its workplan. The DDA is also guided by its Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan.

The DDA is an authority of the City of Alpena, and works with City Council and City Staff as it establishes and implements its goals, including participating annually in the City’s 5 year Capital Improvement Planning process. The DDA also works closely with the City of Alpena, Downtown Alpena Business Association, Alpena Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce, Target Alpena Development Corporation and many other groups throughout the community to support activities which help grow both downtown and the community.

The mission of the Downtown Development Authority is to correct and prevent deterioration in the established DDA district; to encourage historic preservation; to acquire and dispose of interests in real and personal property; to create and implement development plans in the district; and to promote the economic growth of the district.

City of Alpena is a certified Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC), which is a program of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Being a RRC means developers know that the community has best practices to encourage redevelopment.

## Public Safety

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The City of Alpena Public Safety Department consists of the Police and Fire Department. In 2017, the Alpena Police Department responded to 3,989 complaints. The Alpena Fire Department responded to 1,384 incidents including 1,245 EMS assists and 26 fires, of which 8 were structure fires. During the same period, the Alpena EMS responded to 4,696 incidents.

### City of Alpena Public Safety Department

#### City of Alpena Police Department

The City of Alpena Police Department employs 17 certified police officers who provide law enforcement services for the City of Alpena 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Two full-time and one part-time clerical employees support the officers. The Chief of Police administers the Police Department and oversees the

daily operations. The department is comprised of a Detective Division, a Patrol Division, a Community Services Division, and a Staff Operations Division. In addition to traditional police services, the police department offers a D.A.R.E. program to all in-city public and parochial schools, a school liaison program, a bicycle patrol, and a K-9 unit. The Police Department has eight fully marked patrol vehicles, including a K-9 unit and D.A.R.E. and four unmarked vehicles.

### **Huron Undercover Narcotics Team (HUNT)**

The Huron Undercover Narcotics Team (HUNT) is a multi-jurisdictional narcotics task force serving the Northeast Michigan counties of Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Presque Isle. The team consists of five undercover officers from local police agencies plus two detectives (1 sergeant and 1 lieutenant) from the Michigan State. The team is dedicated to reducing the trafficking and availability of narcotics in the community, as well as the associated violent crime that often accompanies narcotics activity. The team was formed in 1990, and has since arrested hundreds of criminals, and removed over \$4 million worth of drugs from area communities. In 2016 they investigated 163 complaints region wide.

### **City of Alpena Fire Department**

The Fire Department employs 28 full-time fire fighters who provide fire suppression, prevention, and emergency medical services for the City of Alpena 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Fire Chief administers the Fire Department and oversees the daily operations. The department is comprised of the Fire Fighting Division and the Fire Prevention Division. The Fire Fighting Division is comprised of three, 8-man shifts. The Fire Prevention Division is staffed by the Fire Marshal. All but one of the fire fighters are Paramedics and the remaining fire fighter is an Emergency Medical Technician Specialist (E.M.T.S.).

The Fire Department provides many services including fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, rope rescue, cold water/ice rescue, confined space rescue, hazardous material mitigation response, and emergency medical services. The department provides emergency and non-emergency ambulance service for the County of Alpena. The department currently has 17 vehicles, including: one aerial tower truck; two fire engine/pumper trucks; one mini pumper truck; one mobile command post bus; two “Echo” paramedic vehicles; seven ambulances; two administrative cars (one for the Fire Chief and the other for the Fire Marshall); and one boat. Additionally, the department has other equipment for confined space entry rescue, ice rescue, rope rescue and high angle rescue, two trailers containing hazardous materials equipment and two small boats.

### **Michigan State Police Post # 74**

The Michigan State Police Post #74 is located in the west portion of the City and works with the other County police agencies to patrol major county roads. Post #74 is part of MSP’s District 7, which covers the Northern Lower Peninsula. There are a total of five posts in various communities across this district. Post #74 is responsible for Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Presque Isle counties.

### **Alpena County Sheriff’s Department**

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Michigan Constitution. The Alpena County Sheriff’s Department is located in the north portion of the City and services those areas of the County that do not have municipal police coverage. The Sheriff is responsible for the administration of the County jail and patrol of the county roads. The Sheriff is also the court officer of the Circuit Court and serves writs, subpoenas and warrants. The Sheriff’s Department employs approximately 10 patrol deputies and 2 sergeants. The current Alpena County Jail has a capacity of 68 beds but in 2017 the citizens of the County voted to fund the construction, furnish, equip and operation of a new County Jail. The new building will



house 94 inmates and be approximately 26,000 square feet in size. The jail will be located four miles outside the city limits.

## Department of Natural Resources

Two Department of Natural Resource Conservation Officers are assigned and living in Alpena County. They are certified law enforcement officers tasked, primarily, with conservation law enforcement. However, they do assist law enforcement agencies within the County on other law enforcement matters and/or investigations.

## Combat Readiness Training Center

Located at the Alpena Regional Airport, the Michigan Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) provides an integrated, year-round, realistic training environment (airspace, facilities, equipment and instruction) which enable military units to enhance their mission capability and readiness at a deployed, combat oriented operating base. In addition, the CRTC has a full time fire department with complete fire, rescue and HAZMAT capabilities. The military area is isolated from the civilian airport to provide minimal interference between the two operations. The flight line and maintenance facilities are subdued to provide a European NATO type operating environment. Sufficient winterized facilities are available to provide a year-round training capability.

## Transportation

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### Streets and Highways

Alpena County has no interstate highway but is served by US-23, which follows the shoreline of Lake Huron from Mackinaw City to Standish and south into Ohio, and by M-32 which runs east-west, connecting Alpena with I-75 and US 131. M-65 heads north and south, which bisects the western portion of the County. State and federal highways include nearly 72 miles of M-32, M-65 and US-23. The County maintains 660 miles of county roads and the Road Commission is also under contract with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the maintenance of 159 lane miles of state highway in Alpena County.

The City of Alpena contains 74.19 total miles of streets, which includes 5.34 miles of State Highway, 25.81 miles of Major Streets, and 43.04 miles of Local Streets. In and around the City of Alpena, four bridges cross the Thunder Bay River. The bridges are located on Bagley Street, US-23, Ninth Avenue and Second Avenue. The limited number of river crossings in this densely populated area of the County has created heavy traffic volumes on all the bridges, but most notably on the Bagley Street and the US-23 bridges. These roads are the primary and secondary truck routes through and around the City of Alpena. **Figure 4.5** illustrates the road system within the City of Alpena.

The City of Alpena is located within the Federal-Aid Urban Boundary. A National Functional Classification System (NFC) is utilized to determine if a given road is a federal-aid road. Federal-aid roads are eligible for federal-aid, either as part of the National Highway System (usually limited to principal arterials) or through the Surface Transportation Program (STP). Federal-aid roads are collectively all principal arterials, all minor arterials, all urban collectors and all rural major collectors. If a road has a NFC designation of rural minor collector or urban or rural local, then it is not a federal-aid road and it is not eligible for federal-aid.



## Air Transportation

Regional air service is available at Alpena County Regional Airport (Phelps Collins), which is located in Wilson Township. There is a 9001 foot and a 5028 foot concrete runway and state of the art communications and radar systems. The airport has the ability to accommodate any type of commercial or military aircraft and is a U.S. Customs Port of Entry. The airport is also home to the Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) of the Michigan National Guard. Passenger service connecting to Detroit and Pellston is provided by Skywest an affiliate of Delta. Charter, airfreight and medivac services, as well as flight training and aircraft rentals are available from a variety of companies.

In 2019, construction was completed on the new airport terminal, parking lot, and ramp improvements. The new terminal will be 12,900 square feet and will vastly improve the passenger experience. The new terminal will improve baggage handling, reduce airliner ground time, more efficient TSA screen and baggage x-ray, passenger boarding bridge. The new facility will be energy efficient with all power lines being underground. The former terminal building will be renovated for airport offices and meeting space as well as the airport restaurant.

**Table 4.4** shows the amount of freight and number of passengers that have traveled through the Alpena Regional Airport from 2005 to 2017. Passenger service at the airport decreased annually from 2005-2008, then began to increase until 2013 when there was additional flight to Minneapolis which was then later dropped as Alpena was not considered an essential air service out of Minneapolis. From 2005 to 2017, inbound freight decreased by 44% and outbound freight decreased by 43%. It is interesting to note that inbound freight has outpaced outbound freight for every year shown. This would indicate that there is an opportunity to ship more freight out of Alpena on the airplanes that have delivered goods to the area.

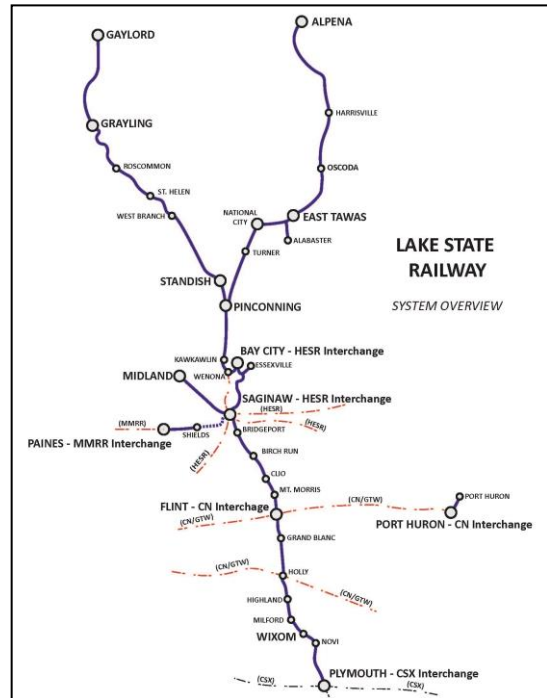
| Year | Freight (inbound) lbs. | Freight (outbound) lbs. | Commercial Passengers (inbound & outbound) | Other Passengers (inbound & outbound) |
|------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 2017 | 696,275                | 459,285                 | 20,404                                     | 908                                   |
| 2016 | 651,692                | 415,119                 | 16,975                                     | 862                                   |
| 2015 | 714,117                | 430,370                 | 19,474                                     | 936                                   |
| 2014 | 696,172                | 425,654                 | 24,852                                     | 880                                   |
| 2013 | 637,930                | 412,278                 | 31,292                                     | 659                                   |
| 2012 | 649,524                | 465,811                 | 25,350                                     | 975                                   |
| 2011 | 631,246                | 493,640                 | 22,747                                     | 1099                                  |
| 2010 | 657,722                | 447,923                 | 16,818                                     | n/a                                   |
| 2009 | 518,930                | 411,489                 | 14,876                                     | n/a                                   |
| 2008 | 869,140                | 583,223                 | 14,608                                     | n/a                                   |
| 2007 | 963,505                | 785,840                 | 15,288                                     | n/a                                   |
| 2006 | 1,132,541              | 794,543                 | 15,625                                     | n/a                                   |
| 2005 | 1,244,849              | 806,391                 | 19,666                                     | n/a                                   |

Source: Alpena County Regional Airport

## Rail Service

Freight rail service is provided by the Lake State Railroad Company (**Figure 4.1**). Rail service is used to deliver raw materials and products to and from the heavy industrial users in the area. Lake State Railway also services a number of customers via transloading (truck-to-rail and rail-to-truck reloading) at their rail yard in Alpena. No passenger service is offered. Alpena is at the end of the rail line, and Lake State Railroad has only one in-bound and one out-bound train per day, Monday through Saturday. Although the volume of freight is expected to increase, no extension or expansion of the line is anticipated. The rail bridge over the Thunder Bay River was replaced in July 2002, financed partially through a loan from the Michigan Department of Transportation. Additionally, Lake State Railway was a recipient of an FY19 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvement (CRISI) grant to strategically replace 30 miles of rail on the line. This allows rail users to utilize 286,000 lb. GRL capacity railcars for shipments. Lake State Railway also helps rail customers leverage the Michigan Department of Transportation’s Freight Economic Development Program (FEDP) grant, which is a grant program that pay 50% of the costs to construct a rail spur or siding for rail users.

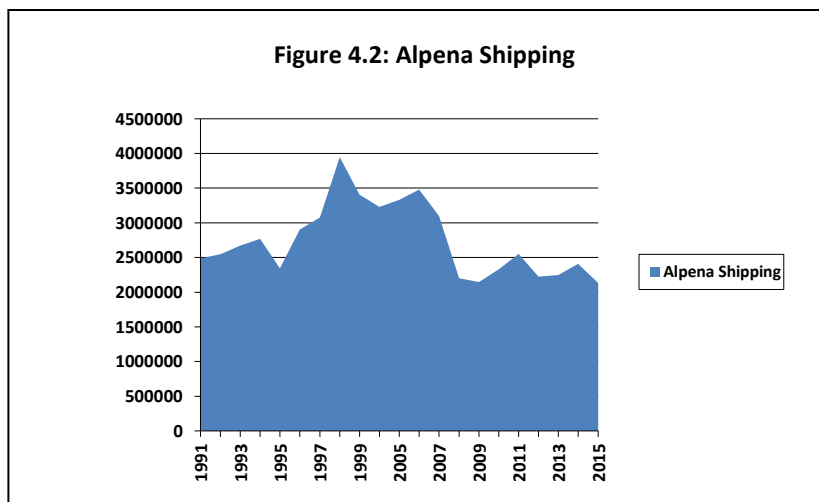
**Figure 4.1: Railroad**



## Marine Facilities

The Alpena area has two channels used for Great Lakes shipping. One is for the Port of Alpena and the other is for the Lafarge Corporation. The annual shipping season for Alpena Harbor is from mid-March to mid-December. Shipping grew steadily between 1991 and peaked in 1999. In 2010, shipping was at its lowest level since 1991 and in general has stabilized at that lower level through 2016 (**Figure 4.2**). **Table 4.5** shows that cement and concrete are the major commodities being shipped out of Alpena with the major receipts being coal and lignite, crude materials, and nonmetal minerals.

**Figure 4.2: Alpena Shipping**



**Table 4.5  
Alpena Freight Traffic 2016 (short tons)**

| <b>Commodity</b>    | <b>Total</b>     | <b>Receipts</b> | <b>Shipments</b> |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Coal & Lignite      | 123,000          | 123,000         | 0                |
| Petroleum Coke      | 129,000          | 129,000         | 0                |
| Limestone           | 38,000           | 38,000          | 0                |
| Gypsum              | 28,000           | 28,000          | 0                |
| Aluminum ore        | 17,000           | 17,000          | 0                |
| Cement & concrete   | 1,718,000        | 0               | 1,614,000        |
| Fab. Metal Products | 18,000           | 18,000          | 0                |
| Salt                | 17,000           | 17,000          | 0                |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>2,131,000</b> | <b>387,000</b>  | <b>1,614,000</b> |

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Waterborne commerce of the United States, Waterways and Harbors, Great Lakes

The City of Alpena Marina is a full-service marina and is the only public or private marina in the area. The marina can accommodate both seasonal and transient boats, of a variety of sizes. The marina is sheltered by a breakwall and access to Lake Huron is made via the mouth of the Thunder Bay River.

The City of Alpena Marina contains approximately 135 slips, 58 seasonal and 77 transient; all with full power and water services, launch ramps, courtesy docks, a fuel station, boater restrooms and shower facility, a fish cleaning station, a pump-out station, a marine store, maintenance facilities, and office building. Winter storage and boat launching services are also available. The City of Alpena Marina also participates in the State of Michigan Central Reservation System.

## Public Transit

### Thunder Bay Transportation Authority

The Thunder Bay Transportation Authority (TBTA) provides scheduled public transportation services to the residents of Alpena, Alcona, and Montmorency Counties, and a small portion of Presque Isle County. The authority operates with a fleet of 40 vehicles and 4 hybrid trolley buses. In 2017, the TBTA completed its new garage and maintenance facility. Alpena Dial-A-Ride Transportation (DART) is operated as an on-demand transportation service by TBTA, which consists of seven wheelchair lift equipped buses.

### Indian Trails, Incorporated

Indian Trails provides statewide public transportation services on a daily basis. The bus route follows US-23 through Alpena County. Buses operate seven days a week, with a southbound run in the morning and northbound run in the afternoon. Buses are wheelchair lift equipped and have space set aside to accommodate wheelchairs. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) subsidizes this transportation service for areas in northern Michigan. This system serves as a daily link between select cities and allows people to travel outside the area to other parts of the state and country.

### Taxi/Shuttle/Limousine Services

Demand response public transportation service is provided by private companies operating in Alpena. A shuttle bus is provided by Holiday Inn between Alpena County Regional Airport and its lodging facility. Passenger van schedules coincide with airline arrivals and departures.

## Charter/Rental bus service

Charter bus service is provided by Country Line Tours. The services provided vary by company.

## Car Rental

Car rental companies are located within the Alpena County Regional Airport, Cliff Anscheutz Chevrolet, and Thunder Bay Chrysler. These companies offer local, state and national rentals.

## Non-Motorized Transportation

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The Alpena Bi-Path is a bicycle and pedestrian pathway system which has been developed throughout the City. This marked bikeway connects with the Alpena Township section that parallels US- 23 from the City limits at Thunder Bay Avenue to Bare Point Road. Inside the City limits, residents and visitors are able to bike, walk, roller blade and skateboard on the 18.5 miles of paved pathway and can access all the waterfront parks in the city. In a cooperative City/County effort, a section of the bikeway follows the shore of the Thunder Bay River through the Alpena County Fairgrounds. Discussions with the Alpena County Road Commission are on-going for the possible future extension of the pathway along Bagley Road from the Thunder Bay River north to Long Rapids Road.

The Bi-Path was extended north along Woodward Street to connect to the 70 mile North Eastern State Trail (NEST), owned and maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The NEST extends northeast connecting to Posen, Onaway and Cheboygan. The DNR is also working on developing the Alpena to Hillman Rail Trail which will connect directly with the Bi-Path at Franklin Street and will extend to Hillman when it is improved. The current project for the Alpena to Hillman Rail Trail is planned for construction in late 2020 and into 2021 and will extend from Franklin Street in Alpena westerly to the carpool lot located on M-32 in Herron.

## Public Water & Wastewater Supplies

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The City of Alpena has the only water treatment and wastewater treatment plants in the County. The City contracts operation and billing for both utilities to United Water. Public water and wastewater is available throughout the city, portions of Alpena Township and lines have been extended west along M-32 through Wilson Township to the Alpena County Airport. The City of Alpena Water Filtration Plant supplies water, and all wastewater in the public system is treated at the City of Alpena Water Recycling Plant (**Figure 4.6**).

Alpena Township and the City of Alpena each manage, operate and maintain the water facilities within their boundaries. Per a 1977 contract and Master Agreement, signed with Alpena Township, the City of Alpena provides up to 1.5 million gallons of water to the Township per day and accepts up to 2 million gallons of wastewater per day. However, this agreement has expired and is being renegotiated between the City and Township.

According to information from the managing entity of the water systems states the 2017 average daily water usage of both the City and Township is approximately 1.63-million gallons, with maximum daily usage of 1.77-million gallons. Per the 1977 agreement, service area boundaries were established that limit extension of wastewater and water infrastructure. When initially established, the boundary went north to Bloom Road, East to Wessel Road, West to the Alpena Township Line and south to Partridge Point. The

agreement was amended in 1998 to extend the service area to include wastewater and water lines to the Alpena County Regional Airport. In 2006, the water main was extended south along US 23 to the southern Alpena Township line. The remainder of the County is served by individual wells and septic tanks for which permits must be obtained from the District Health Department #4.

## Public Water Supply

The Alpena water system serves 4,576 customers in the City of Alpena and 2,298 customers in the adjacent portions of Alpena Township. Thunder Bay is the source for all public water in Alpena County. A groundwater investigation conducted in 1966 by W.G. Keck & Associates determined that there is not a water bearing formation in the area adequate to serve as a source for municipal supply. The City of Alpena Water Filtration Plant is located on the shore of Thunder Bay at the south end of the City of Alpena. The water plant is a conventional surface water plant. Coagulation, flocculation, and filtration are used to clean the water.

The water system consists of a Thunder Bay intake, 6.0 mgd filter plant, four elevated storage tanks and eighty miles of distribution piping. The current raw water intake has been in service since 1905 and has two intakes. The intake line is 2,000 feet long and is a 40-inch diameter pipe with a 30-inch polyethylene liner. There are two openings that are anchored by rock and timber intake cribs; one located approximately 1,000 feet from shore in 10 feet of water and the second located approximately 2,000 feet from shore in 17 feet of water. The rated capacity of the intake pipe is 8 million gallons per day at 2.52ft/sec. Control of zebra mussel colonization within the intake pipe is accomplished via chemical addition. Once the water enters the treatment, it takes 12 hours to complete the treatment cycle.

During the process, at least 50,000 samples are collected and analyzed per year and fluoride, phosphate, and flocculant aides are added. The plant laboratory is certified by the State of Michigan to test for Total and Fecal Coliform bacteria. These are the primary indicator organisms for water quality, both for drinking and swimming/recreation. The facility also tests for chlorine (disinfectant), pH, hardness, alkalinity, turbidity, and fluoride. The State Drinking Water Laboratory also tests water samples for other possible contaminants as required.

One 750 KVA diesel powered (1034 HP) generator is available to operate the entire water treatment plant. This generator will produce all of the necessary electricity to meet City needs during any power failure. The auxiliary generator is exercised quarterly.

The treatment plant has a firm capacity of 6.0 million gallons per day with a maximum daily demand of 3.04-million gallons per day. The average daily demand is 1.98-million gallons per day. There are also 80.6 miles of water main within the entire system.

Treated water storage is as follows:

- 1-million gallon ground storage at the Water Treatment Plant
- 750,000 gallons at Ninth Avenue elevated tower
- 750,000 gallons at North Industrial elevated tower.
- 500,000 gallons at Alpena Township M-32 elevated tower.
- 500,000 gallons at Alpena Township Piper Road elevated tower.
- 300,000 gallons at the Alpena Township US-23 South elevated tower

## Public Wastewater

The original water recycling treatment plant became operational in 1953 and many of the treatment units remain in use today. In 1972, the plant was upgraded to improve pollutant removal capability. Using grant funds from the USEPA, secondary treatment was added to the facility. A biological treatment process called Activated Sludge was used to enhance removal of dissolved pollutants from the wastewater. This addition improved pollutant removal rates and the plant regularly achieves 90 to 95% pollutant removal efficiency.

The Alpena Water Recycling Plant has a defined service area of 25-mile radius around the plant and serves 4,798 customers in the City of Alpena and 2,013 customers in Alpena Township. The system consists of 69.3 miles of sanitary wastewater lines and 11 lift stations. The treatment plant has an average design capacity of 5.5 million gallons per day with a maximum pumping capacity of 7.2 million gallons per day. The average daily treatment is 2.3 million gallons per day.

Preliminary treatment accomplishes the removal of screenings and grit from the raw wastewater. The removed grit is collected, stored, and disposed of by land filling. Primary Clarifiers accomplish about 15% to 20% pollutant removal. Aeration reactors and final clarifiers aid in removing more bacteria. A Biosolids Application Program is in place, which utilizes the nutrient-rich residues to beneficially enrich soils for area farmers. Biosolids are also used to regenerate forest growth and to reclaim areas destroyed during industrial mining operations.

Chlorine bleach is added to the treated wastewater after secondary treatment is complete. Any wastewater treatment process generates solids that must be stabilized and recycled. Two 300,000-gallon anaerobic digesters are used to treat the solid material generated by the Alpena Water Recycling Plant. A valuable byproduct of the anaerobic digestion process is methane gas. This energy source is used to fire the plant boiler and fuel a 4-cylinder engine that drives a raw wastewater pump. Utilization of methane gas from the digester saves the Utility about \$15,000 per year in energy costs.

*Mercury Minimization:* The Alpena Water Recycling Plant first implemented mercury minimization in 1986. The focus of the plan was to identify and eliminate mercury discharges from commercial and industrial sources. Utility personnel have assisted in the identification of numerous over-the-counter products that utilize mercury as a preservative. Once identified, mercury free products can be substituted.

*Industrial Pretreatment Program:* The water recycling plant management staff regulates commercial and industrial wastewater discharges. Chemicals that could upset the biological processes at the plant must be strictly controlled. The indiscriminate discharge of metals and other toxins can also pass through the plant and enter the environment. Customers that have the potential to negatively impact plant processes are issued discharge permits and are inspected annually to insure compliance with limitations.

*Odor Control:* The equipment and infrastructure necessary to transport and recycle wastewater creates conditions that are inherently prone to the creation of odors. Because of the plant's close proximity to the City Marina, \$1.5-million worth of odor control equipment was added to the facility as well as aesthetic upgrades.

# Utilities

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The City’s utility system includes private suppliers of electric, natural gas, telephone, solid waste disposal and cable television services, along with the publicly owned and operated City of Alpena water and wastewater systems. **(Table 4.6)**

| <b>Table 4.6<br/>Utilities</b> |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Utility System</b>          | <b>Company</b>  |
| Natural Gas                    | DTE Energy  |
| Electricity                    | Alpena Power Company  |
| Telecommunications             | Telephone: Frontier<br>Wireless: Numerous providers<br>Internet: Numerous providers |
| Water & Wastewater             | City of Alpena  |
| Cable TV                       | Charter Communications  |
| Solid Waste Disposal           | Private haulers (see below) for household solid waste, City for yard waste          |

Source: Survey of local utility officials, 2002

# Solid Waste Disposal

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Alpena County is a member of the Montmorency-Oscoda-Alpena Solid Waste Management Authority (MOASWMA) The MOASWMA landfill in Montmorency County is the primary destination for the County’s solid waste. Collection of solid waste is available through private hauling companies and the City of Alpena is currently serviced by commercial firms. Curbside collection is the most common collection method with door to door pick up service provided in some instances. The City provides monthly pick-up (April-November) of yard waste and processes the materials at its composting facility located at the City DPW Facility on Long Lake Avenue.

Although the Lafarge Corporation owns and operates its own landfill, many other industries have found ways to recycle all or portions of their wastes. The Alpena City Water Recycling Plant produces 500 dry tons per year of sludge, all of which is used for different applications such as farm fields, forest regeneration and mine reclamation. It is the goal of the plant to keep all sludge out of the landfill.

The Alpena Resource Recovery Program is administered by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) and is overseen by the Alpena Resource Recovery Board that includes representation from various political jurisdictions. The program includes the Resource Recovery Facility (RRF) located on M-32, a leased facility directly across from the RRF plus a number of full-time drop off sites located in the City of Alpena and various other outlying areas. The primary funding source for the program is a \$20 per household surcharge fee. The program accepts electronics, household hazardous waste, paper, tin, batteries, aluminum, plastic, cardboard, garbage, construction debris, mattresses, furniture, appliances, and motor oil. It also participates in the "Cleansweep" program sponsored by the Michigan Department of Agriculture, which is designed to encourage citizens to turn in hazardous materials.

## Fiber Optic Network

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In January of 2005, the Alpena City Council Vision Statement and Goals included the development of a “wired city” and the relocation of all new or reconstructed utilities underground. This led to the development of a plan to develop a fiber optic conduit network which would not only provide the backbone for high-speed telecommunications, but would also provide a readymade system within which to place new or relocated aerial utilities. The City pursued the sharing of resources through the creation of a multi-agency fiber optic consortium. The consortium’s purpose is to enhance voice, video and data communications among public/non-profit entities and develop a redundant network throughout the greater Alpena area. The Consortium has recently reorganized, becoming the North East Michigan Fiber Consortium (NEMiFC). NEMiFC is working to offer more support to its members, apply for grants and is also developing a strategic plan for future network expansion.



Figure 4.3



Figure 4.4

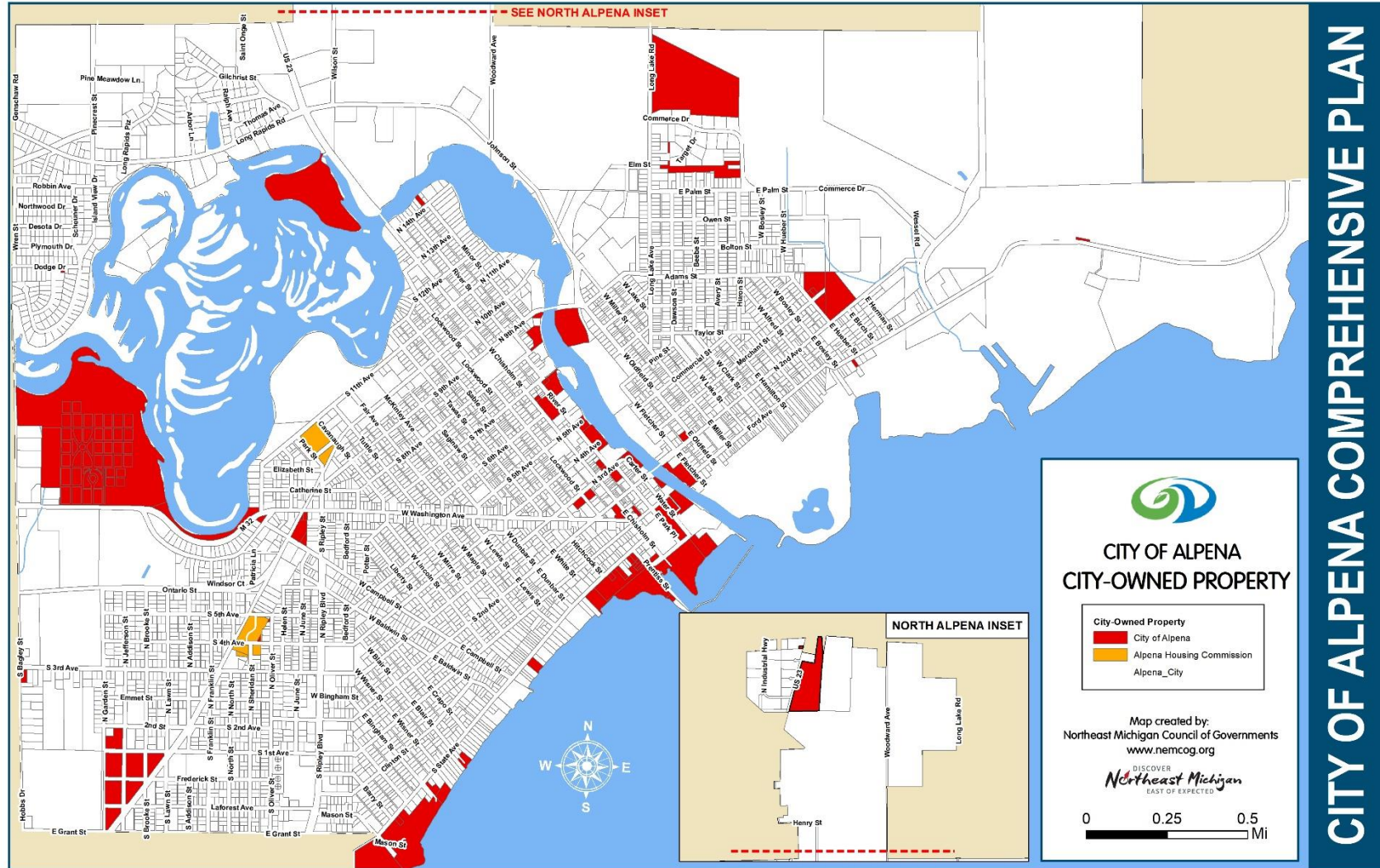




Figure 4.5

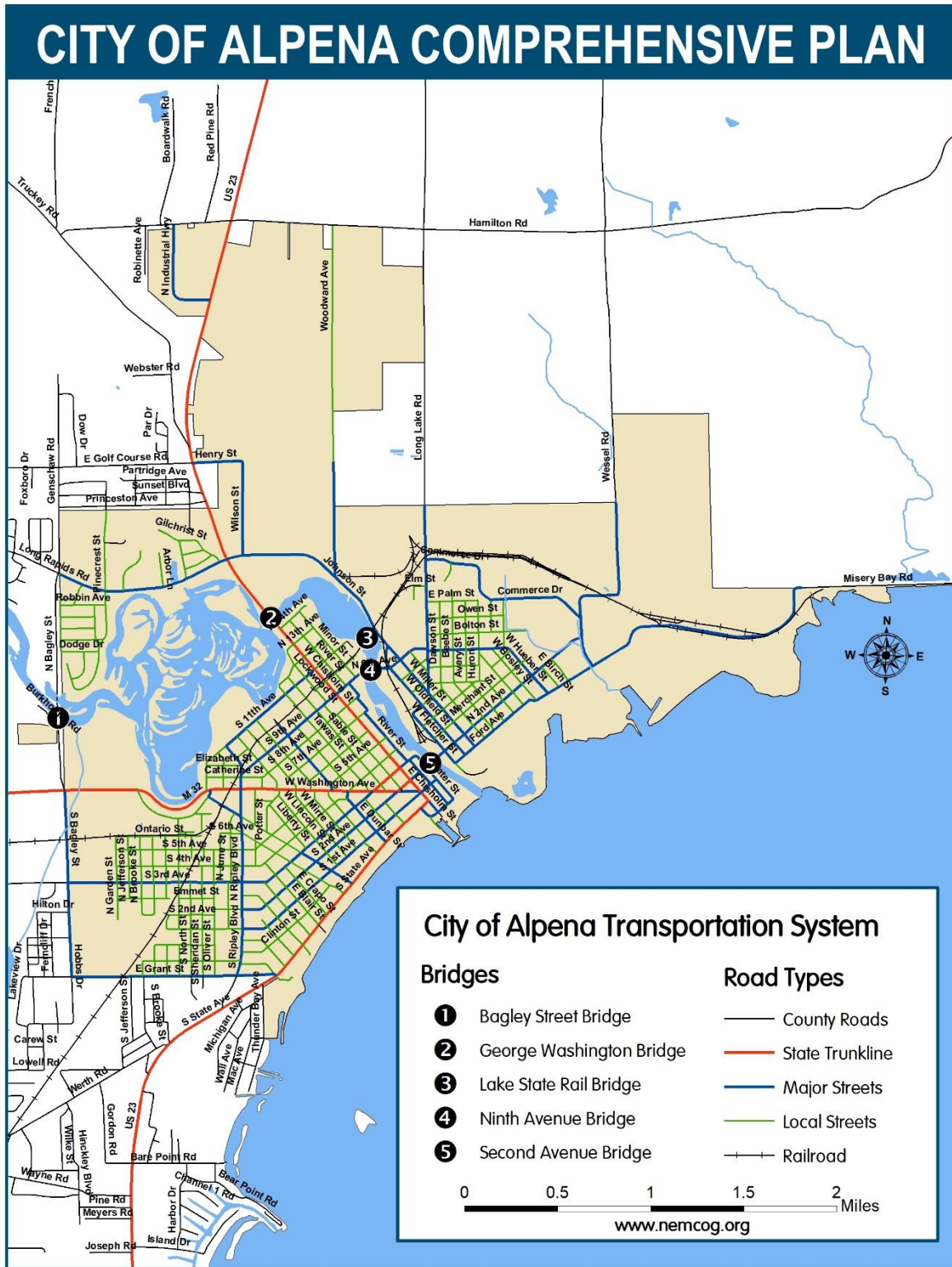
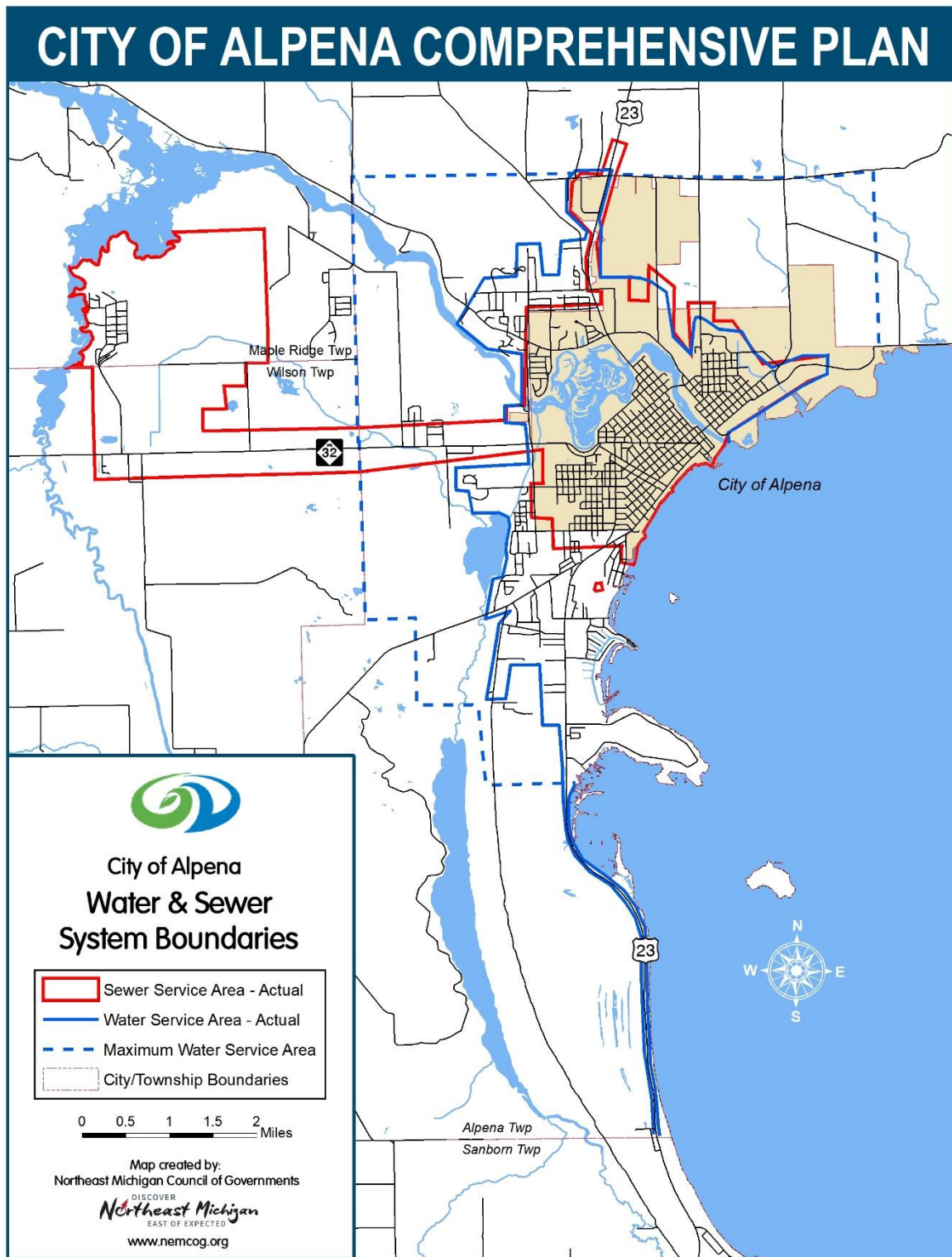


Figure 4.6



# Chapter 5

## Cultural and Natural Resources

Quality of life and community character are closely tied to the City's cultural and natural resources. A community with access to a variety of cultural and natural resources is a desirable place to live and these resources will also draw people from outside of the community and indirectly help strengthen the economic base. This chapter presents information on the cultural and natural resources in the City (**Figure 5.1**).

### Cultural Resources

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Cultural resources include concerts, theater productions, festivals, and community events as well as libraries, museums, art galleries, colleges, and historic buildings. For a community of its size, the City of Alpena is blessed with an abundance of these resources. The following is a list of key cultural and historic features in the community:

#### Music, Theater Performances and the Arts

- **Alpena City Band:** The Alpena City Band has been performing for nearly 100 years. It performs regular summer concerts at the Fine Arts Band Shell at Bay View Park and includes musicians of all ages.
- **Alpena Civic Theatre:** The Alpena Civic Theatre is an all-volunteer theater that has been presenting live performances to area audiences for over 40 years. On average, nearly one hundred persons become cast or crewmembers each year while participating in the season's productions.
- **Alpena Community Concert Association:** An association which brings an annual series of musical performances by international artists to Alpena.
- **Alpena Community College (ACC) Players:** A theatrical performance club which is open to students of all disciplines. The ACC Players present a minimum of one show a semester and meet on a regular basis to study improvisation.
- **An Evening with the Arts:** Held on the last Friday of the fall and spring semesters, this exhibition showcases the work of ACC visual and performing arts students. It has also become popular for the great food made by art students and faculty and served throughout the evening. Admission is free.
- **Art on the Bay:** The Thunder Bay Arts Council presents Art on the Bay for three days each July at Bay View Park. It showcases artists from the area and from around the country.
- **Art in the Loft:** Art in the Loft is a non-profit art gallery which displays the work of artists from the region on the third floor of the historic downtown Center Building. In addition to the special events showcasing adult artists, Art in the Loft presents displays featuring children's art, evening events with the artists including music, and other cultural events drawing guests from the region and beyond.

- **Global Awareness Series:** Each October, ACC presents a series of free programs focusing on the political, economic and cultural aspect of another country or region of the world.
- **Huron Shore Barbershop Chorus:** The men’s chorus was chartered in the Barbershop Harmony Society in May 1974. There are always two to three Barbershop Quartets in the Chorus. Groups are available for performances throughout the year. The Chorus/Quartets have an annual show at the Stanley Beck Auditorium at the Alpena High School in the last week of September or the first week of October.
- **The ACC Spotlight Series:** This performing arts series offers registered students a student-priced ticket for the entire series or for individual performances.
- **Thunder Bay Theater:** Thunder Bay Theatre (TBT), a professional live theater, occupies a turn of the century building that was originally known as Spens Drug and Wallpaper and then as the Alpena Candy and Cigar Company. The cigar humidor remains intact in the lobby and is used as a storage closet. TBT has amassed an extensive costume collection, which is maintained with care to protect the many valuable period pieces included in the inventory. Professional actors work together with local residents to perform theatrical productions.
- **Besser Choir; Community Orchestra; Alpena Area Community Youth Band:** These musical performance groups offer a diversity of musical experiences in the Alpena area.

## Facilities and Collections

- **APlex:** The Apex is a state-of-the-art facility that seats 650 and offers a full commercial kitchen and audio/video services. The facility also features a gymnasium, four regulation-sized tennis courts, two multi-purpose rooms, an aerobics area, outdoor beach volleyball courts, corporate fitness area, and locker facilities. The Apex offers an active schedule of sports, fitness classes, camps year-round for all ages, and live entertainment.
- **Alpena Area Senior Citizens Center:** The Alpena Area Senior Citizens Center is a County-owned facility devoted to attending to the needs of area senior citizens.
- **Alpena Community College:** Alpena Community College (ACC) is located on 700 acres of land in the City of Alpena. ACC operates two major campuses including outreach activities in various area public schools. ACC offers degree completion programs, vocational training and community enrichment classes to residents of Alpena County and all of Northeast Michigan. The Madeline Briggs University Center at Alpena Community College houses offices of accredited four-year institutions that are cooperating with ACC on completion programs for selected bachelor and master's degrees available in Northeast Michigan.
- **Alpena County George N. Fletcher Public Library:** The County-owned George N. Fletcher Library is a premier cultural center for the community and is well known for its excellent programming for children and adults. Over 3,000 visitors each month access the library. More information can be found in the Community Services and Facilities Chapter.

- **Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan:** The only accredited museum in Northeast Michigan, the Besser Museum offers permanent and changing exhibits, lectures, workshops, and classes in art, history, and science.
- **Coast Guard Building:** The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has operated for many years in the City of Alpena. Due to a needed expansion of its Alpena operations and personnel, the Coast Guard partnered with the City and a private developer to establish a new rescue and administrative office in downtown Alpena.
- **Cemeteries (Jewish and Lutheran included):** Alpena's Evergreen Cemetery contains 61 acres and has been an active and operating City-owned cemetery for 141 years. The City also maintains the adjacent Jewish and Lutheran cemeteries. The privately-owned Catholic Holy Cross Cemetery is located on the south side of Washington Avenue across the street from Evergreen Cemetery.
- **Fine Arts Band Shell:** The Fine Arts Band Shell, located on the shores of Lake Huron at Bay View Park, provides a wide range of entertainment events, free of charge, performed by different community cultural organizations.
- **Michigan Room at George N. Fletcher Library:** Part of the library's Special Collections, the Michigan Room offers numerous Michigan reference materials (i.e. law, history, and environment) and general materials (i.e. industry, maritime, sports, and wildlife). In addition, genealogy sources with extensive Alpena County records, as well as records from surrounding counties, are also available.
- **NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve:** Organized as the only fresh water National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) sanctuary in the world, the NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve focuses on the shipwrecks and unique maritime history of the region. The facility relocated to the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center in 2005 as part of the redevelopment of the old Fletcher Paper Mill property on the Thunder Bay River. The Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center is a 20,000-square-foot facility that highlights the maritime heritage of the Great Lakes and the shipwrecks of Thunder Bay. The facility features a maritime heritage "discovery center" featuring more than 8,000 square feet of exhibits on the Great Lakes, shipwrecks, archaeology, and maritime history. The center also has an auditorium for showing films and live video feeds from Thunder Bay shipwrecks, an archaeological conservation laboratory, and an education resource room. Private companies provide shipwreck tours by glass bottom boat, as well as kayak, between May and September.
- **Northern Lights Arena:** Northern Lights Arena, with two sheets of ice, offers open ice skating, drop-in hockey, figure skating, and is home to the Alpena High School Wildcats, Alpena Hockey Association, Alpena Speed Skating Club, Alpena General Men's Hockey League, Alpena Men's Senior Hockey League, Carhardt Senior Hockey League, Alpena Figure Skating Club, and NLA R/C Vehicle Club.
- **Old Town:** Old Town Alpena encompasses the downtown area of the City along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from Fletcher Street to Oldfield Street. Old Town includes several restaurants, the Thunder Bay Theatre, two City parks, and the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center.

- **Outdoor Ice Rink:** Due to budget cuts, the City no longer operates the public ice rink at Mich-e-ke-wis Park. After the closure, the local Optimist Club prepared and operated an outdoor skating rink at McRae Park, but the facility has become weather-dependent. In 2019, an ice rink was opened at Bay View Park.
- **Thunder Bay Sanctuary Research Collection at George N. Fletcher Library:** Through an agreement with the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserve, the library offers one of the premier collections on Great Lakes history in the world. The collection is currently in the process of being digitized. More information can be found in the Community Services and Facilities Chapter.
- **United States Federal Building:** Included on the National Historic Register, the United States Federal Building was constructed in 1911 and is designed in the Renaissance Revival style. It is currently privately-owned.

## Organizations

- **The Alpena Volunteer Center (AVC)** encourages volunteerism, responds to community needs, and promotes activities that improve the community. It is located in Room 108 of the Donald L. Newport Center on the ACC campus. The many services include: 1) Matching volunteers with requests for volunteer help, 2) Providing community information and directories; networking and consulting, 3) Coordinating community outreach programs such as the Christmas Wish List, Association for Lifelong Learners (ALL@ ACC), Community Education classes, annual A College Day event, service-learning opportunities for ACC credit classes, and the ACC Ropes Course.
- **Thunder Bay Arts Council:** An umbrella organization for a variety of cultural and artistic organizations, many of which operate within the City’s Cool City project neighborhood, the Council sponsors the annual “Art-on-the-Bay” arts and crafts fair at Bay View Park each summer.
- **Northeast Michigan Genealogical Society (NEMGS):** NEMGS aims to foster genealogical interest and activities, encourage and preserve family histories, and encourage the expansion and access to genealogy materials to the general public. NEMGS supports microfilm and genealogical collections at the Alpena County Public Library. The Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan houses the society’s unpublished manuscript collection, the Faces of Northeast Michigan (ancestral photographs), and the Van Nocker and the Milo Burston collections (Alpena photographers). Support is also provided to the Alpena Latter Day Saints Family History Center.

## Community Events and Activities

- **Alpena Farmer’s Market:** The Alpena Farmer’s Market offers vendor space on Saturdays and Wednesdays in the winter at the Alpena Mall and the summer at Mich-e-ke-wis Park/Starlite Beach. Throughout the season, special event days are scheduled featuring a variety of programs and events.
- **Festivals/Events**
  - Alpena Blues Festival
  - Michigan Brown Trout Festival
  - Thunder Bay Maritime Festival



Ramblin' Rods Car Show  
Thunder Bay International Film Festival  
Thunder Bay Arts Council Art on the Bay  
Fall Harvest Fossil Fest  
Antique Tractor and Steam Engine Show

- **Friday Night Downtown:** Each Friday in July, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is closed to traffic and opened up to pedestrians to enjoy an evening of entertainment through music, performances, food, and other festivities.
- **Library:** The George N. Fletcher Library hosts many community events that feature authors, musicians, artists, children's programs, and many other activities.
- **Parades**  
Memorial Day Parade  
4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade  
Christmas Parade (Thanksgiving weekend)

## State Historic Sites<sup>1</sup>

- **Alpena City Hall:** 208 North First Avenue  
Alpena City Hall, a Georgian style structure located on the Government Square, remains one of Alpena's most prominent structures. Since its completion in 1908, City Hall has been the center of civic activity in Alpena. A cupola crowned the structure until the 1950's. City Hall represents the work of several Alpena craftsmen.
- **Alpena County Courthouse:** 720 Chisholm Street  
Opened on October 21, 1935, the Alpena County Courthouse is an imposing, Art Deco public building and was likely the first public building constructed of poured Portland cement material in Alpena. The Alpena County Courthouse is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- **Arbeiter Hall:** 1224 North Second Avenue  
The Arbeiter Hall (German Aid Society Hall) has historical significance for its association with a rapidly-growing German ethnic group in Alpena during the later years of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1891, the German Aid Society constructed a hall to serve the social and recreational needs of its membership. After a fire, a new building was completed before the end of the year using the same foundation of the original structure, much of the same masonry, and the original cornerstone. The German Aid Society Hall continued in use until the late 1930's.
- **Daniel Carter Family Commemorative Designation Marker (George N. Fletcher Library):** Park Place  
The Daniel Carter Family were Alpena's (then known as Fremont) first settlers and are interred in Evergreen Cemetery.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: State Historic Preservation Office, Department of History, Arts & Libraries, State of Michigan

- **First Congregational Church:** 201 Second Avenue  
The first church built at the junction of Washington, Second and Lockwood Streets was completed in 1856 and the present concrete masonry church occupying the site was constructed in 1955 using funding provided by Jesse Besser.
- **George R. Nicholson House:** 422 Washington Avenue  
Constructed in 1904, the house was the residence of one of the city's most prominent businessmen and city officials.
- **Huron-Portland Cement Plant:** Ford Avenue  
Now called Lafarge North America, the site houses the world's largest cement plant. Portland cement, so-called because it resembles stone from the Isle of Portland (in the British Isles), was first produced in the United States in 1871 and in Michigan in 1896. Because of Alpena's location in the midst of immense limestone deposits, the Huron Portland Cement Company, founded in Detroit in 1907, chose this site for its plant. Cement production began here in 1908. From Thunder Bay, ships of the Huron fleet deliver cement to all parts of the Great Lakes region.
- **I.O.O.F. Centennial Building:** 150 East Chisholm Street  
The trapezoid-shaped structure was built in 1876 on the former site of the Alpena Courthouse. For many years it housed the fraternal activities of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and is now used for business and professional offices.
- **Jesse Besser House:** 232 South First Avenue  
The Jesse Besser House (1938) has architectural significance as an example of the use of concrete masonry as a residential building material. It has historical significance as the last home of Alpena master inventor, philanthropist, and humanitarian Jesse Besser (1882-1970). In 1904, Besser and his father designed and manufactured the first concrete block-making machine in the United States.
- **Joseph Bertrand House:** 725 South Third Avenue  
The Bertrand House was built in 1925 by Alpena contractor Floyd Gagnon for Joseph Bertrand. The Bertrand House is an excellent example of Craftsman style architecture with strong Prairie style influences. It presents an unusual example of totally unaltered exterior and interior integrity.
- **Memorial Hall/Alpena National Guard Armory:** 230 Water Street  
Constructed in 1919 in the Renaissance Revival style, the Armory Building was originally dedicated as Memorial Hall. An imposing building, it is constructed entirely of poured Portland cement. The site has been purchased by a private development group and has been designated Alpena's first historic district.
- **Monarch Milling Company:** 633 Campbell Street  
Known today as Alpena Flour Mills, the Monarch Mill has historical significance as the last remaining grist mill in Alpena. The original structure on the site was built in 1883; however, after a fire destroyed the original building, the current structure was constructed in 1913.
- **Saint Bernard Catholic Church:** Southwest corner of Fifth and Chisholm Streets  
The structure, completed in 1884, houses the oldest Catholic parish between Bay City and Cheboygan.

- **Thunder Bay River Boundary of the Cession of 1819 (Treaty of Saginaw):** Johnson Street  
The Thunder Bay River was the northern boundary of the Treaty of 1819. The Treaty of 1819, or the Treaty of Saginaw, was signed on September 24, 1819 between Native Americans and Gen. Lewis Cass, fourth military governor of the Michigan Territory (1813-1831). The treaty added some six million acres to what is now the midbelt of the Lower Peninsula.

Figure 5.1



CITY OF ALPENA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**CITY OF ALPENA  
CULTURAL &  
HISTORIC FACILITIES**

- ◆ Cultural Facilities
- ★ Designated Historic Sites
- ↘ Shipwrecks

DISCOVER  
Northeast Michigan  
EAST OF EXPECTED

Map created by:  
Northeast Michigan Council of Governments  
www.nemcog.org

# Natural Resources

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## Climate

The climate is greatly influenced by its topography and its proximity to Lake Huron. Temperature data from the Midwest Regional Climate Center indicates the climate along the immediate Lake Huron shore is semi-marine in nature and lacks many of the temperature extremes found only a few miles inland.

Summer months are pleasant with considerable sunshine and a daily average of more than 15 hours of daylight for outdoor activities. Summer temperatures as high as 104 degrees have been recorded, but are unusual. The following weather data reflects 30 year average (1981-2010) data collected at the Alpena Waste Water Treatment Plant. According to the Michigan State Climatologist's Office the 30 year average July temperature is 68.4 degrees Fahrenheit, which is .5 degrees higher than the last 30 year average.

Winters have comparatively uniform day-to-day temperatures. Sub-zero temperatures have been recorded as early as November 22 and as late as April 2 but have their highest frequency during February. Thunder Bay and Thunder Bay River are usually free of ice by the first week in April, but water temperatures remain low enough to produce diurnal sea breezes during the middle of the day with subsequent reduction in maximum temperatures on many days during the spring and summer. The 30 year average January temperature is 20.5 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 0.6 degrees warmer than the last 30 year average.

Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year. Most winter precipitation is in the form of snow. Most of the summer precipitation is the result of showers or thundershowers, which occur most often during the months of June, July, and August. The 30 year annual average precipitation is 30.03 inches which is a 1.71 inches higher than the last 30 year average of 28.59 inches. The precipitation includes the snowfall liquid equivalent. The 30 year average annual snowfall is 57.6 inches, which is 9.6 inches less than the last 30 year average. Prevailing winds are from the northwest with the exception of May and June when southeasterly winds predominate. Generally speaking, the climate is getting warmer with more rain and less snow.

## Topography

The City of Alpena is located on an old post glacial lake plain. The terrain is relatively flat. At the water's edge of Lake Huron and Thunder Bay, the elevation is 580 feet above sea level with the land gently sloping up westward from the lakeshore to 689 feet above sea level at the Airport. The highest elevation noted on a USGS topographic map is 675 feet near the intersection of Hamilton Road and US-23. The elevation is approximately 620 feet above sea level along the western border of the City. One exception to the gently sloping landscape is Lafarge quarry. The sharply sloping quarry walls define a hole that is approximately 80 feet below the surface level of Lake Huron.

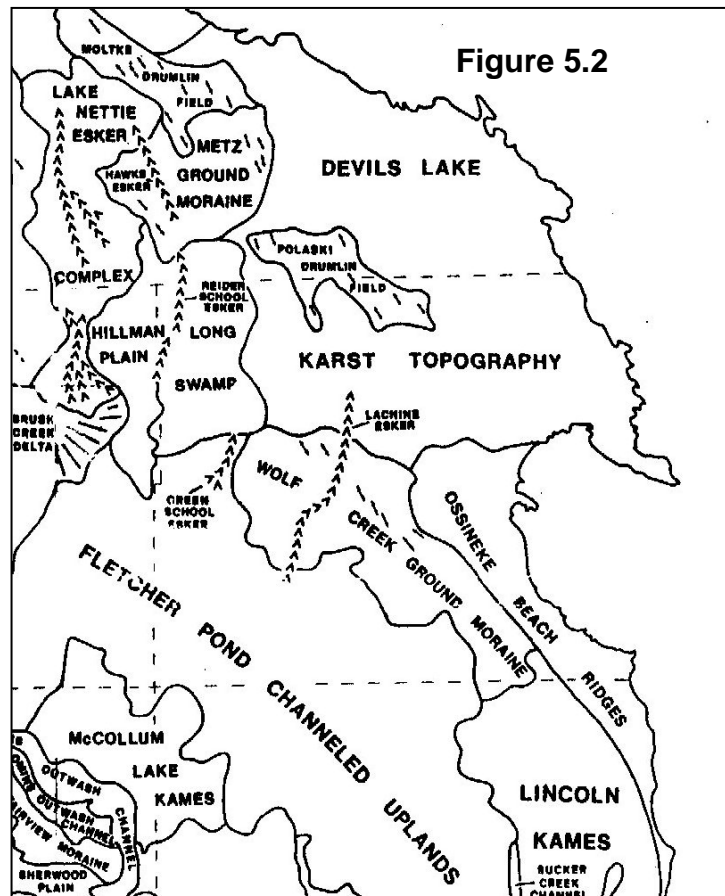
## Geology and Landforms

Limestone bedrock laid down over 300 million years ago and glacial landforms created over 10,000 years ago define the landscape of Alpena. This section will describe the glacial landforms or quaternary geology and the underlying bedrock geology.

Starting some 2 million years ago, during the Pleistocene era, continental glaciers formed in the Hudson Bay area. Several times during this two million year period the massive sheets of ice built up and inched their way south across what is today Michigan. These massive ice sheets were more than one mile thick and advanced in a southerly direction, bulldozing their way across the landscape. The glacier pushed material in

front of it, incorporated rocks and soil into the debris laden ice. They scraped, ground and broke apart the sedimentary bedrock of the Michigan Basin.

Each advance and retreat of the continental glaciers took tens of thousands of years. This reoccurring process shaped and reshaped the land by obliterating and then creating hills, valleys, rivers and lakes, swamps and marshes. The last glacial period is called the Wisconsin era, which created the landscape we know today. The glacier left behind boulders, rocks, cobble, sand, gravel, silt, clay and loam. In some areas the material was deposited in unsorted masses called till plains, ground moraines and end moraines. Water flowing from the melting glaciers also sorted materials, creating outwash channels, sand deltas, kames and eskers. Fine materials were captured in the fast moving glacial meltwater and settled to the bottom of expansive glacial lakes creating lacustrine clay and silt plains. According to a map prepared by W. A. Burgess and D. F. Eschman, titled "Landform Units in Northeastern Lower Michigan," the Alpena area is divided into two landform units (**Figure 5.2**). Essentially, the southern part is in the Ossineke Beach Ridges and the northern part is in the Devils Lake Karst Topography.



At the front of the melting glacier, vast lakes formed, these emerging lake basins were the beginnings of our Great Lakes. During different time periods, the post glacial great lakes were both much higher and much lower than the lake levels we have grown accustomed to in recent times. Geologists have identified and named the different post glacial great lake stages, which include glacial great lake stages Warren, Algonquin, Nipissing and Algoma. Landforms and soils adjacent to Lake Huron were heavily influenced by these different lake stages. Glacial Great Lake Warren formed at the front of the melting Huron glacial lobe around 12,000 years before present and was the most extensive, flooding the entire land area of Alpena.

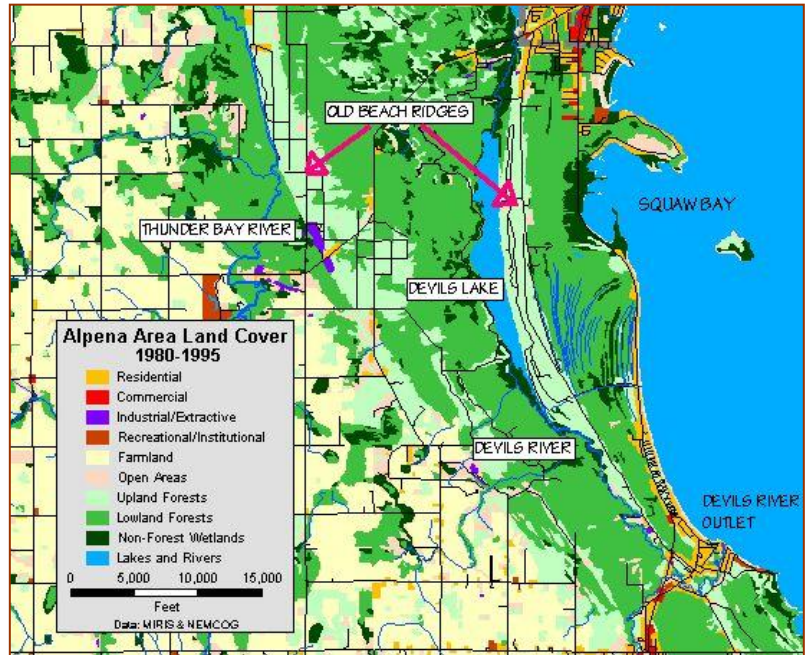
The Ossineke Beach Ridge landform, a beach ridge and swale complex, is a series of alternating old beach ridges and linear depressions that parallel the Lake Huron shoreline. As Glacial Lake Warren receded, a series of beach ridges interspersed with low wet areas formed. At times the recession was slow but steady, creating a series of closely spaced low ridges and wet swales. When lake levels receded at a rapid rate, expansive areas of relatively level land were uncovered. Initially the area may have been an emergent coastal wetland like Squaw Bay. As the water table further dropped, lowland brush and eventually lowland conifer and hardwood trees would dominate. When the receding lake levels stalled, beaches were built by wave action and deposition of sand washed up on shore. A review of aerial photos shows remnant beach ridges in the northern and southern parts of the City. This would indicate prior to settlement much of the



area was covered by an extensive dune and swale complex, and as development occurred, the land was filled and leveled. Dune and swale complexes are still evident in the southwestern corner of City.

There were extended periods when the lake recession stalled, and combined with a readily

available supply of sand, long wide sandy ridges or low sand dunes were created inland from the present shoreline. A wide sandy ridge, one to two miles inland from the Lake Huron Shoreline, runs from the community of Black River in Alcona County, through Negwegon State Park and Ossineke continuing north into Alpena Township and the City of Alpena. Sandhill Road in Alcona County and Piper Road in Alpena County follow this dry sandy ridge. The wide sand ridge extends into Alpena Township and the City crossing Werth Road at Hobbs Drive, following the west edge of Mud Lake, continuing in a northeasterly direction, crossing the Thunder Bay River and eventually ending northeast of the Thunder Bay Recreation Center.



Sportsman’s Island Park is part of this old beach ridge landform. The pine-oak forest on the island is characteristic of forest vegetation found growing in other segments of this old beach ridge or sand dune. Along with being a good place to build roads, the well drained sand ridge is also built up with subdivisions in the southern part of the study area. Sunset Grade School, Alpena High School, Evergreen Cemetery, Alpena Community College and the Thunder Bay Recreation Center are also located in this sand ridge area.

The presence of limestone bedrock at or near the surface, particularly north of the Thunder Bay River, influences the hydrology and vegetation of the area. Northern white cedar thrives on these shallow soils and is the dominant forest species in both wet and dryer areas north of the Thunder Bay River. Beneath the thin mantel of glacial deposits is sedimentary bedrock that was created during the upper and lower Devonian ages of the Paleozoic Era. The bedrock was formed in ancient seas, which covered the area some 345 to 405 million years ago. The shallow marine seas deposited layers of silt, clay, sediments, marine



animals, plants, coral, and other calcareous materials. These deposits formed shale, limestone, and dolomite bedrock. The bedrock in this area is referred to as the Traverse Group. Deposits are further defined as Potter Farm Formation, Norway Point Formation, Four Mile Dam Formation and Alpena Limestone. Rich deposits of Alpena Limestone, Newton Creek Limestone and Genschaw Formation are mined and processed at the Lafarge facility in the northeast part of the study area.

## Soil Constraints Analysis

When planning for types and intensity of land uses, sustainable development and protection of critical resources, soil types and slopes are important factors that determine carrying capacity of land. Construction of roads, and buildings on steeply sloped areas, areas with bedrock at or near the surface or areas with organic and hydric soils require special design considerations. In addition, costs for developing these sensitive areas are greater than in less constrained parts of the landscape. If developed improperly, the impacts to natural resources can be far reaching.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has completed a detailed soil survey of Alpena County. A digital version of the soil survey maps was acquired from the Michigan Center for Geographic Information (CGI). Using information contained within the published soil survey books, a series of maps are presented that depict hydric soils, soils depth to bedrock, and soils with building limitations.

### Hydric Soils

**Figure 5.3** is a color thematic map that shows extensive areas of hydric soils. Lower density and less intensive development should be directed to these areas with severe building constraints. Hydric soils are saturated, flooded or ponded during part of the growing season and are classified as poorly drained and very poorly drained. Hydric soils have poor potential for building site development and sanitary facilities. Wetness and frequent ponding are severe problems that are difficult and costly to overcome. Areas with hydric soils are best suited for forestlands, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and wildlands recreation. Functioning as the backbone of a community's green infrastructure, these areas convey and retain stormwater runoff from developed lands. Hydric soils are associated with lakes and streams and when covered with natural vegetation, function as water quality buffers. Sites with high water tables may be classified as wetlands and a wetlands permit would be required to develop these areas. These wet areas are hydrologically connected to surface water resources either by streams, intermittent drainages or through subsurface water movement.

### Building Site Development

The USDA soil survey rates soils for various uses, such as building site development, and identifies the limiting factors, such as steep slopes or high water table. The rating system is slight, moderate and severe limitations. Using the rating system developed by USDA, soil limitations for buildings without basements have been mapped (**Figure 5.4**). Areas with well drained soils and slopes less than 10% tend to have slight limitations for building development. Areas depicted as yellow on the map would be considered well suited for building development. Areas with slopes greater than 18%, high water tables, bedrock near the surface, large stones and organic soils have severe limitations. Lands with severe constraints are quite extensive. Some of those bedrock influenced areas also have constraints from high water tables.

### Depth to Bedrock

The soil survey classifies soils according to depth to bedrock. **Figure 5.5** is a thematic map showing depth to bedrock according to criteria in the soil survey. Areas colored as red contain soils where bedrock is within four feet of the surface. Bedrock outcrops can be seen in road cuts on Woodward Avenue where the old railroad grade crosses the road. As noted on the above building constraints map, areas with shallow soils have severe buildings constraints.



## Natural Resource Features

While much of the central core has developed into urbanized land uses over the last 100 years, there are still extensive undeveloped lands bordering the City. The forests, wetlands and open areas provide wildlife habitat, lands for outdoor recreation, protect water quality and bring nature into the city. Within developed portions of the City and the surrounding Alpena Township, the wide expanses of forests and wetlands are squeezed into narrow corridors following rivers, railroads and lakeshores. Information from the Alpena Eco-Plan, a coastal zone management project, describes the ecological features of the City and surrounding area. Utilizing reference data such as land cover/use maps, topographic maps, and digital aerial photographs, NEMCOG staff developed a natural resource features map of the City (**Figure 5.6**).

### **Forests**

Approximately 15% of the land area is forested. Forests include upland cover types such as jack-red-white pine, aspen-birch, sugar maple-beech and red oak. Northern white cedar thrives on upland sites where limestone bedrock is close to the surface. Lowland forests include lowland conifers and hardwoods, such as northern white cedar, tamarack, black spruce, balsam fir, elm, red maple, willow, black ash, balsam poplar and aspen. The forests are concentrated in the northern portions of the City. A sandy ridge, remnants of an old sand dune that runs from the southwest to the northeast crossing the river at Sportsman's Island, is dominated by red oak, white oak, jack pine and white pine.

### **Upland Non-forested Open Areas**

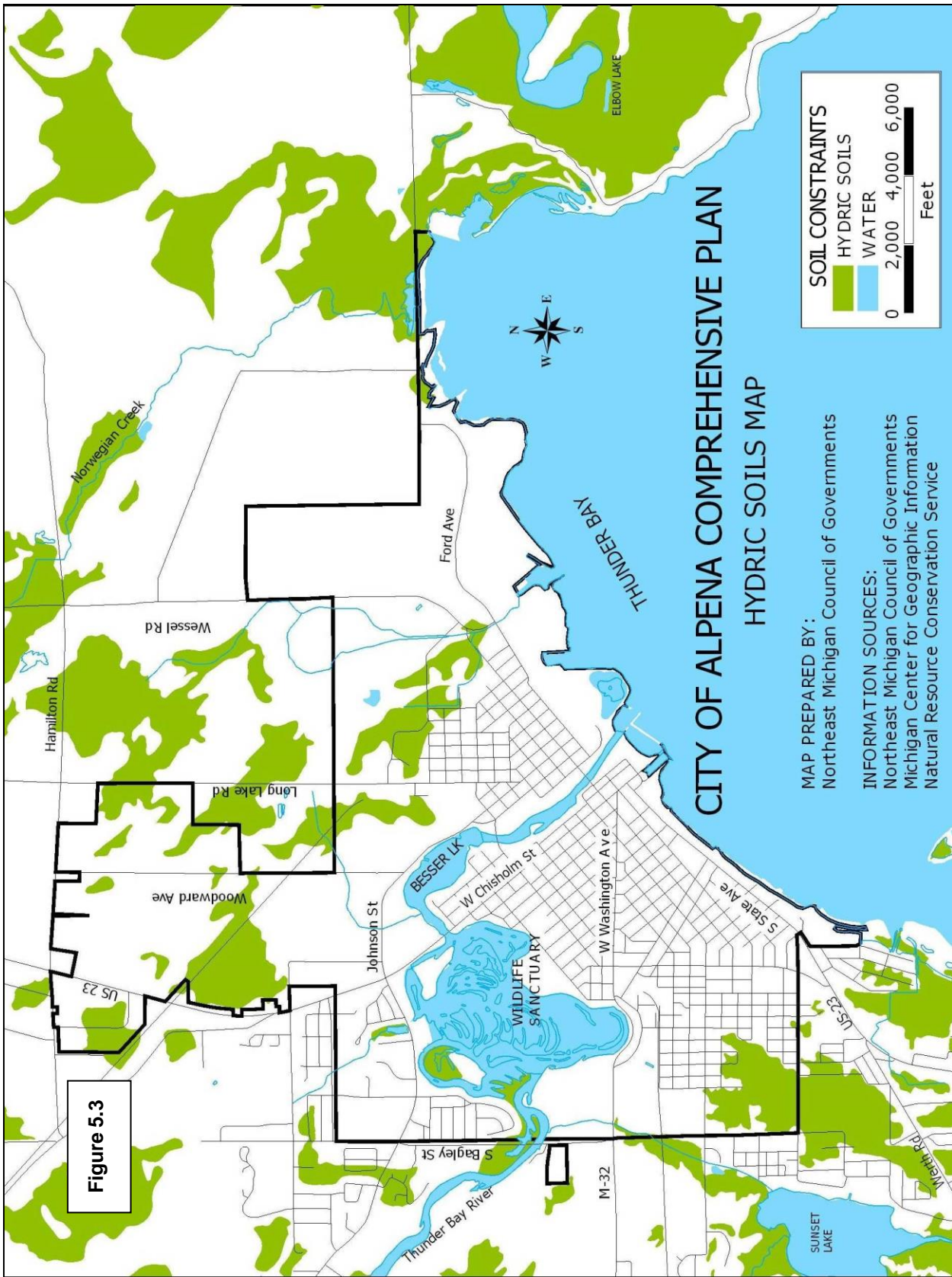
Old farm fields, cleared areas, railroad corridors and shore areas are included in this category. The most extensive open areas are located north of the river and include old farm fields, wet meadows and cleared areas. Shrubs such as hawthorn, autumn olive, tartarian honeysuckle, and spreading junipers can be found growing in upland areas. Speckled alder, willow, and red osier dogwood shrubs dominate wetter areas. Land bordering the Thunder Bay River, Wildlife Sanctuary and Lake Besser are mapped in this category, with some segments being mowed lawns. The Lake Huron shoreline south of the river mouth and within the City is included in this category. These sites are mainly mowed lawns. The railroad corridors and rail-trail (Paxton Spur) are narrow openings that pierce the urban and built-up portions of the Township and City. The open areas, particularly in the urban setting, present wonderful opportunities for planting shrubs and trees to enhance wildlife habitat. Shrubs in the undeveloped, mostly wet areas south of the river are speckled alder, willow, and red osier dogwood. Shrubs such as hawthorn, autumn olive, tartarian honeysuckle, spreading junipers can be found growing in upland areas.



### **Wetlands**

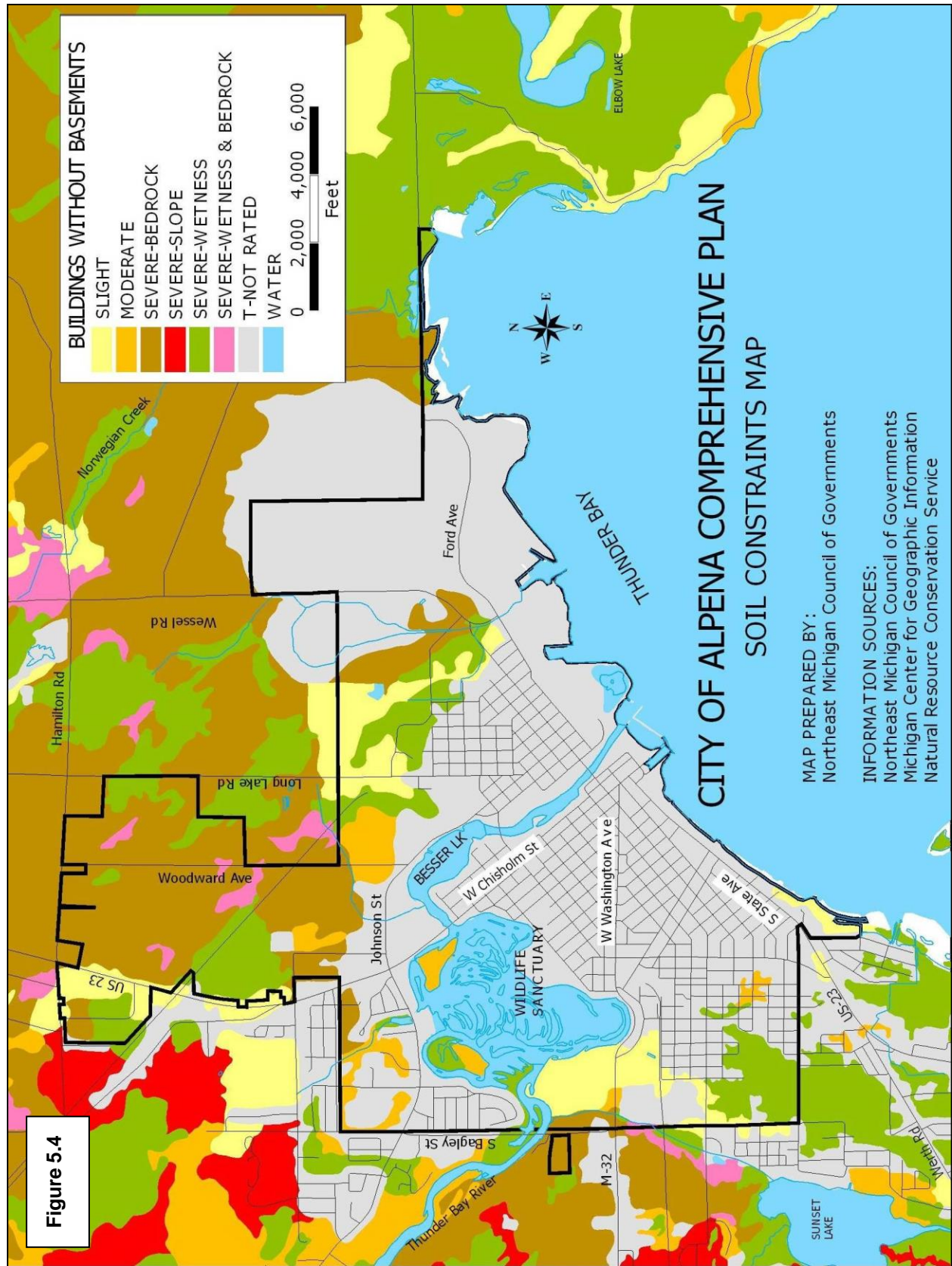
Wetlands are defined as land that has sufficient water at, or near, the surface to support wetland or aquatic vegetation. These areas are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes and bogs. Two of the most important functions of wetlands are water quality protection and ecological corridors. As noted on the Alpena Resource Map, the major wetland areas are adjacent to rivers and creeks. The networks of wetlands receive surface water and subsurface water discharge creating the many streams and creeks which in turn flow into the area lakes. The interconnected resources exemplify how activities distant from major water bodies can still have an impact on the water quality.

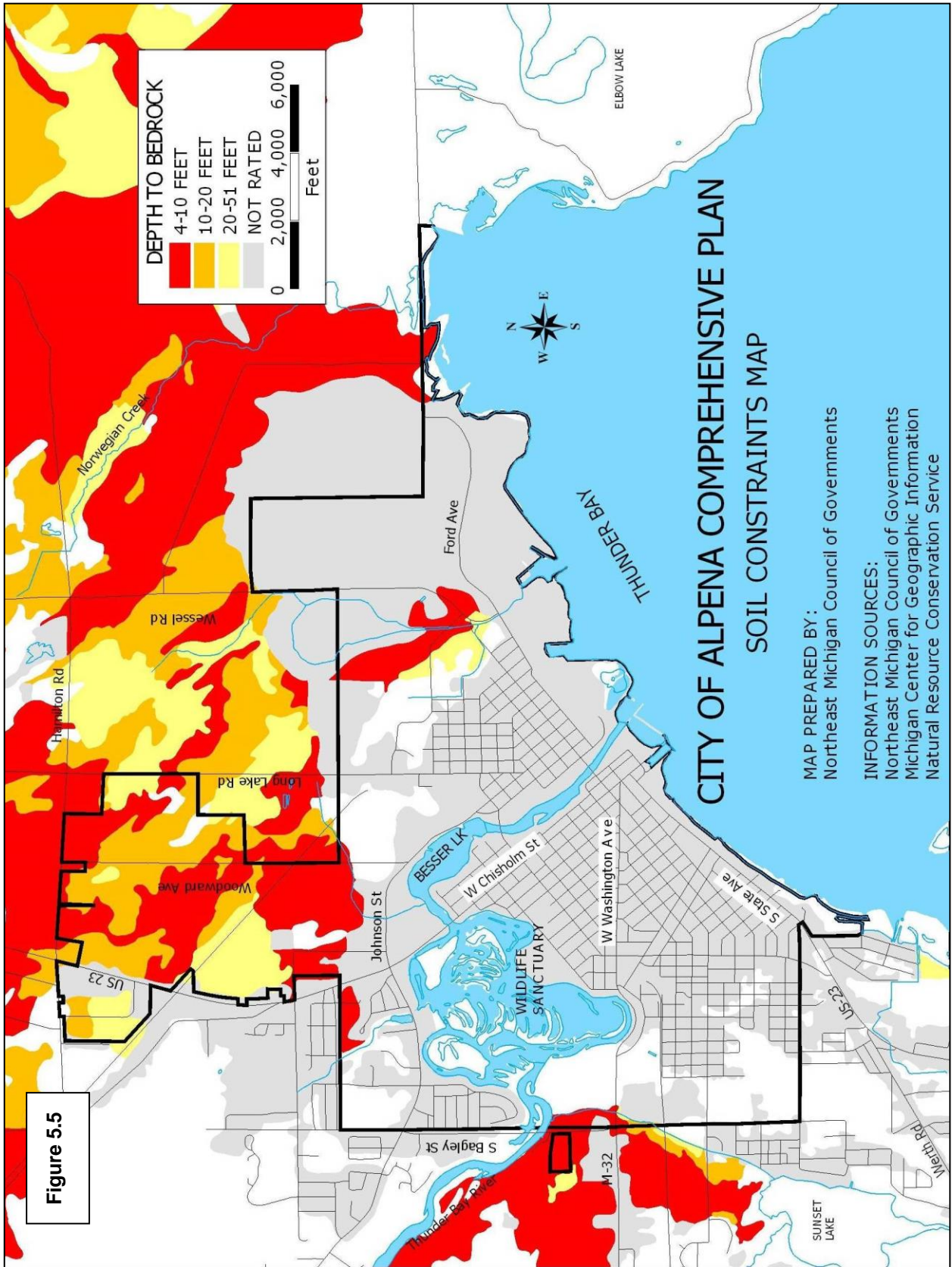
The wetland category comprises non forested types such as lowland brush (speckled alder, willow, and red osier dogwood shrubs, emergent vegetation (cattails, rushes, sweetflag, arrowhead and pickerelweed), and wet meadows (water-loving grasses and sedges). Non forested wetlands are common in the Wildlife Sanctuary and in the northeast and southwest parts of the City. The wetland complex in the southwest of the city is part of a dune and swale complex. Non-forested wetlands often form transition zones between upland areas and water features. Lowland forests grow on soils with a seasonally high water table and are often classified as wetlands. Lowland forests include areas that support lowland hardwoods and conifers, such as northern white cedar, black spruce, balsam fir, elm, black ash, red maple, ash and aspen species.



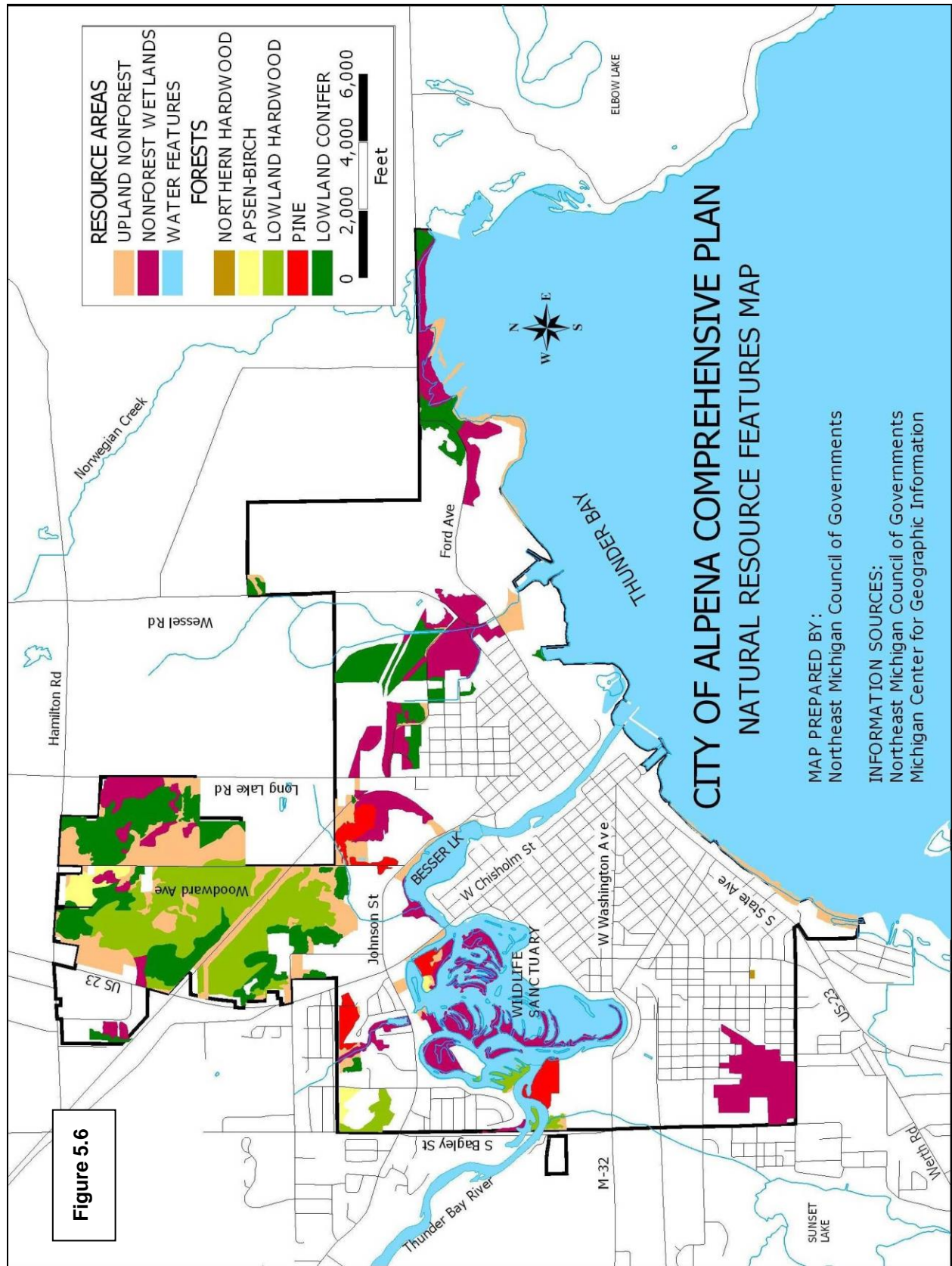
**Figure 5.3**











**Figure 5.6**

## **Water Resources**

Surface water resources define the shape, climate, and character of the community. In the developed neighborhoods, one is never more than one half mile from a lake or river. Key water resources include Lake Huron, Thunder Bay and Thunder Bay River. Other water resources include Lake Besser, Norwegian Creek, Fletcher Creek, and Gilchrist Creek. Fletcher and Gilchrist Creeks along with numerous manmade ditches tend to be intermittent, carrying water during spring run-off and heavy rain events.



A large portion of the City's eastern border follows the shoreline of Lake Huron, which is the second largest Great Lake and the fifth largest freshwater lake in the world. Lake Huron serves as habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other aquatic organisms, and offers many fishing opportunities. An abundance of boating and other water-related recreation opportunities are also available through this resource.

In addition to the Lake Huron shoreline (including Thunder Bay), there are a total of 7.6 miles of Thunder Bay River frontage located in the City. The river is used for recreation and transportation. The greatest use designated for the river is as parkland. The next largest use of this river frontage is residential, with residential dwellings occupying 12,247 feet. The remaining 15,352 feet are occupied by institutional, industrial, and commercial uses.

The Thunder Bay River includes a small impoundment of 45 acres at the Ninth Street Dam called Lake Besser. Located upstream from Lake Besser, the Wildlife Sanctuary is an impoundment of the Thunder Bay River that contains marshes, narrow curving linear islands and flooded river oxbows. The lake area includes approximately 190 water acres, and the river includes 160 acres for an approximate total water area of 350 acres. The Sanctuary is a key ecological resource located entirely within the city limits. Water courses function as the central core of ecological corridors. The Thunder Bay River is a corridor of regional importance.

## **Islands**

Numerous curve-a-linear islands, remnants of past erosive powers of the untamed Thunder Bay River, can be found in the Wildlife Sanctuary. Depending upon the soils and elevation above the average water level, vegetation varies from pine and oak on Sportsman Island; willows and ash on lower islands and speckled alder, red osier dogwood, sedges, and cattails on wetter sites.

## **Pre-Settlement Vegetation**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has compiled pre-settlement vegetation maps of counties in Michigan. The maps were generated from information contained in the first government land survey notes in the 1800's along with information such as current vegetation, land forms and soils. A review of the pre-settlement vegetation map of the Alpena area show much of the city was classified as spruce-fir-cedar forests and mixed conifer swamp forests. The sand ridge (old sand dune) was covered with jack pine-red pine forests and pine-barrens. Other types of vegetation in the northern parts of the City included beech-sugar maple-hemlock forests and hemlock-white pine forests. Hemlock, considered an important species

for song birds, was once fairly common along coastal areas, but logging and land clearing has greatly reduced the species.

The pre-settlement map does not show coastal wetlands, but one can surmise coastal marshes and emergent wetlands would have been abundant. Coastal wetlands in Isaacson Bay, Squaw Bay and around Bare Point and Partridge Point are remnant examples of the extensive wetlands that ringed Thunder Bay during pre-settlement times. The mouth of the Thunder Bay River was a rich delta consisting of emergent wetlands, marshes, wetland forests, sandy beaches and oak and pine forest covered beach ridges. It was an area where great numbers and types of wildlife and fish congregated. Native American people understood and exploited the abundant plant, animal, and fish resources. The junction of a major river and Great Lakes was also the best place to locate a town. When water transportation was the primary mode, the Thunder Bay River brought raw materials to the community, to be processed into goods, loaded on the sailing ships and steamers and then transported to markets in large cities around the Great Lakes. To allow for the construction of large factories, land was cleared, low areas filled and the river tamed. One hundred years of activity eliminated the coastal marshes from Lafarge Corporation down to Mich-e-ke-wis Park.

## General Ecological Areas

Based on soil conditions, past and current development patterns, geological landforms, and existing vegetation, general ecological areas have been delineated. This effort identified six eco-areas: beach ridges and swales, riverine, karst, coastal resources, sand dunes and urban areas. **Figure 5.7** is a map of the Eco-Areas. The mapping of these areas will lend itself to development of recommended treatments in subsequent chapters. For example, several preferred species to plant on old sand dunes are red oak, serviceberry, beach cherry, and jack pine.

### **Beach Ridges and Swales**

This area includes remnant sections of the post glacial beach ridge and swale complex called the Ossineke Beach Ridge. Most of the remnant undeveloped areas have high water tables and as a result are less desirable for development. However, both the City and Township have slated these areas for residential development. The old beach ridges are low and tend to support aspen, ash, elm and willow trees. White pine can be found growing on better drained, somewhat higher ridges. Speckled alder, willow, and red osier dogwood shrubs along with cattails, sedges are common in the wet swales.

### **Riverine**

This area includes the Thunder Bay River, Wildlife Sanctuary, Lake Besser, islands in the river and riparian lands adjacent to the water features. Vegetation in this eco-area ranges from aspen and jack pine on upland well drained sites to willow, and red osier dogwood shrubs on lower sites adjacent to the river and to cattails, bulrushes and lily pads on wet sites. The area includes the Alpena Wildlife and Sportsman's Island Park. Rivers and riparian forests provide critical habitat for many species of wildlife and reptiles. The riparian zones are long narrow edge habitats, an interface between land and water. The area is part of an ecological corridor that extends far inland to Oscoda and Montmorency Counties.

### **Karst-Forest Lands**

The northern part of the planning area is influenced by the presence of limestone bedrock at or near the surface. Northern white cedar thrives on these shallow soils and is the dominant forest species in both wet and dryer areas. Black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, eastern tamarack, aspen, white birch, white pine, jack pine, and red pine can be found growing in the forested areas. Shrubs such as hawthorn, autumn olive, tartarian honeysuckle, spreading junipers can be found on dryer sites, while, speckled alder, willow, and red



osier dogwood shrubs dominate wetter areas. There are also numerous open areas in the karst eco-area which consist of old farm fields, wet meadows and cleared areas. The karst eco-area has extensive areas of undeveloped lands, partially due to large ownership, limited development potential and the underlying bedrock resources.

Old farm fields and natural forest openings are most prevalent in the karst eco-area. Forest openings serve an important function in the spring; because they are in the sun most of the day, openings are the first area to lose snow and to green up. After a winter of eating twigs and seeds, animals seek out openings for a meal of succulent nourishing fresh greens. Predators, like the red-tailed hawk and fox, understand this fact and cruise these areas for a spring meal of rodents. Flowering plants throughout the growing season attract insects, which in turn are devoured by birds.

### **Coastal Resources**

The coastal wetlands in Whitefish Bay, Squaw Bay and around Bare Point and Partridge Point are remnant examples of the extensive wetlands that ringed Thunder Bay during pre-settlement times. The mouth of the Thunder Bay River was a rich delta consisting of emergent wetlands, marshes, wetland forests, sandy beaches and oak and pine forest covered beach ridges.

With the current high-water levels of Lake Huron, coastal marshes along Stony Point, Bare Point and Whitefish Bay have temporarily flooded. Between Stony and Bare Points wave action is creating new beach ridges. The landward side of the beach ridges drops off, creating a protected emergent wetland. This is a living example of the process that happened 1000's of years ago further inland when the beach ridge and swale complexes were created. Birds such as sandpipers, terns, plovers, snipes and gulls all frequent these coastal wetlands and beaches. Great blue herons, marsh wrens, red-winged blackbirds, swamp sparrows, mallard and black ducks can be found in the marshes. Plants include cattails, sandbar willow, bulrushes, sedges, joe-pie-weed, jewelweed, arrowhead, and water plantain.

### **Sand Dunes**

The wide beach ridge or sand dune, located approximately one mile inland from the lakeshore, is designated as its own ecological feature. The pine-oak forest is the predominant forest type growing on these sandy ridges. This forest type is not common in other parts of the study area. Remnant forests of red oak are found in subdivision adjacent to Hobbs Drive, Autumn Drive, Grant Street, Piper Road, Greenhaven Lane and Shelley Street in the southwest corner of the study area. Natural stands of jack pine and white pine trees can be found adjacent to the Alpena Area High School, Evergreen Cemetery, and Thunder Bay Recreation Center. Other plants include sedges, grasses, blueberries, spreading junipers, serviceberry, and chokecherry. Most of this ecological feature has been developed for institutional or residential uses.

### **Urban Areas**

Typical of older cities, small natural pockets of land are very limited in residential and commercial developments. Active and abandoned railroad rights-of-way, parks, cemeteries, creeks and drainage ways provide critical corridors. Connected backyards in the internal portions of city blocks may also function as habitat for certain species of song birds.

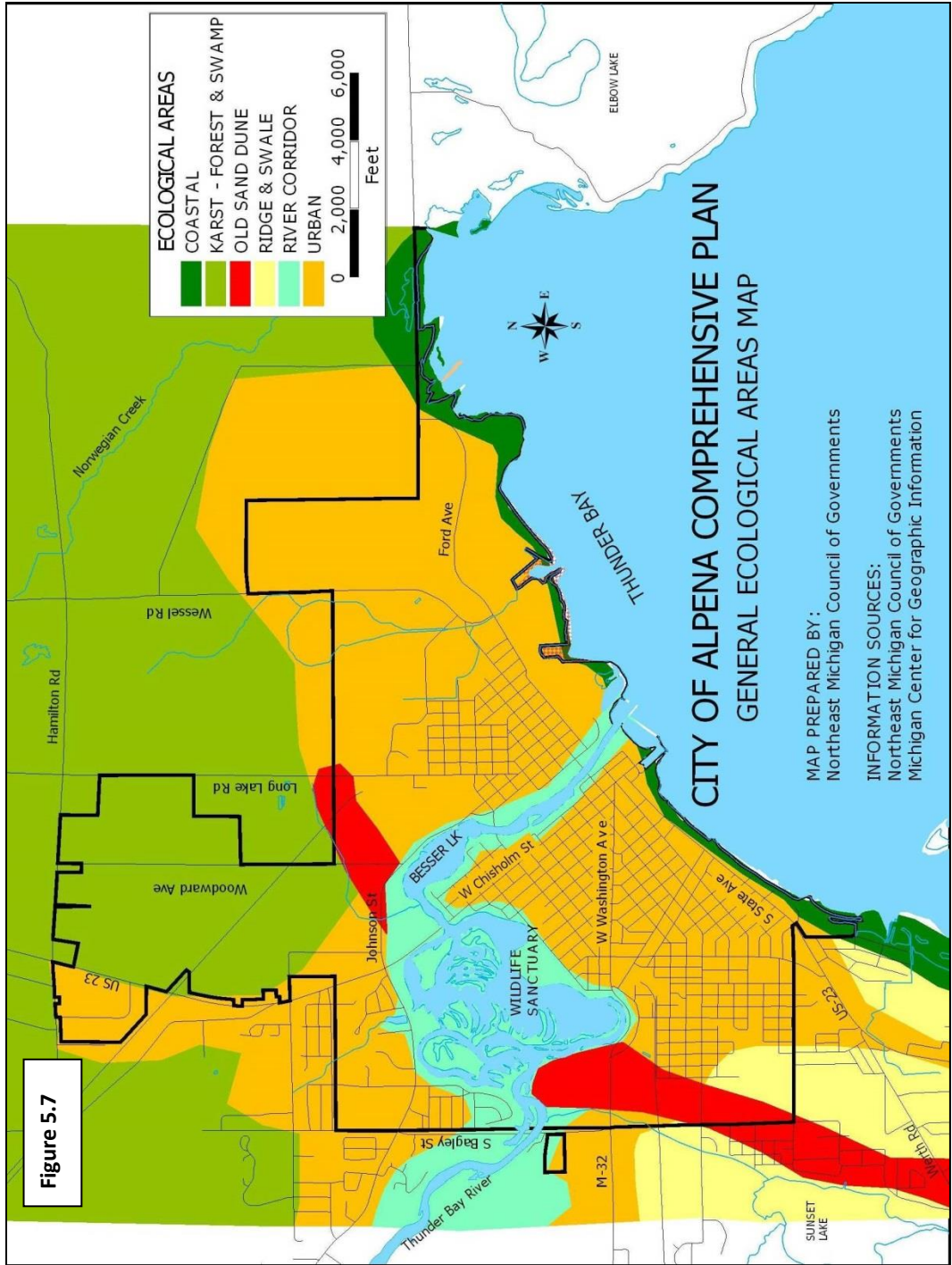


Figure 5.7

### Key Ecological Corridors

The key ecological corridors are Thunder Bay River, Wildlife Sanctuary, Lake Besser, Norwegian Creek, Fletcher Creek, and several manmade drainage networks. The shoreline and emergent wetlands along the Lake Huron Shoreline are another important, yet very limited corridor. Other important corridors are the Lake States Railroad that enters the community from the southwest, and the Paxton Spur Rail-Trail that enters the community from the west near the Alpena High School. The Lake States Railroad Right-of-Way passes through the community and connects to Lafarge at the north end. The ecological integrity is greatly

compromised in commercial areas.

## Sites of Environmental Contamination

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended regulates facilities of environmental contamination in Michigan. The Remediation and Redevelopment Division of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) works towards managing and revitalizing sites of environmental contamination to protect the environment. The division administers two programs: Environmental Remediation (release of hazardous substances from facilities) and Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (release of hazardous substances from underground storage tanks).

The facility inventory database has information for Sites of Environmental Contamination (Part 201), Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (Part 213), and Baseline Environmental Assessments (BEA). The Baseline Environmental Assessments document the existing contamination and allows a facility to be acquired and/or operated without being held liable for the existing contamination. EGLE also has an online mapping application, *Environmental Mapper*, which allows users to view sites of environmental contamination, leaking underground storage tank sites, and any land use or resource use restrictions imposed on a property that has been provided to EGLE. Information about the sites of environmental contamination in the City of Alpena can be found in **Table 5.1** and **Figure 5.8**.

| Facility ID | Facility Name                            | Address   | Type     |
|-------------|--|---|----------|
| 04000152    | 1135 West Chisholm                       | 1135 West Chisholm                                    | Part 201 |
| 04000183    | 181 North Industrial Highway             | 181 North Industrial Highway                          | Part 201 |
| 04000141    | 324 North 11th Avenue                    | 324 North 11th Avenue                                 | Part 201 |
| 04000136    | 500 Palm Street                          | 500 Palm Street                                       | Part 201 |
| 04000170    | 610 S. Third Avenue Heating Oil Release  | 610 S. Third Avenue                                   | Part 201 |
| 04000039    | Abitibi-Price Corp                       | 416 Ford Avenue                                       | Part 201 |
| 00014901    | Admiral Petroleum #5866                  | 906 W Washington Ave                                  | Part 213 |
| 04000131    | Alpena Area Wide SAF                     | several sites - each scored separately                | Part 201 |
| 00007063    | Alpena City Highway Garage               | 615 W Campbell St                                     | Part 213 |
| 00007001    | Alpena County Road Commission            | 1400 N Bagley St                                      | Part 213 |
| 00014561    | Alpena County Sheriffs Dept              | 320 Johnson St  | Part 213 |
| 00004057    | Alpena EZ Mart                           | 1035 W Chisholm St                                    | Part 213 |
| 04000162    | Alpena Hide and Leather Company          | 817 and 819 West Miller Street                        | Part 201 |
| 04000030    | Alpena Oil Campbell Street               | 620 West Campbell                                     | Part 201 |
| 00003566    | Alpena Oil Co Inc                        | 235 Water St  | Part 213 |
| 04000126    | Alpena Public Schools - Bus Garage       | 1357 M-32 West  | Part 201 |
| 04000119    | Alpena Riverfront Area                   | several sites - each scored separately                | Part 201 |
| 04000128    | Alpena Third & River                     | 225 River Street (address was 201 N 3 <sup>rd</sup> ) | Part 201 |
| 00015756    | Beavers Automotive & Radiator Repair Inc | 600 N Ripley Blvd                                     | Part 213 |
| 00004102    | Cap & Bottle Store                       | 525 S State Ave                                       | Part 213 |
| 04000161    | Cap and Bottle Store                     | 525 S. State Avenue                                   | Part 201 |
| 50005688    | Carter Street Right of Way               | between second & third ave                            | Part 213 |
| 00007062    | City of Alpena Marina                    | 400 E Chisholm St                                     | Part 213 |
| 04000124    | Consumers Energy (Former MGP)            | 730 State Street                                      | Part 201 |
| 00008007    | Downtown Union 76                        | 201 E Chisholm St                                     | Part 213 |
| 04000129    | Former Fletcher Paper Company            | 318 W. Fletcher Street                                | Part 201 |
| 04000166    | Former Freese Hydraulics                 | 324 North 11th and 325 North 11th Ave                 | Part 201 |
| 04000142    | Former Werth Dry Cleaners Property       | 901 W. Chisholm Street                                | Part 201 |
| 00037255    | Garants Office Supplies & Print          | 117 W Washington Ave                                  | Part 213 |
| 04000154    | Harborside Mall                          | 100-190 North State Avenue                            | Part 201 |
| 04000182    | Health Wise Medical Clinic               | 101 Oxbow Drive                                       | Part 201 |

**Table 5.1  
Sites of Environmental Contamination**

|          |   |   |          |
|----------|---|---|----------|
| 00013659 | Huggler Oil Co                          | 930 W Washington Ave                    | Part 213 |
| 04000080 | Huggler Oil Co. (00013659)              | 930 West Washington Avenue              | Part 201 |
| 04000094 | Lafarge Corporation                     | 1435 Ford Avenue                        | Part 201 |
| 04000115 | Lake State Railway                      | 1002 Long Lake Avenue                   | Part 201 |
| 00039596 | Midas Muffler & Brake Shop              | 901 W Washington Ave                    | Part 213 |
| 04000095 | National Gypsum                         | Misery Bay Road                         | Part 201 |
| 00033178 | Ninth Street Warehouse                  | 9th Street Warehouse                    | Part 213 |
| 04000143 | NOAA (part of Former Fletcher Paper)    | 500 West Fletcher Street                | Part 201 |
| 04000116 | Oxbow Park                              | off Pinecrest                           | Part 201 |
| 00037458 | Perry Oil Co/alpena Bulk Plant          | 634 W Campbell St                       | Part 213 |
| 04000121 | Second Avenue Former Salvage Yard       | Second Avenue NE of Herman Street       | Part 201 |
| 00007689 | Shallas Market Inc.                     | 326 Long Lake Ave                       | Part 213 |
| 00042088 | Summit Sports                           | 224 E Chisholm St                       | Part 213 |
| 04000081 | Tandem Transport                        | 5 Wood Street                           | Part 201 |
| 04000043 | Thunder Bay Manufacturing               | 666 McKinley Ave.                       | Part 201 |
| 04000024 | Tuttle Street                           | 132 Tuttle                              | Part 201 |
| 04000171 | W Washington Avenue Heating Oil Release | 538 W. Washington Avenue                | Part 201 |
| 00002151 | Wayne Kowalski                          | 102 Mason St                            | Part 213 |
| 04000211 | Word of Life Commercial Property        | 801 West Miller Street                  | Part 201 |
| 04000105 | City Of Alpena Marina                   | 400 E Chisholm Street                   | Part 201 |
| 04000174 | Perry Oil Co. Campbell (00037458)       | 634 West Campbell Street                | Part 201 |
| 04000163 | Standard Oil Company (Former)           | 324 North 11th Ave & 325 North 10th Ave | Part 201 |
| 04000173 | Summit Sports - Part 213                | 224 East Chisholm Street                | Part 201 |

## Discharge Permits

### **Surface Water - National Pollution Discharge Elimination (NPDES) Facilities**

The State of Michigan controls the discharge of pollutants from waste and wastewater into Michigan’s surface waters through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting process. This process imposes effluent limitations and other necessary conditions to protect the environment and meet State and Federal regulations. **Table 5.2** shows the NPDES permits issued in the City of Alpena.

**Table 5.2  
National Pollution Discharge Elimination Facilities**

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Alpena Biorefinery   | Great Lakes Maritime Center  |
| Alpena WWTP  | Lafarge N America-Alpena Plt |
| Alpena WWTP  | Nemroc Inc-Alpena            |
| Ameri-Shred Ind Corp-Alpena  | Nor-Tech Ind Corp-Alpena     |
| ATI Casting Service LLC  | PCI                          |
| Besser Co  | Panel Processing Inc-Alpena  |
| Conveyor Systems Inc   | Ren-Tech Ind Corp-Alpena     |
| Decorative Panels Intl-Alpena  | Specification Stone Products |
| Source: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy 2020 |                              |

### **Air Discharge Permits**

The State of Michigan administers the Renewable Operating Permit (ROP) system to regulate air emissions for facilities that emit more than a certain amount of air contaminants. According to EGLE, there are two

renewable operating permits issued in the City of Alpena:

- Decorative Panels, Inc.
- LaFarge Midwest, Inc.

Figure 5.8





# Chapter 6

## Existing Land Cover/Use

This chapter presents information on the types and location of the existing land uses to provide guidance during the process to establish goals and objectives, and determining the future land uses. This process identifies and maps urban and built-up land uses, such as residential and commercial uses, and natural land cover types, such as forests and wetlands (**Figure 6.1**).

As development occurs, larger tracts of land are subdivided into smaller parcels. Therefore, studying the existing pattern of land divisions is one way to analyze the status of land use and development. Typical of most cities, the older parts of the community have small lots that are 10,000 square feet or less. As development occurred and newer lots were created in the city, particularly over the last 30 years, the newly created lots were larger. This fact is most noticeable for highway commercial development where on-site parking is a requirement. The trend is slowly reversing as new development has shifted to compact, mixed-use and higher density residential. Three developments that fit this trend are Oxbow Village, Alpena Marc, LLC (Fletcher Mill site) and Rivers Edge Condominiums.

The north parts of the City are still in large ownerships. Alpena Community College owns a large tract of land along Woodward Avenue and Long Lake Avenue. The college is developing a master plan that will propose development activities and uses on this tract. Additionally, Lafarge is another large landowner where most of this land is dedicated to the quarry and processing facility.

Fourteen categories have been identified and mapped within the City (**Table 6.1**). Urban and built-up areas were separated into ten categories and undeveloped areas were separated into four categories. The existing land use map illustrates the distribution of land uses throughout the City (**Figure 6.1**). The map was generated using ancillary data sets including the 2013 Existing Land Use and 2018 digital aerial photography.

### Single-Family Residential

This category includes one and two family residential units and covers the largest area within the urban and built-up categories. The one and two family residential use occupies approximately 23.6% (1,356 acres) of the land in the City. Single family residential accounts for most of the residential development in the City.

### Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential is characterized as a building or cluster of buildings containing three or more dwelling units. This classification includes apartments, condominiums, retirement homes and nursing homes. Multi-family development is found throughout the city with concentrations in the northwest and southwest parts of the City. Upper story residential units above older commercial buildings in the downtown business, while classified as multi-family, are not separated from the downtown business category. Proposed developments, such as Rivers Edge Condominiums, will add to the multi-family units. Multi-Family residential accounts for 1.3% of the City and covers 74 acres.

### Office

This category includes office uses (e.g. doctors, dentists, attorneys, accountants, insurance, and personal services), and office buildings (e.g. medical clinics, banks, and corporate headquarters). Office uses are concentrated along Chisholm Street, Ripley Street, and in the Arbor Lane Office Park and Long Rapids

Plaza north of Long Rapids Road. Office uses in the downtown are not separated from the Downtown Business District. Office uses cover 42 acres or less than 0.7% of the City.

## **Commercial**

The commercial category includes the retail sales of goods and services, and motels and restaurants outside the Downtown Business District. This classification contains 146 acres or 2.5% of the City. Commercial activity is concentrated along Chisholm Street, Ripley Street, South State Street, Second Street, north of the river and Washington Avenue, west of Ripley Avenue. Neighborhood commercial establishments are scattered throughout the City.

## **Downtown Business District**

The downtown business district contains a mix of uses including retail, service, restaurants, and residential. Many of the buildings are multi-story with residential, office or vacant above street level uses. In an effort to revitalize the downtown, the City has been working to encourage residential development in the upper stories of these older commercial buildings. The area mapped as downtown covers 61 acres or 1.1% of the City.

## **Mixed Use**

Two areas are classified as mixed use, Oxbow Village and Alpena Marc, LLC (Fletcher Paper Mill Property). These developments include mixed residential, commercial, service, and institutional uses. These two developments account for 1.2% of the City's area or 68 acres.

## **Light Industrial**

Light industrial uses are defined as limited manufacturing activities that emit a minimum of noise, vibration, air pollution, etc. Typical uses include warehousing, distribution, research and development, light manufacturing, and limited assembly of finished materials. Land within this category is found along Eleventh Avenue, at the east end of Johnson Street, in North Industrial Park and Commerce Industrial Park. Land in this use category covers 215 acres or 3.7% of the City.

## **Heavy Industrial/Extractive**

Heavy industrial uses are generally found in the northeast parts of the City and along the waterfront. Uses include quarries, bulk storage, salvage operations, and facilities that process raw materials. With heavy industrial at 588 acres and extractive at 486 acres for a total of 18.7% of the city, this is the second largest land use category in the City.

## **Parks**

City parks, Alpena County Fairgrounds, City Marina, North East State Trail, and Paxton Spur Rail to Trail corridor are included in this category. With approximately 221 acres of parklands (4.2% of the City), residents have ample access to parks. The wetlands and surface water in the Wildlife Sanctuary are not included in this category.

## **Institutional/Public**

This category includes institutional uses (e.g. churches, schools, recreation fields associated with schools, museums, hospitals, and cemeteries), and public agencies and buildings, such as City Hall. This is a large category covering 452 acres or 8.6% of the City. These uses can be found around the City with large areas along West Washington Street and West Johnson Streets. Alpena Community College owns extensive lands north of the campus along Woodward Avenue and Long Lake Avenue. Since this property has not been developed, the land area was mapped as its current land cover types (forests,

wetlands and old farm fields).

## **Non-forested Uplands**

The non-forested land category consists of herbaceous and shrub lands, beaches and undeveloped shorelines. The land use inventory found 214 acres (3.7% of the City) mostly located in the northern part of the City. A majority of the non-forest areas are old farm fields located on Alpena Community College lands.

## **Forests**

Upland and lowland forests are classified in this category. Upland forest types include pine, aspen-birch, and northern hardwoods (sugar maple, red maple, beech, and basswood). These forest types are found growing on well drained soils. Lowland forests grow on soils with a seasonally high water table and are often classified as wetlands. Lowland forests, include areas that support lowland hardwoods and conifers, such as northern white cedar, black spruce, balsam fir, elm, black ash, red maple, ash and aspen species. Forests occupy 922 acres or 16.1% of the City.

## **Wetlands**

Wetlands are defined as land that has sufficient water at, or near, the surface to support wetland or aquatic vegetation. These areas are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes and bogs. The wetland category comprises non-forested types such as lowland brush (tag alder and willow), sphagnum bogs, emergent vegetation in lakes, and wet meadows. Non-forested wetlands account for 228 acres or 4.0% of the City and are located adjacent to rivers and creeks.

Two primary functions of wetlands are water quality protection and ecological corridors. The network of wetlands receives surface water and subsurface water discharges, which creates the many streams and creeks that flow into the area lakes. The interconnected resources exemplify how activities distant from major water bodies can still have an impact on water quality.

## **Surface Water**

The Thunder Bay River, Wildlife Sanctuary, and Besser Lake are included in this category, and cover 8.6% or 494 acres of the City. Thunder Bay and Lake Huron are not mapped in this category. Given Alpena is bounded by Lake Huron on the east, and the Thunder Bay River and impoundment, water resources are key to the community character and environment.

## **Other**

Certain land uses included in this category comprise a very small portion of land within the City. Primarily this land consists of transportation such as roads and railroad right-of-way. These land uses total 51 acres of the City.



**Table 6.1  
Existing Land Use**

| <b>Land Use Category</b>             | <b>Number of Acres</b> | <b>Percent of City</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Single-Family Residential            | 1,356                  | <b>23.6%</b>           |
| Multi-Family Residential             | 74                     | <b>1.3%</b>            |
| Office                               | 42                     | <b>0.7%</b>            |
| Commercial                           | 146                    | <b>2.5%</b>            |
| Downtown Business District           | 61                     | <b>1.1%</b>            |
| Mixed Use                            | 68                     | <b>1.2%</b>            |
| Light Industrial                     | 215                    | <b>3.7%</b>            |
| Heavy Industrial                     | 588                    | <b>10.2%</b>           |
| Extractive                           | 486                    | <b>8.5%</b>            |
| Parks                                | 223                    | <b>3.9%</b>            |
| Institutional/Public/Utilities       | 573                    | <b>10.0%</b>           |
| Non-Forested Uplands                 | 214                    | <b>3.7%</b>            |
| Forests                              | 922                    | <b>16.1%</b>           |
| Non-Forested Wetlands                | 228                    | <b>4.0%</b>            |
| Water                                | 494                    | <b>8.6%</b>            |
| Other (Transportation, Railroad ROW) | 51                     | <b>0.9%</b>            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>5,741</b>           | <b>100%</b>            |

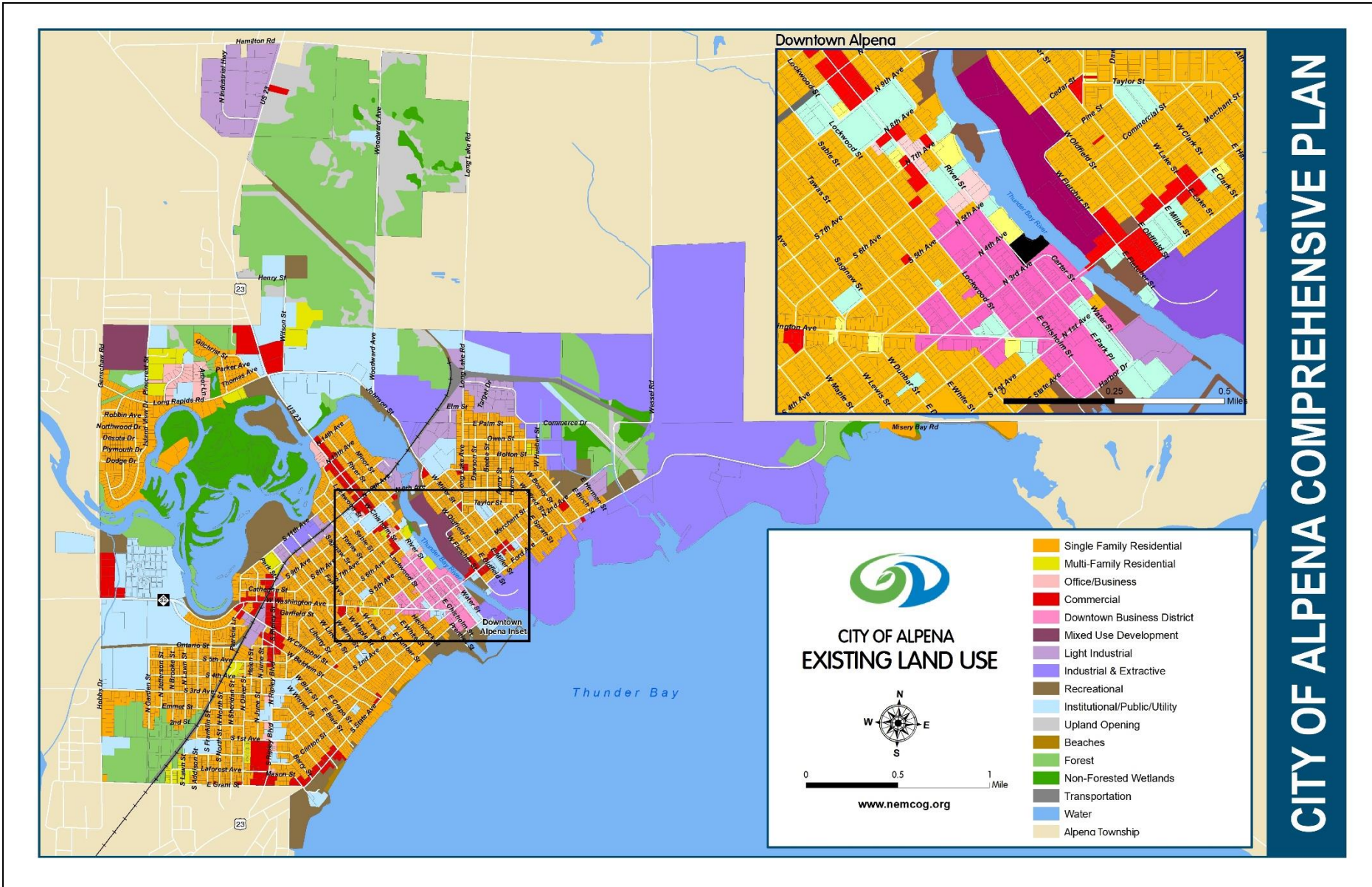


Figure 6.1 – Existing Land Use

# Chapter 7

## Goals & Objectives

### Purpose

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The purpose of this chapter is to establish the goals, objectives and action steps that will guide future growth and development in a manner that will reflect the City's unique character. In developing community goals and objectives, it is important to analyze demographics, housing, economic conditions, services and facilities, cultural and natural resources and existing land use. Preceding chapters of this comprehensive plan have documented the above characteristics.

### Public Input

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The City Planning Commission commissioned a city-wide survey that was available online to both city and surrounding area residents. The survey was available on the City of Alpena website and hard copies were available at Alpena City Hall. Press releases were issued to inform the public about the availability of the survey. 208 completed surveys were received (survey results are on file with the City of Alpena and are available online at [www.alpena.mi.us/departments/planning](http://www.alpena.mi.us/departments/planning)). Participants were asked a number of different questions, including the identification of assets and negative issues within the City of Alpena, and a number of different questions regarding government services, community facilities, natural resources, housing, economic development, transportation, and quality of life. Lastly, participants were asked to provide suggestions on improvements that could be undertaken by the City of Alpena in the future.

#### **Survey Summary**

- 208 Surveys Received

#### **Respondents**

- 199 Full-time Residents
- 4 Non-Residents
- 4 Seasonal Residents
- 88.7% of respondents own their own home in the city
- 61.5% of respondents have lived in the City 20+ years
- 57.2% of respondents are age 50 and above
- 32.0% of respondents occupy the professional/managerial category; 33.0% are retired
- 57.8% of respondents work within the City of Alpena

#### **Information Flow**

- 63.3% of respondents stated they get information from the newspaper
- 57.2% of respondents acquire information from the internet
- 54.8% of respondents get information from family and friends
- More than 50% of respondents gain information from TV and Radio

## City Assets

The residents of the City of Alpena value the rural, small town community and accessibility to the area's forests and water resources. The low crime rate, ability to utilize the City's park and recreation facilities, the friendly people, and the amount of services available to seniors were also listed as assets.

The following illustrate a number of positive issues about living in the City of Alpena that were identified by survey participants.

**SATISFACTION:** 76.0% of respondents are very satisfied or satisfied living in the City of Alpena.

**SENSE OF COMMUNITY:** 75.3% of respondents feel the City shares a sense of community. Out of the respondents that felt there was not a sense of community, comments indicated newcomers did not feel welcomed and social activities are not advertised.

**QUALITY OF LIFE:** Approximately 70% of respondents believe the City's overall quality of life has either declined or stayed the same. Respondents noted the City's water and air quality have improved, there are improvements in the downtown and marina areas, new businesses are opening, there are more recreational opportunities, and more services.

**SERVICE PROVISION:** Respondents support the maintenance of the City services (brush pick-up service, irrigation at city parks, sidewalk snowplowing, leaf pick-up/leaf drop-off, street sweeping, and tree trimming services). Over half of the respondents would like to see the sidewalk snowplowing service expanded. Over one-quarter of respondents would like to see the brush pick-up, leaf pick-up, and tree trimming services expanded, and less than 5% of respondents would like to see the irrigation at city parks and street sweeping expanded.

**RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE:** Over 65% of respondents are satisfied with both solid waste and recycling options in the City (67.2% and 71.9%, respectively). Respondents recommended expanding the recycling program to include glass collection and curbside recycling.

**TOURISM DEVELOPMENT:** The majority of respondents (96.5%) support tourism development and believed there is an adequate amount of wayfinding signs.

**ATTRACTION OF YOUNG FAMILIES:** The majority of respondents (90.5%) support the idea of attracting young people and families to the City through the attraction of high-quality jobs and economic development.

**CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES:** The majority of respondents (85.5%) support protecting the cultural and historic resources noting these resources can be used to attract people to the area.

**RECREATION FACILITIES:** The majority of respondents (96.4%) support the City in maintaining and improving its park system. The most used facility is the City Bi-Path System, while the least used facilities include LaMarre Park, Water Tower Park/Riverside Skate Park, and the Eleventh Avenue Boat Launch.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** The majority of respondents support public safety services. There is strong support for local fire and law enforcement (91.7% and 73.8% respectively). However, support for emergency medical services was low at 63.1% with the majority of the comments supporting the ambulance service but not supporting MidMichigan Medical Center- Alpena.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:** 56.0% of respondents believe public transportation is adequate in the City and recommended increasing the system's marketing efforts and expanding its operating times.

## City Issues

There was a wide range of concerns expressed by the respondents. The most noted concern was the lack of cooperation and collaboration between city government boards and with surrounding local governments. Respondents noted government officials were resistant to change and lacked new innovative ideas to spur economic growth and development in the City. Other major concerns included the lack of high-quality jobs, affordable housing, and diverse commercial developments.

The following illustrates a number of potential issues about living in the City of Alpena that were identified by survey participants.

**COMMUNITY PROBLEMS:** Respondents noted blight was a big problem in the City, while the lack of affordable housing, and unsightly or unsuitable business operations were seen as small problems. Respondents stated air quality, road conditions, lack of employment, quality medical services, property taxes, and the decrease in property values were medium problems.

**BLIGHT:** 64.3% of respondents believe blight is a big problem within the City. Many comments noted there is blight throughout the City, but there are specific areas of concern (e.g. the north side of the City, Fletcher Paper, DPI, empty/abandoned residential and commercial buildings, etc.). Respondents supported enforcement of regulations to address junk and blight, and removal of blighted structures.

**RECYCLING:** Despite strong support for the recycling program, respondents who did not use the program stated it was because the location was inconvenient.

**MEDICAL FACILITIES:** 57.1% of respondents are not satisfied with the medical facilities in the City with most noting the lack of specialized doctors, walk-in clinics, and highly trained physicians. Other issues included the outdated facility, poor customer service, and long wait times in the emergency room.

**JOBS:** 56.6% of respondents do not believe there are adequate jobs opportunities in the City.

**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT:** Respondents (89.4%) would like to see commercial development to fill vacant commercial buildings and bring jobs to the City. Respondents supported diverse retail stores, restaurants, entertainment businesses, breweries, green industries, small grocery stores, professional mental health and medical services, and entrepreneurial businesses. Respondents did not support multiple businesses of the same chain.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT:** 58.3% of respondents support industrial development in the City that includes tech, small manufacturing, and industry.

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:** 65.9% of respondents support residential development that is available to all income levels. Respondents supported diverse housing that includes apartments, condos, single and multi-family homes, and senior housing. Respondents also supported dense residential housing in the downtown area.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** Approximately 42% of the respondents do not think the high-speed internet service is adequate noting they would like to have other choices for service providers and would like to see fiber optic access expanded into the City. Approximately 60% of respondents indicated the cellular service in the City is adequate but noted there is a lack of service in areas outside the City.

**ROADS:** Less than half of respondents (47.1%) were satisfied with road maintenance and construction. If more funding becomes available in the future, respondents recommended the removal of one-way streets, fixing roads with water mains under them, paving gravel roads, and addressing pothole issues, hazardous intersections, and speed limits. Over 65% of respondents were satisfied with snow removal.

The most identified road segments needing improvements include:

- First Avenue
- Mich-e-ke-wis Park Road
- Second Avenue
- Ontario Street
- Washington Avenue
- Third Avenue
- Ripley Street
- Ford Avenue
- Eleventh Street
- Gilchrist Avenue
- Ralph Avenue
- Thomas Avenue
- Campbell Street
- Parker Avenue
- All Side Streets
- Painting lines on Bagley Street/Bridge
- Ninth Avenue
- Fourth Avenue from Ripley Street East
- 23 N and Golf Course Road
- Taylor Street
- Dunbar Street
- Tawas Street
- Johnson Street
- Long Lake Avenue
- Spratt Street

**Additional suggestions offered to the City:**

- Provide more housing options (do not focus on subsidized housing)
- Balance development with the City's natural resources
- Promote Northern Lights Arena
- Come to an agreement about the water and sewer issue
- Decrease the number of stray/feral animals in the City
- Create an economic and community development advisory board that includes citizens, business owners, city officials, etc. to represent all interests
- Create scenic views of Lake Huron
- Hire and retain professional and progressive staff
- Plant trees and landscape
- Create a parking garage at the old GMC dealership and use the trolley to transport people throughout the City

# Goals, Objectives & Action Items

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## Focus Areas

Goals, objectives and action items for the following six focus areas are found within the Implementation Strategies Table.

### 1. Community Character and Quality of Life

A community's "character" is an intangible item which identifies the attributes which make a community unique. A community's character can be influenced by a number of factors that include land use patterns, natural features, transportation systems, and economic patterns. While a community's character will continually change over time, attempting to preserve it can be a very important part of maintaining a community's cultural heritage and traditions. A community's "quality of life" are those factors, when taken in totality help define the viability of a community as a place to live, work, and play.

### 2. Planning, Zoning and Community Development

In the past, land use patterns developed as a consequence of natural features. The river and lake were integral parts of the development of the local economy and transportation systems. Land developed around these features and the City grew based upon those early patterns. However, land use patterns are changing based on the economy of the present day, and planning for these changes allows the City to reshape its future while retaining its essential community character. Planning for the preservation of unique neighborhoods, commercial and industrial centers, and recreational areas as well as areas of mixed-use development will promote sustainable growth within the City. In addition, with over one-third of the City existing in wetlands, forests, herbaceous uplands and open water, planning for natural resources becomes an integral part of sustainable community development.

### 3. Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Services

Governmental institutions owe their constituents an efficient and open organization by continually seeking ways in which to operate in the most cost-effective manner. Efficient and consistent delivery of services to the public is critical in achieving this goal. Cooperation and collaboration between local units of government is also an important part of achieving this goal. Open lines of communication with the public will help to assure constituents that this is being pursued.

Focusing on a regional perspective to enhance the area by working with adjacent communities toward common goals will provide a seamless look and feel to the City and adjacent areas. Common goals can be reached faster and resources utilized more wisely by partnering with adjacent communities on joint projects that provide the best service to area residents. The City strives to enhance the level of service it provides to its residents and will continue to do so at both an intra- and inter-governmental level.

Having well designed and managed infrastructure and services greatly adds to the "livability" of a community. These services include the transportation system, water and wastewater systems, public safety operations, a full-service marina facility, non-motorized transportation routes, public parks and facilities, a fiber optic network and the provision of public records. The continued maintenance of these facilities is essential and requires constant oversight. The expansion of infrastructure and services is



extremely expensive and places additional funding burdens on the public. Expansions which are not carefully planned can inadvertently add to environmental degradation and undesirable sprawl. The City of Alpena continues to provide high quality services to its residents. Maintaining and upgrading this infrastructure will allow continued provision of these high quality essential services to City residents and businesses, and will assist in achieving other established goals.

#### **4. Natural, Cultural, and Recreation Resources**

The City of Alpena is blessed with many natural resources and recreational opportunities. This helps to add to the quality of life and makes the community a more enjoyable place in which to live and work. The City's many recreational facilities and opportunities are also very important in attracting tourists, new residents and businesses. The protection of a community's natural environment is imperative in maintaining the quality of life and ensuring that future generations live in healthy surroundings. A clean and attractive environment helps to attract new businesses, residents and tourists. Economic development and environmental protection are both necessary for a healthy community. Alpena was founded on the rich and abundant resource base of the region. Its geographic location on Thunder Bay and at the outlet of the Thunder Bay River was central to the City's early growth and economy. The natural resources of the region are often cited as a key reason for living in Alpena. The City has little influence on the natural resource base outside the City boundaries. However, it can feel the effect of activities far beyond its borders. For example, since the community is located at the outlet of the Thunder Bay River and relies on Thunder Bay for drinking water, what happens "upstream" directly impacts the community. The Wildlife Sanctuary provides "in town" access to the natural environment. Wetlands complexes, with limited development potential, also provide critical habitat for wildlife as well as stormwater retention and water quality protection. Many of the community festivals and events focus on the water resources of the community. An active program to protect water resources of the river and bay will have long term payoffs for quality of life and livability.

Alpena was incorporated in 1871 and boasts an industrial heritage beginning with the logging era of the 1800s. This rich history is evident in the historic homes and buildings throughout the City. The City contains 13 sites which are listed on the State Historic Register and has established its first local historic district (the Memorial Hall Historic District). The presence of the many historic structures located in the City gives Alpena a unique character that is important to maintain as surrounding development pressures increase. In addition, the City has become the cultural center of northeast Michigan, making Alpena a destination for area residents and travelers. Cultural resources available in Alpena include such things as a community college, two live performance theaters, libraries, Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan (the region's only accredited museum), the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, an art gallery, numerous musical events, cemeteries, festivals, and many organizations devoted to the arts. Maintaining and expanding these valuable resources will preserve and enhance the quality of life in Alpena for present and future generations. The protection of a community's historic and cultural environment is imperative in maintaining the quality of life and ensuring that future generations develop a sense of community. A focus upon preserving these resources and presenting them in an attractive environment helps to attract new businesses, residents and tourists.

#### **5. Housing**

A diverse and well-maintained selection of housing choices is another vital component of a community. The strength of a local economy is based, in part, on the affordability and selection of the housing stock.

As a strong economy is an essential element of a healthy community, adequate housing choices must be available for residents to feel economically secure. In order to have productive community members and attract new citizens to an area, a local community needs a broad mix of demographics to develop a well-rounded economy. This helps to add to the quality of life and makes the community a more enjoyable place in which to live and work. Housing choices impact more than just what type of structure an individual buys. Access to and the affordability of housing choices impacts overall community development by influencing such factors as access to quality education, church attendance, community organizations, and convenient shopping opportunities. Therefore, a local community must actively seek ways in which to encourage desirable residential development.

The variety of income levels present in the City suggests that a range of housing opportunities will be needed to satisfy the needs of the entire population. Since high percentages of the age of the current housing stock was constructed prior to 1970, this presents additional challenges to maintain a housing stock that is attractive to a wide variety of income levels and demographics.

Continued housing rehabilitation programs are needed to ensure this housing stock doesn't fall into disrepair but enhances the character of the City. With a limited supply of land available for residential development, the City needs to strongly encourage new housing developments that provide a variety of housing options across the economic spectrum, while at the same time supporting ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the current housing stock. Through these efforts the housing demands of current and future residents can best be met.

## **6. Economic Development**

A strong economy is an essential element of a healthy community. Residents must have the opportunity to earn family-sustaining wages in order to be productive community members. A strong economy does not usually just “happen” without the local community actively seeking ways in which to encourage desirable development. The U.S. and world economies are changing rapidly, which is profoundly affecting local economies, as well. The City of Alpena has seen first-hand how quickly communities can lose high-paying employment, due to new technological advances and competition from abroad. It is imperative, therefore, to plan ahead in order to insure a vital economic future.

As the City works toward diversifying its economy, expanding the commercial/retail base is essential. New commercial development has been primarily occurring outside the City limits. This new development has and will continue to establish Alpena as the retail center in the region, which, in turn, will spur redevelopment of commercial areas within the City (i.e. the downtown area). As more commercial development occurs in Alpena, people who, in the past, traveled to other regions to meet their needs will be able to remain in or travel to Alpena. The revitalization of the Central Business District along with Ripley Boulevard, Chisholm Street and development of new commercial corridors (US-23 North property) is essential to the economy and to maintaining a centralized retail center for the region.

Until automated systems reduced required manpower in the 1980s, Alpena relied on large-scale heavy industry as its economic base. As the economy has become diversified, the community has become a regional commercial, education and health care center. As the twenty-first century develops, Alpena must continue this diversification to meet the challenges of the new century. A unified and comprehensive economic development vision will provide the structure upon which progress will occur. Maximizing the development of all designated land for industrial or commercial use while working with businesses to

retain existing jobs and tax base will be essential. As a built out community, the reuse of vacant, underutilized, or abandoned properties will be a necessary component of the economic plan.

As the City works toward diversifying its economic base to provide economic stability, tourism has become a vital economic component to the City and the entire region. As other areas of Michigan, which have traditionally been tourist destinations, become built out, travelers will begin looking for areas of northern Michigan that offer abundant natural resources, cultural opportunities, and a slower-pace of life. The City can fill that niche by providing recreational amenities and serving as the urban center for visitors to northeast Michigan looking to find the amenities they need as they travel. As northeast Michigan becomes a tourist destination, the City of Alpena will grow as a tourist destination and will become the hub around which all other area tourism connects. The existence of 18 City-owned parks, in addition to numerous other publicly owned recreational facilities within the City shows that recreation has been and will continue to be a priority.

## Objectives and Implementation Strategies (Action Items)

The following table contains timelines and responsible parties for implementing the strategies for the goals and objectives found in the six focus areas listed. It is important to note that, while responsible parties are listed, the City will make every effort to collaborate with partner organizations, other local units of government, and members of the public in order to ensure the correct mix of stakeholders are involved in each item.

### TIMEFRAMES

**SHORT:** Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years.

**MEDIUM:** Important actions that have some level of significant cost and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years.

**LONG:** Actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation.

**ONGOING:** Actions that do not have a beginning and end period but which are continuously ongoing in the City.

CC = City Council

PC = Planning Commission

DPW = Department of Public Works

CM = City Manager

DPD= Director of Planning and Development

Staff = City Staff

ARRF=Alpena Resource Recovery Facility

BA=Building Authority

CD= Central Dispatch

AMCD=Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District

Chamber = Chamber of Commerce  
CVB=Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
DDA = Downtown Development Authority  
EM=County Emergency Management Office  
EMS= Emergency Medical Services  
FD= Fire Department  
HAC= Harbor Advisory Committee  
HC= Housing Commission  
HDC= Historic District Commission  
HDSC=Historic District Study Committee  
LE= Law Enforcement  
MDOT=Michigan Department of Transportation  
MW= Michigan Works  
RAB= Recreation Advisory Board  
Road Commission= Alpena County Road Commission

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

| FOCUS AREA   | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS   | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY                             |
|--|---|------------|---|
| <div style="font-size: 48pt; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">1</div> <div style="font-size: 18pt; font-weight: bold;">Community Character &amp; Quality of Life</div> | <b>GOAL 1</b><br><b>Enhance the overall quality of life in the City of Alpena to accommodate an aging population and to attract diverse age groups.</b>   |            |   |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> Strive to balance future growth and development in the City while maintaining its small-town character.</i>  |            |   |
|  | (1) Encourage the development of goods, services, recreation, and employment opportunities needed to retain and attract families.   | Ongoing    | DPD, PC, CC, CM, RAB, Chamber, Michigan Works |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE B:</b> Improve communication with the public and encourage public input regarding ongoing efforts to improve the City's quality of life.</i>  |            |   |
|  | (1) Implement improved communication processes for public feedback and encourage the use of the City's website to disperse information, such as planning-related resources, news releases, agendas, meeting minutes, financial information, and city plans. | Ongoing    | CM, Staff, DPD                                |
|  | (2) Support neighborhood watch programs.  | Ongoing    | LE  |
|  | (3) Sponsor community and neighborhood public forums to solicit public feedback from all demographic sections in the City.  | Ongoing    | Staff, CM, DPD                                |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE C:</b> Implement placemaking initiatives focused on heritage, historic character, access, linkages, and unique activities.</i>  |            |   |
|  | (1) Pursue placemaking funding opportunities.   | Ongoing    | CM, Staff, DDA, CVB, Chamber                  |
|  | (2) Encourage the continuance of year-round community events.   | Ongoing    | CM, Staff, DDA, Chamber                       |
|  | (3) Promote the City's designation as a Tall Ships "Port of Call."  | Ongoing    | CM, Staff                                     |
|  | (4) Market the Alpena Area as the "Sanctuary of the Great Lakes."   | Ongoing    | CVB, Chamber, Staff                           |
|  | <b>GOAL 2</b><br><b>Maintain and enhance the recreational facilities and activities in the City of Alpena.</b>  |            |   |
|  | (1) Maintain and implement the City's Recreation Plan and Mich-e-ke-wis Park Plan.  | Ongoing    | DPD, CC, CM, DPW, RAB, DPW                    |

| FOCUS AREA  | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS   | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY   |
|---|---|------------|---------------------|
| <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Community Character &amp; Quality of Life</p> | <p><b>GOAL 3</b></p> <p><b>Maintain and enhance the appearance and character of the City of Alpena.</b></p>   |            |                     |
|   | <p><b>OBJECTIVE A: Enhance community gateways, parks, and streets.</b></p>  |            |                     |
|   | (1) Enhance streetscapes to include pedestrian-friendly features such as trees, street furniture, bike racks, trash receptacles, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.  | Medium     | CC, PC, DPD, DDA    |
|   | (2) Expand beautification efforts (entryway signage and landscaping) to enhance the appearance of the public facilities and gateways into the City.   | Ongoing    | DPW, CC, DPD, CM    |
|   | (3) Improve linkages between the downtown and waterfront for pedestrian access.   | Long       | DDA, CM, CC, RAB    |
|   | (4) Expand the downtown banner program into the commercial corridors.   | Long       | DDA, CM             |
|   | (5) Encourage the use of natural landscaping in community parks, around public facilities and on private lands, where appropriate.  | Ongoing    | RAB, PC, DPD        |
|   | (6) Support the ongoing street tree planting program/designation as a Tree City USA community.  | Ongoing    | Staff, CM           |
|   | <p><b>OBJECTIVE B: Work with the public, agencies, and organizations to protect and preserve the city's historic buildings, residential neighborhoods, and historic features.</b></p>   |            |                     |
|   | (1) Provide resources to assist residents and businesses with rehabilitation and preservation of older and/or historic homes and buildings within the City.   | Ongoing    | DPD, Staff, HDC, HC |
|   | (2) Create additional historic districts to preserve older residential homes.   | Short      | HDSC                |
|   | (3) Develop local ordinances and policies to protect historic resources.  | Short      | HDC, DPD, PC, CC    |
|   | (4) Encourage properties to be included on the National Historic Register.  | Ongoing    | HDC                 |
|   | (5) Develop design guidelines for new and existing developments in older parts of the city to protect historically sensitive designs and styles, including the incorporation of designs and styles into signs and streetscape elements. | Short      | HDC, DPD, DPW       |



| FOCUS AREA  | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS  | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY              |
|---|--|------------|--------------------------------|
| <h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">2</h1> <h2 style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">Planning,<br/>Zoning, and<br/>Community<br/>Development</h2> | <b>GOAL 1</b><br><b>Coordinate and collaborate with other levels of government, governmental agencies, and the public on land use, zoning and development issues to efficiently leverage revenue and generate cost saving measures.</b>                                  |            |                                |
|   | <i><b>OBJECTIVE A: Improve communication with the public, local organizations, and surrounding governmental entities.</b></i>  |            |                                |
|   | (1) Communicate with the county and adjacent townships about land use and site plan issues for properties near their boundaries.   | Ongoing    | CC, CM, DPD                    |
|   | (2) Research the feasibility of joint meetings (e.g. joint Planning Commission/Council meetings).  | Short      | CC, CM, Staff                  |
|   | (3) Develop standard operating procedures for the timely exchange of information between the City, Township, and the County Planning Commissions.  | Short      | PC, CC, DPD                    |
|   | (4) Maintain representation on community boards, advisory groups, and intergovernmental groups (e.g. Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council, Alpena Intergovernmental Council, Intergovernmental Sub-Committees, and Intergovernmental Roads Committee). | Ongoing    | PC, CM, DPD, CC                |
|   | (5) Work with the Great Lakes Small Harbors Coalition and Michigan Port Collaborative to improve marketing efforts.  | Ongoing    | CM, Staff, DPD                 |
|   | (6) Work with the Chamber, DDA, Alpena Area CVB, and local businesses to enhance the City's economy.   | Ongoing    | DPD, CM, Staff, CC             |
|   | (7) Maintain discussions between state and federal agencies, area environmental groups, and industrial representatives.  | Ongoing    | CM, DPD, Staff                 |
|   | <b>GOAL 2</b><br><b>Guide development to meet the long-term needs of the community through the protection of existing developments, preservation of community character, fostering of new developments, and the conservation of natural resources.</b>                   |            |                                |
|   | <i><b>OBJECTIVE A: Maintain and implement the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.</b></i>  |            |                                |
|   | (1) Coordinate implementation efforts with the City Council, appropriate departments, agencies, and organizations.   | Ongoing    | CC, DPW, CM, Staff, DDA, DPD   |
|   | (2) Assign responsible parties and realistic timelines to hold individuals accountable for achievements.   | Ongoing    | CC, DPW, CM, DDA, Chamber, CVB |
|   | (3) Conduct an annual comprehensive plan review and future goal setting meeting to determine accomplishments and actions needed for the next year. At a minimum, review the comprehensive plan at five-year intervals per state law.                                     | Ongoing    | PC, CC, CM, DPD                |

# 2

## Planning, Zoning, and Community Development

|   |         |                         |
|---|---------|-------------------------|
| (4) Review and update the Zoning Ordinance to modify districts, to include standards based on changes in land use or development/zoning practices, and to protect surface and groundwater (ex: study impacts of waterfront setbacks). | Ongoing | PC, DPD, CC             |
| <b>OBJECTIVE B: Foster distinct, attractive development to enhance the visual character in the City.</b>  |         |                         |
| (1) Encourage LEED-certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) developments to promote sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.            | Ongoing | PC, DPD                 |
| (2) Consistently enforce the current zoning ordinance and other City ordinances.  | Ongoing | DPD, PC                 |
| (3) Encourage infill development that is compatible with surrounding uses.  | Ongoing | DPD, PC, CM             |
| (4) Establish and/or maintain transitional zones to separate incompatible land uses.  | Ongoing | DPD, PC, CM, CC         |
| (5) Continue to promote and implement the City’s Brownfield Redevelopment Program.  | Ongoing | DPD, CM, PC, DDA, Staff |
| (6) Incorporate road and infrastructure capacity into land use decision making.   | Ongoing | DPD, DPW, PC            |
| (7) Develop a blight ordinance to ensure private properties remain clean and attractive.  | Short   | DPD, PC, CC             |
| (8) Implement land use controls (e.g. clustering, shared parking, access management, landscaping, etc.) to regulate commercial development along state highways and primary City streets.   | Ongoing | DPD, PC                 |
| (9) Promote compact development design in areas to maximize potential land uses.  | Ongoing | DPD, PC                 |
| <b>OBJECTIVE C: Encourage mixed use development, and diverse business development.</b>  |         |                         |
| (1) Research innovative development options to increase the tax base while maintaining the essential character of the community.  | Ongoing | CC, CM, DDA, Chamber    |
| (2) Continue to implement innovative zoning techniques that allow for a mix of residential and commercial uses as well as expansions of the home-based business and cottage industry.   | Ongoing | PC, DPD, Staff          |

| FOCUS AREA  | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS   | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY       |
|---|---|------------|-------------------------|
| <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Planning,<br/>Zoning, and<br/>Community<br/>Development</p>       | <p><b>OBJECTIVE D</b><br/>Continue developing the City’s and County’s Geographic Information System (GIS) programs to assist with natural resource management and community planning and development.</p>   |            |                         |
|   | (1) Develop data sharing agreements and a protocol to exchange GIS data.  | Short      | EM, CM                  |
|   | (2) Implement a server-based GIS to link GIS data with City databases and records that is accessible to all City departments.   | Long       | CM, DPD                 |
|   | (3) Implement a web-based GIS system that the public can access through the City’s website to look up GIS layers, parcel data, and tax records.   | Long       | CM, DPD                 |
|   | (4) Work with Alpena Township to resolve boundary issues, including streets, infrastructure, and land use issues. Work toward the provision of consistent infrastructure between the city and township (ex: sidewalks).   | Ongoing    | PC, DPD, DPW, CM, EM    |
| <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Transportation<br/>Infrastructure<br/>and Public<br/>Services</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GOAL 1</b><br/><b>Improve and maintain the transportation systems, community facilities, public utilities, and telecommunications to accommodate the needs of current and future residents, visitors, and commercial enterprises.</b></p> |            |                         |
|   | <p><b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> <i>Improve community facilities, infrastructure, and public safety equipment with the assistance of State and Federal funding.</i></p>   |            |                         |
|   | (1) Maintain a current Capital Improvement Plan, including funding for transportation-related activities.   | Ongoing    | CM, Staff, CC           |
|   | (2) Inventory and map the existing utility infrastructure.  | Ongoing    | Staff                   |
|   | (3) Direct future development to areas where necessary public services and utilities already exist or where expansion of services and utilities are planned.  | Ongoing    | DPD, PC                 |
|   | (4) Encourage clustering residential development in areas where services and utilities are available to preserve open spaces.   | Ongoing    | DPD, CC, PC             |
|   | (5) Encourage new street and utility improvements to coincide with new developments.  | Ongoing    | DPD, PC, DPW, MDOT      |
|   | (6) Encourage the placement of utilities underground.   | Ongoing    | DPD, PC                 |
|   | (7) Research approaches to improve cell phone coverage in the City.   | Short      | Chamber, DPD, CM, Staff |
|   | (8) Expand fiber optic and wi-fi in the city through the implementation of the Northeast Michigan Fiber Consortium’s (NEMiFC) <i>Wired City Initiatives</i> .   | Long       | CM, CC, PC, DPD         |
| <p><b>OBJECTIVE B:</b> <i>Develop policies and programs to integrate a multi-modal transportation system in the City.</i></p>   |   |            |                         |

# 3

## Transportation Infrastructure and Public Services

|  |         |                                    |
|--|---------|------------------------------------|
| (1) Implement the Road Inventory Asset Management System, the Alpena Area-wide Transportation Plan, and the U.S. 23 Heritage Route Management Plan.  | Ongoing | DPW, Staff, Road Commission, MDOT  |
| (2) Review and implement the City's Corridor Design Plan.  | Long    | DDA, CM, DPD, DPW, RAB             |
| (3) Implement signal crossings at all intersections where pedestrian/bicycle routes cross major thoroughfares.   | Ongoing | DDA, DPW, Road Commission, MDOT    |
| (4) Develop an alternate commercial vehicle bypass route away from downtown and residential areas.   | Long    | DPW, Road Commission, MODT         |
| (5) Support improvements to regional transportation networks, including more passing lanes and four lane segments on U.S. 23 and M-32.   | Long    | CC, CM, DPW, Road Commission, MDOT |
| (6) Work with the Thunder Bay Transportation Authority to improve and expand the public transit system within the City and to promote a public awareness campaign.   | Ongoing | DPW                                |
| (7) Continue developing plans to implement sidewalks, the Bi-Path extension, corridor improvements, destination points, and visual elements in the City.   | Long    | DPD, DPW, DDA, CVB                 |
| (8) Incorporate Complete Streets design concepts into planning efforts to ensure all forms of transportation are adequately provided for. Ensure the Complete Streets concept is factored into roadway improvement projects, trail projects, and private development (through zoning requirements and site plan review standards). | Ongoing | CM, DDA, DPW                       |
| <b>OBJECTIVE B: Provide efficient and accessible solid waste disposal options within the City.</b>   |         |                                    |
| (1) Continue implementing and expanding recycling services, including placing additional recycling drop-off sites throughout the City.   | Ongoing | DPW, ARRF                          |
| (2) Investigate solid waste options, including curbside recycling and franchising/contracting of trash pickup.   | Ongoing | CM, DPW, ARRF                      |
| (3) Promote the Alpena County Resource Recovery Facility and encourage local recycling efforts.  | Ongoing | Staff, ARRF                        |
| (4) Implement City-wide clean-up days or collaborate with other jurisdictions to implement countywide clean-up days.   | Short   | Staff, DPW, ARRF                   |

**3**  
**Transportation  
Infrastructure  
and Public  
Services**

| <b>GOAL 2</b><br><b>Ensure efficient response of emergency services within the City.</b>  |         |                                |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|
| <b>OBJECTIVE A: Support existing public safety services (e.g. police, fire, and emergency medical services).</b>  |         |                                |
| (1) Plan for and upgrade existing public safety equipment to ensure the provision of efficient services.  | Ongoing | CC, CM, LE, FD, EMS, CD        |
| (2) Inventory the current telecommunication services and plan for the future telecommunication needs of the public safety services.                     | Ongoing | Staff, CM, LE, FD, EMS, EM, CD |
| (3) Maintain adequate response times to public safety incidents.  | Ongoing | CD, LE, FD, EMS                |
| (4) Research collaboration or consolidation methods between local units of government to efficiently use tax dollars to provide public safety services. | Short   | CM, CC, LE, FD, EMS, CD        |
| (5) Allocate sufficient resources to ensure adequate staffing and the ability to fund training opportunities for staff.                                 | Ongoing | CM, CC, LE, FD, EMS, CD        |
| (6) Participate in Alpena County’s Emergency Management Operations.   | Ongoing | CM, DPD, Staff                 |
| <b>GOAL 3</b><br><b>Encourage the prudent use of City fiscal resources.</b>   |         |                                |
| (1) Continue to encourage the use of the standards of the Certificate of Financial Achievement Award as best practices for the City.                    | Ongoing | CM, CC, Staff                  |
| (2) Encourage the City to continue to maintain a General Fund balanced budget.  | Ongoing | CM, CC, Staff                  |
| (3) Encourage annual contributions to the Budget Stabilization fund, as allowable.  | Ongoing | CM, CC, Staff                  |
| (4) Encourage the continued funding of the sewer backup/self-insured account and a build-up of reserves   | Ongoing | CM, CC, Staff                  |
| (5) Establish a Property Purchase fund or a designated fund balance for property purchases, as funding permits.   | Ongoing | CM, CC, Staff                  |

| FOCUS AREA  | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS   | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY |
|---|---|------------|-------------------|
| <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Natural,<br/>Cultural, and<br/>Recreation<br/>Resources</p> | <b>GOAL 1</b><br><b>Conserve, protect and maintain natural resources for the enjoyment of current and future residents and visitors.</b>  |            |                   |
|   | <b>OBJECTIVE A: Improve the City’s air and water quality.</b>   |            |                   |
|   | (1) Participate in air and water quality testing, and address any issues based on enforceable standards.  | Ongoing    | Staff, AMCD       |
|   | (2) Implement the <i>Thunder Bay River Watershed Initiative</i> .   | Long       | CM, AMCD          |
|   | (3) Seek partnerships and grant opportunities to improve the City’s water quality.  | Ongoing    | AMCD              |
|   | (4) Determine ways to eliminate seasonal, organic beach deposits and to remove the gypsum cement kiln dust pile from Thunder Bay.   | Short      | DPW, AMCD         |
|   | (5) Develop design standards to supplement State and Federal laws pertaining to wetlands and water quality protection.  | Short      | DPD, PC, CC, CM   |
|   | (6) Adopt environmentally sustainable ordinances, such as stormwater management, and effectively administer and enforce current regulations, such as soil erosion and sedimentation control.  | Ongoing    | DPD, PC, CC, CM   |
|   | (7) Create a public education campaign concerning waterfront vegetative buffers and evaluate the feasibility of regulatory approaches.  | Medium     | DPD, PC           |
|   | <b>OBJECTIVE B: Work with the Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District, MSU Extension, the County Drain Commissioner, and Northeast Michigan Council of Governments to develop environmental education and awareness programs for the public.</b>   |            |                   |
|   | (1) Develop a “Watershed Resource Day” to distribute information about watershed ecology, stormwater management, and drinking water protection.   | Short      | Staff, DPD        |
|   | (2) Create an environmental educational center at the Wildlife Sanctuary to address the ecological and cultural heritage of the Thunder Bay River and its environs.   | Short      | DPD, Staff        |
|   | (3) Research grant funding opportunities to develop an education program to minimize mercury in wastewater discharges.  | Short      | Staff             |
|   | (4) Develop a “Protect the Bay” program to provide workshops and distribute information about stormwater impacts, water friendly lawn care, and the protection of water quality, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, and wildlife habitat. | Medium     | DPD, Staff        |
|   | <b>OBJECTIVE C: Identify and protect desirable open space areas, scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, ecological corridors, and environmentally sensitive areas.</b>  |            |                   |
|   | (1) Encourage the use of native plants for reforestation projects, wildlife habitat, street and neighborhood trees, landscaping, parks and roadside areas.  | Ongoing    | PC, DPD, DPW      |
| (2) Work with Thunder Bay River Watershed Council to mark “Dump No Waste -Drains to River” at storm sewer catch basins.   | Ongoing   | DPW        |                   |

# 4

## Natural, Cultural, and Recreation Resources

|   |         |                     |
|---|---------|---------------------|
| (3) Support state and federal legislative efforts to control the spread of invasive species in the Great Lakes.   | Ongoing | DPD, DPW, PC, HAC   |
| (4) Develop and implement programs to protect maritime resources that restore and protect natural buffers along the City's water resources.   | Ongoing | DPD, PC, RAB, DPW   |
| (5) Work with Huron Pines to support and implement conservation projects in the City.   | Ongoing | DPD, PC, CC, STAFF  |
| <b>GOAL 2</b>   |         |                     |
| <b>Protect and preserve the cultural resources for the enjoyment of current and future residents and visitors.</b>  |         |                     |
| <b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> <i>Promote cultural tourism in the City through the support of public and private cultural and civic organizations, including the expansion and/or improvement of the existing facilities and activities, and the development of new facilities and activities.</i> |         |                     |
| (1) Continue implementing the wayfinding program to direct residents and visitors to the City's cultural resources.   | Ongoing | DDA, Chamber, CVB   |
| (2) Allow the public to use City recreational facilities and other areas for events.  | Ongoing | CC, RAB, DPD        |
| (3) Work with the various cultural and arts organizations to promote arts and culture programs in the city.   | Ongoing | CVB, Staff, Chamber |



| FOCUS AREA   | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS  | TIME FRAME   | RESPONSIBLE PARTY |
|--|--|--------------|-------------------|
| <h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">5</h1> <h2 style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">Housing</h2>                          | <b>GOAL 1</b>  |              |                   |
|  | <b>Allow suitable housing opportunities for all income levels, age groups, household types, and resident types (year-round/seasonal).</b>  |              |                   |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE A: Encourage the development of a mixture of quality housing within the City.</b></i>  |              |                   |
|  | (1) Identify areas for the appropriate development of affordable single-family housing, multiple family rental units, age-progressive senior and assisted living housing, townhouses, and upper level residential housing in the downtown area, and provide for opportunities to age in place. | Ongoing      | DPD, PC, CC       |
|  | (2) Research, implement, and maintain rental housing programs to ensure high standards are maintained in single- and multi-family rental housing.  | Ongoing      | DPD, PC, CC       |
|  | (3) Match residential densities to the characteristics and available services of proposed sites.   | Ongoing      | DPD, PC           |
|  | (4) Research and pursue funding options for the affordable housing programs.   | Ongoing      | HC                |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE B: Encourage the maintenance of the existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods in good repair, appearance, usefulness and safety.</b></i>  |              |                   |
|  | (1) Enforce codes to remove unsanitary or unsafe housing-  | Ongoing      | CM, DPD           |
|  | (2) Research grant programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant Program, to rehabilitate existing low and moderate income housing units.  | Ongoing      | DPD, HC, Staff    |
|  | (3) Identify available funding sources for residential improvements and notify residents about the rehabilitation programs.  | Ongoing      | DPD, HC, Staff    |
|  | <i><b>OBJECTIVE C: Protect the neighborhood character of residential areas.</b></i>  |              |                   |
|  | (1) Require buffers or transition areas between residential and non-residential uses, while allowing for the continuation of existing neighborhood small businesses.   | Ongoing      | DPD, CC, PC       |
|  | (2) Promote the Residential Rental Rehabilitation and Development Programs.  | Ongoing      | DPD               |
|  | (3) Monitor and evaluate the rental registration and mandatory rental inspection programs.   | Ongoing      | BA                |
| (4) Promote the use of grant programs (e.g. Community Development Block Grant Programs) to rehabilitate older housing units. | Ongoing  | HDC, DPD, HC |                   |

| FOCUS AREA   | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS   | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY       |
|--|---|------------|-------------------------|
| <div data-bbox="218 623 279 699" style="font-size: 48px; font-weight: bold;">6</div> <div data-bbox="128 764 371 846" style="font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Economic Development</div> | <b>GOAL 1</b><br><b>Coordinate private development with recreation and tourism opportunities on the waterfront.</b>   |            |                         |
|  | <b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> Incorporate waterfront smart growth development concepts and standards into the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance.                    |            |                         |
|  | (1) Encourage compact developments to enhance, preserve, and provide access to the waterfront resources.  | Ongoing    | DPD, Staff              |
|  | (2) Direct new development towards existing developed areas (e.g. downtown waterfront) to encourage revitalization of the waterfront.                           | Ongoing    | DPD, CM, Staff, Chamber |
|  | (3) Develop a Marina Master Plan with the Harbor Advisory Committee to promote and further develop the City Marina.   | Short      | DPD, BA, HAC            |
|  | (4) Develop public/private partnerships to increase access, development, and beautification along the waterfront.   | Ongoing    | DPD, Staff, CM          |
|  | (5) Work with private property owners to beautify or redevelop property along the waterfront.   | Medium     | DPD, Staff              |
|  | (6) Acquire waterfront property for recreational use, including the expansion of pedestrian access along the waterfront.  | Ongoing    | RAB, BA, CM             |
|  | <b>GOAL 2</b><br><b>Retain existing businesses, establish new commercial uses and redevelop vacant commercial buildings.</b>                                    |            |                         |
|  | <b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> Support efforts to create a vibrant downtown.   |            |                         |
|  | (1) Implement and maintain the practices outlined by the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Program.  | Ongoing    | DPD, PC, CM, DDA        |
|  | (2) Encourage mixed-use development in the downtown business district.  | Ongoing    | DDA, DPD, PC, CM        |
|  | (3) Extend pedestrian pathways to connect downtown with surrounding areas.  | Medium     | DPD, CC, PC, CM, DPW    |
|  | (4) Promote the vitality of downtown by emphasizing the entertainment and cultural center, restaurants, theater, library, museums, parks, marina, and shopping. | Ongoing    | DDA, Chamber, CVB       |
|  | (5) Promote the business façade improvement grant program.  | Ongoing    | DDA, Staff              |
|  | (6) Encourage businesses to use outdoor spaces (e.g. sidewalk cafes).   | Ongoing    | DPD, PC, Staff, DDA     |

| FOCUS AREA   | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS  | TIME FRAME  | RESPONSIBLE PARTY     |
|--|--|-------------|-----------------------|
| <div data-bbox="218 656 281 732" style="font-size: 48px; margin-bottom: 10px;">6</div> <div data-bbox="128 781 373 862" style="font-size: 24px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Economic Development</div> | <b>OBJECTIVE B:</b> Attract a diverse mix of new businesses.   |             |                       |
|  | (1) Promote worker education and training programs, including entrepreneurial training programs.   | Ongoing     | Chamber, MW           |
|  | (2) Evaluate tax incentives and abatement programs to attract commercial developments.   | Ongoing     | CM, CC, Staff         |
|  | (3) Coordinate small business marketing and recruiting efforts, including researching the feasibility to develop a small business incubator facility within the City.  | Long        | CM, Chamber, MW       |
|  | (4) Encourage the development of home-based businesses.  | Ongoing     | CM, DPD, PC           |
|  | (5) Identify and address City regulations perceived as burdensome by potential investors and employers.  | Ongoing     | DPD, Staff, CM        |
|  | (6) Promote the City’s business retention programs, renaissance zones, and neighborhood enterprise zones.  | Ongoing     | Chamber, DPD, DDA     |
|  | (7) Expand efforts to complete development of Commerce Industrial Park.  | Ongoing     | Chamber, DPD          |
|  | (8) Revitalize the City’s central business district, including redeveloping its commercial corridors (e.g. Ripley Boulevard, Chisholm Street, First Avenue, etc.)  | Ongoing     | Chamber, DPD, CM, DDA |
|  | (9) Evaluate the allowance of recreational marijuana facilities in the city.   | Short       | PC, DPD, CM, CC       |
|  | <b>GOAL 3</b>  |             |                       |
|  | <b>Diversify the City’s economic base to include high tech, research and development, urban agriculture, entertainment businesses, health-related businesses and services, industrial development, and manufacturing services.</b> |             |                       |
|  | <b>OBJECTIVE A:</b> Develop public/private partnerships to implement county and regional economic development initiatives.   |             |                       |
|  | (1) Continue implementing strategies that build on Alpena’s status as a regional marketplace for Northeast Michigan.   | Ongoing     | Chamber, CM           |
|  | (2) Maintain relationships with potential economic development partners (e.g. county, townships, private investors, NEMCOG, Michigan Works, and state and federal agencies).   | Ongoing     | Chamber, CM           |
| (3) Acquire property for new development through the City Economic Development Corporation (EDC).  | Ongoing  | Chamber, CM |                       |
| (4) Participate in the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments’ (NEMCOG) Community Economic Development Strategy and other regional economic development programs.                             | Ongoing  | Chamber, CM |                       |

| FOCUS AREA | OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS | TIME FRAME | RESPONSIBLE PARTY |
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|
|------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------|

|  |  |         |                          |
|--|--|---------|--------------------------|
| <h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">6</h1> <h2 style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">Economic Development</h2> | <b>OBJECTIVE B: Enhance and maintain industrial development in the City.</b>   |         |                          |
|  | (1) Identify and market locations for clean, light industrial development that include appropriate utilities and rail service.   | Ongoing | Chamber, CM, Staff       |
|  | (2) Utilize tax incentive and tax abatement programs to encourage industrial development.  | Ongoing | Staff, DPD               |
|  | <b>GOAL 4</b>  |         |                          |
|  | <b>Market the City of Alpena as a tourism destination.</b>   |         |                          |
|  | <b>OBJECTIVE A: Participate in regional tourism marketing efforts.</b>   |         |                          |
|  | (1) Participate in the U.S. 23 Heritage Route tourism program (including subprograms such as ARTown).  | Ongoing | CM, Chamber, CVB         |
|  | (2) Participate in a Pure Michigan campaign, if available and when feasible.   | Ongoing | CM, Chamber, CVB         |
|  | (3) Participate in regional and statewide recreation and trail tour marketing efforts (such as Pure Michigan Trail Towns and Up North Trails).   | Ongoing | CM, RAB, CVB             |
|  | (4) Participate in the promotion of the National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, City parks, Bi-Path, the North Eastern State Trail, Alpena Community College, Northern Lights Arena, and local festivals and art fairs. | Ongoing | CVB, Chamber             |
|  | <b>OBJECTIVE B: Research and implement opportunities and techniques that attract year-round tourism.</b>   |         |                          |
|  | (1) Develop tourism packages that include sites of interest, recreational activities, and lodging and dining coupons.  | Ongoing | Staff, DDA, Chamber, RAB |
|  | (2) Support the development of mixed lodging opportunities (e.g. hotels, bed and breakfasts, tourist homes, cabins, waterfront hotel, resort complex, etc.).   | Ongoing | DPD, PC, DDA, Chamber    |
|  | (3) Capitalize on maritime tourism opportunities offered by the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve.   | Ongoing | Staff, Chamber           |
| (4) Maintain waterfront facilities for cruise ships.   | Ongoing  | Staff   |                          |

# Chapter 8

## Future Land Use Plan

The next step in the comprehensive planning process is to plan for types and intensity of development that may occur over the next twenty years. With the establishment of a future land use plan, Alpena intends to ensure that existing land uses such as residential, institutional, parks, commercial and industrial can continue; that irreplaceable resources such as water, wetlands and forestlands will be protected; and that reasonable growth can be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts.

The Planning Commission, with public input and assistance from NEMCOG, developed future land use recommendations for the City. Recommendations are based on an analysis of several factors including: social and economic characteristics, environmental conditions, existing land uses, available community services and facilities, existing patterns of land divisions, current zoning, community input and community goals and objectives. The future land use plan illustrates the proposed physical arrangements of land use for the City of Alpena. It identifies and defines the major future land use categories as well as the approximate locations for each use. The boundaries reflected on the map are not intended to indicate precise size, shape or dimension; rather they portray a general land use arrangement, which may be refined as the community develops. The plan is prepared to serve as a policy for the City regarding current issues, land use decisions, investments, public improvements and zoning decisions. The plan is also intended to be a working document which will provide for the orderly development of the City, assist the community in its efforts to maintain and enhance a pleasant living environment, protect important natural resources and foster economic development and redevelopment.

### Future Land Use Planning Areas

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The community has identified fourteen categories of land use needed to serve future development needs. These categories are listed below and depicted in **Figure 8.1**. The proposed land use categories were developed in an effort to create a long-term plan for the development and redevelopment of the City of Alpena.

#### Residential Uses

Several residential categories are included in the future land use plan. It is the intention of the plan to protect existing residential neighborhoods while providing a variety of housing options to meet future needs.

##### **Single-Family and Two-Family Residential**

This category includes single- and two-family detached dwellings along with other related facilities such as parks, churches and schools. Infill development and redevelopment should be considerate of existing neighborhood character. Lot sizes range from less than 0.1 acre (65'x65") to nearly one acre with the average size being approximately 0.2 acres (125'x65'). The community recognizes some larger homes have been divided into 3-4 family rental units. It is the intension to discourage further conversion of large single family homes into multi-family rental units and to encourage the re-conversion back into single- and two-family dwellings.

### **Multi-Family Residential**

This designation is intended to provide locations for apartments, townhouses and condominiums. This category is intended for residential development with a density greater than six units per acre. Higher density residential uses can generate a significant amount of traffic and, therefore, should be located directly adjacent to a major thoroughfare. Higher density residential uses can serve as a transition between non-residential districts and lower density residential areas.

### **Planned Development/Residential**

This designation encourages the use of the property as a residential Planned Unit Development (PUD). The PUD/Residential category allows residential uses in a manner that would encourage innovative or creative housing design. If designated within older neighborhood areas, the housing must complement the historical character of the City. The PUD could include a mix of densities such as attached or detached housing, as well as generous setbacks, open space, landscaped areas, and architectural design that is complementary to adjoining structures. The PUD could also include areas of non-residential use which are compatible to the residential uses.

## **Commercial Uses**

Commercial activities such as retail, service and office are key components of a vibrant growing community. Along with generating employment and wealth, commercial centers provide access to goods and services for residents both local and regional. Commercial development generates tax revenue while helping to support community infrastructure improvements and services. The plan identifies a variety of commercial land use areas.

### **Office/Service**

This classification is intended for uses such as office buildings and for mixed-use service districts which may include office buildings, banks, services business, convention centers, public facilities, medical related facilities, social service agencies and churches. The designation could include privately owned facilities as well as public or quasi-public institutions.

### **Local Business**

This land use category is designed to provide opportunities for local services and convenience centers for the day-to-day needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Local business would not include intensive or highway commercial related uses. Protection of the abutting and surrounding residential land use is important, therefore uses that create hazards, offensive or loud noises, vibration, smoke, glare, large truck traffic, high traffic volumes or late hours of operation are not compatible. The designation would include commercial uses in predominately single-family residential neighborhoods where the prevailing land use is residential, and where the commercial use abuts local streets, not considered major thoroughfares.

### **Central Business District**

The Central Business District provides for commercial development that is pedestrian-oriented and offers a mix of uses within a central core. Downtowns provide convenient, safe access to shopping, restaurants, nightclubs, theater, cultural events, parks and services for the local community and visitors. A strong orientation and connection to the waterfront is encouraged. Streets, designed to provide efficient traffic flow, as well as centralized parking are critical to accommodating a population orientated to automobiles. At the same time, the City must continue to focus on a walkable, pedestrian friendly environment. A vibrant downtown draws families into the community center for entertainment, cultural events and festivals. Upper

story apartments and condominiums over first floor retail and office space, in conjunction with healthy adjacent residential neighborhoods, breathe life into the downtown and contribute to its vitality and viability. Small parks, benches, street cafes, river walks and public art add to the pedestrian atmosphere.

### **General Business**

This district is intended for the widest and most intensive variety of retail and service businesses. Typical uses in this district include drive-through restaurants, auto service establishments and commercial uses serving a regional clientele. The uses within this district are auto dependent and benefit from the exposure of high traffic volume thoroughfares. At the same time the City will work towards providing safe pedestrian access.

### **Mixed Use**

This designation could include areas proposed under a unified development scheme incorporating either a singular land use or a mixture of office, commercial or residential uses. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) may incorporate innovative or creative design that promotes open space, trails, bike paths and landscaping within a campus style plan as well as more densely developed urban designs. A PUD could also be incorporated within a multi-year long-range development plan.

## **Industrial Uses**

The industrial base has supported Alpena for the last 150 years. Industry infuses energy into the local economy by providing reasonable wages and generating tax revenues. The City has been actively recruiting smaller-scale light industry to diversify the industrial base and become less dependent on a few large-scale industries. The plan intends to support existing industrial land uses and provide areas for new light and heavy industrial development. Furthermore, the plan recognizes there are industrial sites within the community that are adjacent to or surrounded by residential uses. It is the long range vision of the planning commission to minimize industries' negative impacts on residential neighborhoods through ensuring buffering and screening, encouraging relocation of industrial uses to more appropriate locations in planned industrial areas and encouraging on-going efforts to reduce pollution levels. Some areas may transition from heavy industry to light industry or industrial into mixed-uses such as a mixture of office, commercial or residential uses.

### **Light Industrial**

The light industrial district is designed primarily to accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses and industrial operations whose external and physical effects are restricted to the immediate area and have a minimal effect on surrounding districts. This designation allows uses such as manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging and assembly of finished or semi-finished products from previously prepared materials. "Clean" industries (research and high-tech) are included in this designation.

### **Heavy Industrial**

This category is designed to provide locations for general or heavy industrial activities such as those which involve the use of heavy machinery, extensive amounts of contiguous land, service by railroad lines or major thoroughfares, processing of chemicals or raw materials, assembly, generation of industrial waste, noise, odor, or traffic problems of similar characteristics. These uses require service by large trucks, rail or deep port shipping. Heavy industrial uses should be adequately screened and buffered from adjacent residential uses.



## Community Uses

Alpena functions as a regional hub, drawing people into the community to access higher education, health services, recreation facilities and cultural activities. The community recognizes the importance of these facilities both for City residents and persons around the region. The plan designates areas to accommodate existing uses and potential expansion of uses.

### Institutional

This public and quasi-public designation includes government buildings, water treatment plant, sewage treatment facility, cemeteries, libraries, museums, indoor recreational facilities, community centers, hospitals, nursing homes, churches, schools and associated facilities, and colleges. City Hall and government buildings in the downtown are included in the Central Business District.

### Park/Public Open Space

This classification includes public parks, quasi-public parks and the City Marina. The category is designed to provide protection to existing recreation property and identifies areas planned for future recreation use.

## Natural Resources

Water resources, natural areas and other environmentally sensitive areas are key elements of the quality of life for community residents.

### Resource Conservation

There are environmentally sensitive areas within the City that are not suitable for intensive development. Consistent with the natural resource goals and objectives, the plan designates those areas as resource conservation. It should also be recognized there are other environmentally sensitive areas not mapped as part of this land use plan. When development occurs in and around those sites, efforts should be made to minimize impacts and incorporate natural features into site development plans.

### Water Resources

Water is central to the daily life and community identity of the City of Alpena. The Thunder Bay River, Wildlife Sanctuary, Besser Lake and Lake Huron provide over twenty miles of waterfront and considerable opportunities for recreation. The plan recognizes the importance of water resources in the community's quality of life and the need to protect water quality.

## Special Issue Planning Areas

### **Senior Citizen Issues**

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006, an article in the “Bizjournals” recognized Alpena as the #1 place to retire in Michigan and 44<sup>th</sup> in the United States. An analysis of population trends shows people have known Alpena is a great place to retire for a long time. As the local population of “Boomers” reach retirement age and new retirees move into the area, the community must work toward accommodating an increased demand in senior and retirement housing and other services.

#### *Planning and development summary points:*

- Housing should be located close to shopping and services, be low maintenance, and offer a range of options and values.
- Market rate rental apartments, garden apartments, townhouses, and elder transition housing are lacking in Alpena. Public/private partnerships will be essential to achieve the desired outcome.
- Mixed-Use, Planned Development/Residential and Multi-Use Residential planning areas could accommodate this type of development.
- The community must adapt in order to make Alpena an “elder-friendly” place. For example, a high level of personal safety and security must be maintained. Transportation systems must be in place to facilitate in-town and out-of-town travel. Other businesses and services to meet senior’s commercial, health care, and lifestyle needs must be available. In addition to providing for the basic needs of senior citizens, recreational, cultural, social, and spiritual needs should be addressed. There must be supportive community systems in place which take seniors into consideration when decisions are made.

### **Waterfront**

With over 20 miles of shoreline, including Lake Huron and the Thunder Bay River, waterfront is a key asset to the community. Based on public input, citizens would like to see a mix of uses along the waterfront.

#### *Planning and development summary points:*

- Continue to strengthen the connections between waterfronts and the City.
- Consider physical connections, visual connections, and spiritual connections to the water features.
- Make the connections easy by providing visual clues and connect activity points.
- Encourage a mix of uses such as hotels, restaurants, residential, parks, businesses, and industry.
- Transition that has occurred in recent years should be used as an example for the future (for example the Fletcher Mill Property).
- Continue to provide and improve pedestrian access to waterfronts.
- Continue to provide and improve boating access to water features.
- Develop a Comprehensive Waterfront Plan.

### **Johnson/Miller Street Corridor**

The Johnson /Miller Street Corridor is a key entryway into the City. The corridor is the primary access point for persons going to the college and museum. As downtown attractions such as the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center and Old Town grow in popularity, this corridor will become increasingly

important. As Johnson Street crosses 9th Avenue, the connection becomes fragmented, and visitors can become confused with directions to points of interest.

*Planning and development summary points:*

- Make the corridor a recognized and used entryway into Alpena.
- Maintain and enhance the campus-like setting of the corridor.
- Provide a better connection to downtown businesses and facilities.
- Provide visual and physical connections to the Thunder Bay River.
- Enhance landscaping to retain visual integrity and maintain slower traffic speeds.
- Maintain and enhance a pedestrian friendly environment by providing benches and small pocket parks; and strengthen pedestrian connections with the downtown.

### **Chisholm Street Corridor**

Chisholm Street is a primary commercial corridor and entryway into the City. Businesses located along this major thoroughfare are oriented to vehicular access. Because it is also US-23 and the major north-south state highway along the east coast, high traffic volumes make this one of the busiest streets in the City. The older commercial development with parking lots in the front of buildings, sidewalks, and numerous curb cuts results in a hardened urban landscape. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes this as a key commercial corridor and recommends the City supports development and redevelopment of businesses. The City of Alpena will coordinate with the Michigan Department of Transportation to implement changes along the Chisholm Street Corridor.

*Planning and development summary points:*

- Develop and implement an access management plan to improve safety and traffic flow.
- Develop and implement a Streetscape Plan to improve visual character, soften the urban edge, and incorporate multi-modal transportation.
- Develop a program, similar to the downtown building façade to continue to upgrade the visual character of the corridor.
- Improve pedestrian access along the corridor and provide benches and bike racks.

### **Downtown**

During the various community input sessions, people commented on the importance of the downtown to the identity of the community. Historically, the downtown was a regional draw as families came from surrounding farming communities to shop at the stores and do business. With the growth of “big box” retail outlets in Alpena Township, the downtown business district suffered, and its ability to draw people downtown diminished. The Downtown Development Authority and the City of Alpena have been working to improve the business climate and shopping experience in the downtown.

*Planning and development summary points:*

- Continue to explore grants and loan programs to make improvements to the downtown
- The City should continue to encourage and support residential growth in the District through the conversion of upper story living areas.
- The community needs to continue to strengthen the pedestrian environment through promoting the Walkable Community concept.
- Way-finding signs, benches, pocket parks and bike racks all add to the pedestrian experience.
- The downtown must strengthen its connections to the water, residential neighborhoods, attractions and community parks by providing trails, signs and visual clues.

## **Destination Alpena**

With its proximity to many natural amenities, waterfront location, full-service marina, and developed recreational system, Alpena is a natural haven for the outdoor enthusiast. In addition, it also has a number of “cultural” amenities available to capitalize upon. Amenities ranging from the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center/Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, the Besser Museum for Northeast Michigan, numerous historical sites, to two live performance theaters, blend together with the area’s natural amenities to create a destination that can appeal to a very wide range of people.

The City of Alpena recognizes the potential of the area being marketed as a destination location and has been partnering with a number of public and private agencies to facilitate this process.

### *Planning and development summary points:*

- Continue partnerships with the Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and other relevant agencies to develop consistent and coordinated marketing of the Alpena area.
- Implement the brand identity *Alpena: Sanctuary of the Great Lakes*.
- Work with the private sector to develop larger hotels, thereby increasing the total room count within the area.
- Continue to support the development of a waterfront campground within the area.
- Work with the appropriate public and private entities to market and promote the City of Alpena Marina as a first class marina and to provide the necessary amenities.

## **Industrial Development**

Historically, heavy industry has been a linchpin of the local economy. As the twenty-first century begins, the total dominance of heavy industry over the local economy has waned. However, industrial development continues to provide employment opportunities and a significant tax base in the City. Therefore, the growth of new industry and the continuation of existing industry must be emphasized.

### *Planning and development summary points:*

- Continue to work with economic linchpins Lafarge North America and DPI to expand and retain their industrial operations.
- Work with appropriate federal, state, and/or local entities to address and alleviate any environmental issues resulting from industrial development.
- Promote a range of industrial development in North and Commerce industrial parks.
- Continue brownfield redevelopment.
- Expanded college programs related to manufacturing should be developed at Alpena Community College.
- Retain existing manufacturing entities.

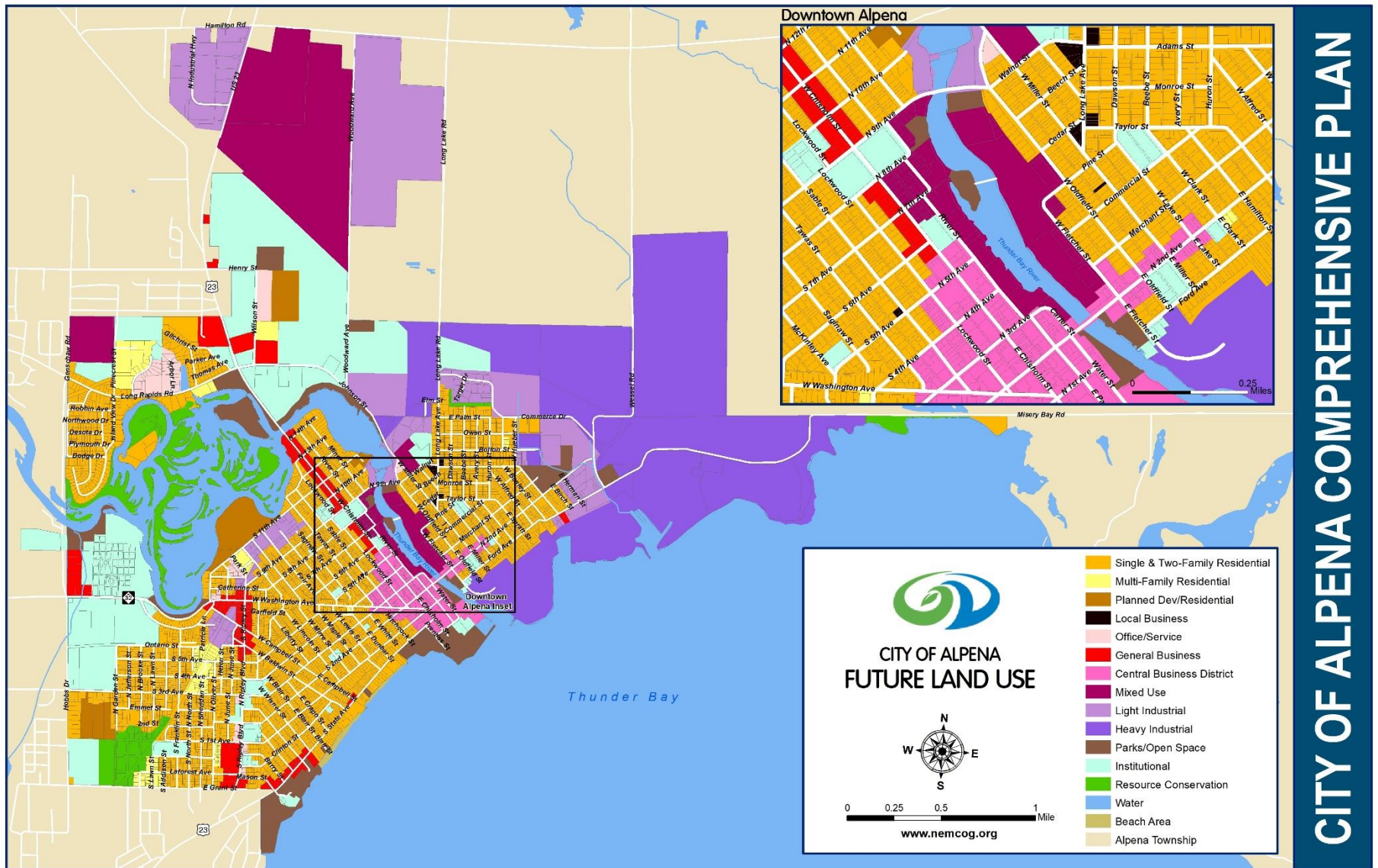


Figure 8.1 Future Land Use



## Priority Redevelopment Sites

As part of the City of Alpena's participation in the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities Program (RRC), the City has designated certain priority redevelopment sites. This section highlights these vacant or underutilized sites which have redevelopment potential that will economically benefit the community.

### US 23 North

The US 23 North property includes 98 acres located on Alpena's north side near the community college, the hospital, civic center, and other professional office sites. This property contains over 750 feet of frontage on US 23. This section of US 23 is highly traveled with a 14,000 ADT. The land uses surrounding this property consists of heavy commercial, storage, and light industrial.



The property has a flexible lot configuration and has all utilities available. It is currently zoned B-3 which allows for accommodation and food service activities, educational uses, human care facilities, agriculture/forest product services, arts and entertainment facilities, retail and commercial businesses, contractor facilities, public facilities, and transit-related facilities. The future land use map shows this property as Mixed Use which anticipates a large range of commercial and residential uses on this property. The city does not intend to apply building form standards to this area that are applied in other areas of the city.

The city states that land costs negotiable to \$0 based on capital investment and job creation. The city has created a property prospectus for this site and intends to work with the MEDC RRC program to connect with potential developers and to market the property in addition to working with economic development professionals within Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation.

### Commerce Industrial Park

There are several lots available for purchase within Commerce Industrial Park. The property is located near US 23 along a designated truck route and is just south of a Lake State Railway line. Surrounding uses include industrial activities to the north and west and residential properties to the south. Vacant land is located to the east.

The property is currently zoned light industrial and has all utilities available on-site. The average lot size is 40,500 square feet. The price per lot: \$1 - \$25,000 based on investment and job creation. The future land use map has this property remaining as a light



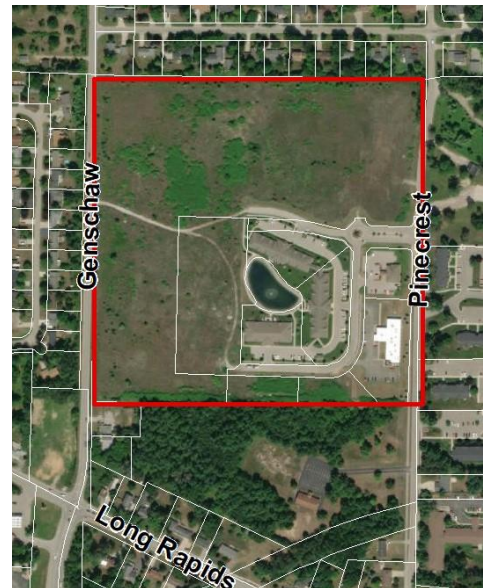
industrial district. The highly flexible light industrial district allows a great variety of uses including caterers, microbreweries, agricultural and forest product services, automotive facilities, equipment repair and maintenance, professional offices, cleaning services, telecommunications, contractor facilities, low-impact manufacturing, specified retail (boat sales, building/garden equipment sales, outdoor sales, truck/heavy equipment sales/service), freight terminals, warehousing, storage, wholesale, transportation facilities, and other uses. Uses within this district are intended to produce no odor, air emissions, or vibrations beyond the boundaries of the site. Industrial operations are to remain fully enclosed (except for parking and storage).

Property prospectus packages for this site have been created and the city intends to work in conjunction with Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation and the MEDC RRC program to connect with potential developers and to market the property.

## Oxbow Village

Oxbow village is a 40-acre mixed-use development, which is zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD). There are approximately 30 acres remaining available for development. Existing development consists of 48 units of assisted living senior housing, a dialysis treatment center, and a medical office.

The future land use map designates this development as future mixed use with the intention that it remain as a PUD. Planned Unit Developments are not limited to any specific uses and are intended to be flexible in use and design. The city intends new development to be designed and located to promote appropriate interaction between all developed uses and to buffer incompatible activities. Multiple residential housing activities are desired within this development to meet the growing variety of housing needs within the community and to complement the existing office uses. The city intends to work with the Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation, MEDC RRC staff, the property owners, and appropriate housing resources to market this property.



## Memorial Hall (former Armory Building)

The former Memorial Hall is a 48,000 square foot former armory building. The building is a certified historic site and is eligible for state and federal tax credits. The structure is located in downtown Alpena on the Thunder Bay River and is across the street from City Hall.



The property is zoned Waterfront Development District (WD) which allows

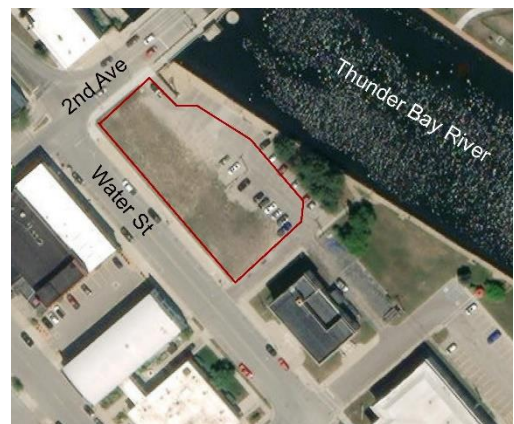




for a great variety of retail, business, educational, recreational, transportation, and residential uses. The city envisions a combination of mixed uses including residential, office, commercial, and even incubator-space within this facility. The future land use map shows the property as central business district, which encompasses the waterfront development district within that future land use category (**Chapter 9, Table 9.1**). The WD requires a zero foot front setback and requires building access points both on the street and on the river side of the property. The property is also within the Downtown Overlay District which contains design standards for building scale, façade, roof, materials, transparency, and sidewalk encroachment. Due to the historic nature of this building, the approval of flexible design standards by the Planning Commission will likely be necessary for this property. The city intends to work with the Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation, MEDC RRC staff, and the property owners to market this property.

## Thunder Bay River Property (former Alpena Power site)

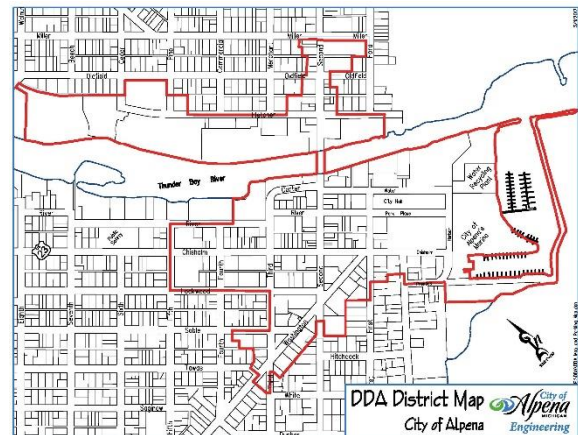
This vacant property, which totals 27,354 square feet, is located in downtown Alpena at the foot of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Bridge along the shore of the Thunder Bay River. It is the location of the former Alpena Power office building, which was demolished using a Michigan Land Bank demolition grant.

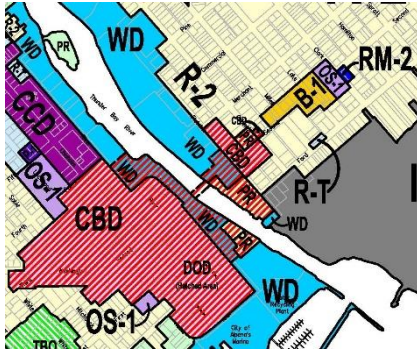


The property is currently zoned Waterfront Development District (WD) which allows for a great variety of retail, business, educational, recreational, transportation, and residential uses. The future land use map shows the property as central business district, which encompasses the waterfront development district within that future land use category (**Chapter 9, Table 9.1**). The WD requires a zero foot front setback and requires building access points both on the street and on the river side of the property. The property is also within the Downtown Overlay District which contains design standards for building scale, façade, roof, materials, transparency, and sidewalk encroachment. The city envisions this property being utilized for mixed-use development. However, this property is versatile and could house a variety of proposed uses. The city intends to work with the Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation and MEDC RRC staff to market this property to developers.

## Downtown Alpena

Downtown Alpena is an historic downtown with a mix of retail, service, culinary, entertainment, and cultural establishments. An emerging residential market, especially in the upper stories of commercial buildings, is developing, creating true 24/7 activities within the heart of the community. The Alpena DDA maintains a list of available properties at <https://www.downtownalpenami.com/available-properties.html>.





Lots within this area are primarily zoned Central Business District (CBD) and Waterfront Development District (WD), but some lots are also zoned One-Family Residential (R-2) and Local Business District (B-1). These districts encompass many uses including mixed uses, retail, office, commercial, educational, recreational, and multiple forms of residential structures. In addition, a portion of this district is located within the Downtown Overlay District (DOD). The DOD encourages zero lot line development, allows up to four stories in the central downtown area, and has design standards in place which address building scale, building materials, facades, transparency, and sidewalk encroachment. However, a provision of the zoning ordinance does

allow for flexible design standards in order to encourage creative design outcomes. A small portion of this area is located within the Commercial Corridor District (an overlay district) which contains some of the same design standards as the DOD. The future land use map shows this area as future “central business district” and “mixed use” both of which allow a continuation of the variety of uses currently allowed by zoning. Specific strategies for downtown Alpena are contained with the *2017 Downtown Alpena Strategic Plan*.

# Chapter 9

## Implementation and Adoption

### Plan Coordination and Review

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As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), as amended, notification of intent to develop the City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan was sent to all adjacent communities and other relevant entities to request cooperation and comment. A copy of the notice letter, affidavit of mailing and entities notified can be found in Appendix A.

After the draft plan was completed by the City of Alpena Planning Commission, a draft was transmitted to the City Council for approval to distribute the plan for review and comment. The draft plan was transmitted to entities notified at the initiation of the plan update. After the required comment period, public hearing and plan adoption the final plan was transmitted to all required entities. A copy of all relevant information can be found in Appendix A.

### Public Hearing

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A public hearing on the proposed Comprehensive Plan for the City of Alpena, as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) as amended, was held on October 13, 2020. Section 43(1) of the Act requires that 15 days notice of the public hearing be given in a publication of general circulation in the municipality. A notice of the public hearings was published in the Alpena News. Copies of the public hearing notice are reproduced in Appendix A.

The purpose of the public hearing was to present the proposed master plan and to accept comments from the public. During the hearing, maps of existing land use, resource maps and proposed future land use recommendations were presented.

### Plan Adoption

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The City of Alpena Planning Commission formally adopted the Comprehensive Plan on October 13, 2020. The Alpena City Council passed a resolution of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan on October 19, 2020.

### Plan Implementation

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The Comprehensive Plan was developed to provide a vision of the community's future. It will serve as a tool for decision making on future development proposals. The plan will also act as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, road maintenance and development, community group activities, tax incentive decisions, and administration of utilities and services.

On an annual basis, the City of Alpena Planning Commission will review the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and identify and prioritize three to four working objectives for the year. These

identified priority items will be the focus of the Planning Commission's activity throughout the year. This will allow the Planning Commission to work on a proactive basis in order to better accomplish the goals identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

## Zoning Plan

Section 33 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, calls for a plan to include a zoning plan for the control of height, area, bulk, location and use of buildings and premises in the city. The zoning plan identifies the current zoning districts and their purposes, as well as how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.

According to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended, comprehensive planning is the foundation of a zoning ordinance. Section 203 (1) of the Act states:

*"The Zoning Ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land, to insure that uses of land shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships to avoid the overcrowding of population, to provide adequate light and air, to lessen congestion on the public roads and streets, to reduce hazards to life and property, to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements, and to conserve the expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous uses of land, resources, and properties. The zoning ordinance shall be made with reasonable consideration to the character of each district, its peculiar suitability for particular uses, the conservation of property values and natural resources, and the general and appropriate trend and character of land, building, and population development."*

The City of Alpena completed a comprehensive rewrite of its Zoning Ordinance in 2009. The new Ordinance was adopted by the Alpena City Council on January 18, 2010 with an effective date of March 1, 2010. The new Zoning Ordinance better reflects and supports the implementation of the goals and objectives and future land use contained in this Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the Ordinance reflects changing conditions in the community and along the coastline.

Although many of the use districts remained the same or were consolidated, the City included major modifications, including the development of new districts and the inclusion of hybrid form based zoning in the Central business District (CBD), the new Commercial Corridor District (CCD) and in portions of the new Waterfront Development District (WD). These changes enable the Zoning Ordinance to provide new regulations that preserve the aesthetic and natural qualities of the City, while providing flexibility to accommodate innovative building and land use applications that enhance the quality of life for residents, create an attractive destination for visitors, and protect the abundant natural resources found in and around the community.

Following are the land use categories within which the 18 zoning districts and 3 overlay districts in the City of Alpena are organized:

### **Residential Districts:**

The following districts are considered residential districts: One-Family Residential Districts (R-1 and R-2), Two-Family Residential District (RT), Multiple-Family Residential Districts (RM-1 and RM-2), Thunder Bay Junior High Neighborhood Overlay District. The principal purpose of these districts is to provide for a range of residential dwelling types at various densities for specific uses. These include: single family attached and

detached, duplexes, multi-family structures and complexes, and condominium units. These may be developed utilizing standard subdivision, land division or site condominium regulations as permitted by state law.

### **Non-Residential Districts:**

#### ***Commercial***

The City of Alpena currently has the following commercially-related districts: Office Service District (OS-1), Central Business District (CBD), Commercial Corridor District (CCD), Local Business District (B-1), General Business District (B-2), and Commercial District (B-3). These commercial districts allow varying types and intensities of commercial establishments. OS-1 is intended to accommodate offices, banks and personal services and to serve as transitional areas between residential and commercial districts and to provide transition between major thoroughfares and residential districts. B-1 is intended to meet the day-to-day shopping needs of the adjacent residential districts. CBD provides for office buildings and retail stores within the City's traditional downtown. The new CCD provides specific development standards for unique commercial nodes along major corridors and high impact intersections within the City outside the downtown area. B-2 provides for more diversified businesses and is typically located along major thoroughfares. B-3 also provides for more diversified businesses which could result in external physical effect.

#### ***Industrial***

The City reduced the number of industrial districts from three to two, consolidating the two light industrial districts into a single I-1, Light Industrial, and re-designating the I-3 Heavy Industrial District, to the new I-2, General Industrial. The Light Industrial District (I-1) is intended to accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses, and industrial operations whose external physical effects do not affect the surrounding districts. The new General Industrial District (I-2) is designed for manufacturing, assembling, and fabrication activities whose external physical effects will be felt by surrounding districts and generally require state and/or federal environmental reviews and permits.

#### ***Special Zoning Districts***

The following special districts are overlay districts or multi-use districts that do not directly fall under the residential and non-residential categories listed above:

- **Thunder Bay Neighborhood Overlay** – Provides supplemental development standards for a vacant residential block and abutting properties to promote residential development compatible with the eclectic architecture of existing neighborhood residences dating from the late 1800's to the mid 1950's.
- **Downtown Overlay District** – Form based development standards applicable to the City's CBD district and portions of the Waterfront Development District (WD) located within the City's downtown, with the purpose of ensuring the compatibility of new, rehabilitated and existing downtown structures with one another utilizing specific standards for architecture, function and scale.
- **US 23 North Corridor Overlay** – Provision of common development standards along the principal entry corridor into the City from the north. The highway corridor consists of properties located in both the City of Alpena and Alpena Township.
- **Waterfront Development District (WD)** – A riverfront district providing public access along both sides and across the Thunder Bay River promoting mixed-use development of residential, commercial and water-related commercial/industrial uses.

- **Vehicular Parking District (P-1)** – Provides for the development of parking lots with specific design standards located as transitional zoning between business/industrial zones and abutting residential zones.
- **Conservation & Resources District (CR)** – District containing sensitive environmental habitats permitting limited development with strict development standards.
- **Parks & Recreation District (PR)** – Permits public recreational developments and protects existing public park and recreation lands for the use and benefit of the community.
- **Planned Unit Development (PUD)** – District provides development that does not readily comply within the typical zoning district classifications. Flexibility in use and development standards provides for creative design solutions unique to a property that provide the most efficient and effective use of the property to the benefit of the entire community.

One of the primary functions of a zoning ordinance is to promote development that directly assists in the implementation of the goals and objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The adoption of the new Zoning Ordinance in 2010 greatly facilitated this process. The City of Alpena lends itself naturally to the principles of New Urbanism – an approach to designing cities and neighborhoods, which attempts to reduce traffic and eliminate sprawl. Many of the goals of this plan can be addressed by implementing the 10 principles of New Urbanism: (1) Walkability (2) Connectivity (3) Mixed-Use and Diversity (4) Mixed Housing (5) Quality Architecture and Urban Design (6) Traditional Neighborhood Structure (7) Increased Density (8) Smart Transportation (9) Sustainability and (10) Quality of Life.

The City’s new Zoning Ordinance incorporates many, if not all, of these principles through a combination of traditional and form based zoning techniques with a strong emphasis on the use of mixed use development, public non-motorized linkages, preservation of unique cultural and natural resources, and flexible design standards.

**Relationship Between Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance**

For the City Zoning Ordinance to effectively implement the overall development goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, the established zoning districts must reflect and directly relate to the general land use categories of the Plan. The following chart illustrates the correlation between the Plan’s future land use categories and the corresponding zoning districts.

| Table 9.1                                  |  |
|--|--|
| Future Land Use Category                   | Corresponding Applicable Zoning District(s)  |
| <b>Single &amp; Two-Family Residential</b> | R-1, One Family Residential  |
|  | R-2, One Family Residential  |
|  | R-T, Two Family Residential  |
|  | TBO, Thunder Bay Overlay   |
| <b>Multiple Family Residential</b>         | RM-1, Multiple Family Residential  |
|  | RM-2, Multiple Family Residential  |
| <b>Planned Development/Residential</b>     | PUD, Planned Unit Development  |
| <b>Local Business</b>                      | B-1, Local Business  |
| <b>Office/Service</b>                      | OS-1, Office Service   |
| <b>General Business</b>                    | B-2, General Business  |
|  | B-3, Commercial  |
|  | CCD, Commercial Corridor   |
|  |  US-23 North Corridor Overlay |
| <b>Central Business District</b>           | CBD, Central Business  |
|  | WD, Waterfront Development   |
|  | DOD, Downtown Overlay  |
| <b>Mixed Use</b>                           | CCD, Commercial Corridor   |
|  | WD, Waterfront Development   |
|  | CBD, Central Business  |
|  | PUD, Planned Unit Development  |
| <b>Light Industrial</b>                    | I-1, Light Industrial  |
| <b>Heavy Industrial</b>                    | I-2, General Industrial  |
| <b>Parks/Open Space</b>                    | PR, Parks and Recreation   |
| <b>Institutional</b>                       | All Residential & Business Zoning Districts  |
|  | Dependent on Specific Use.   |
| <b>Resource Conservation</b>               | CR, Conservation and Resources   |

## Grants and Capital Improvement Plan

The Comprehensive Plan will be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budgeting, grant applications, and administration of utilities and services. The City of Alpena maintains an aggressive six-year capital improvements program across all City departments. As the Capital Improvements Plan is updated annually, the goals and objectives designated in the Comprehensive Plan will allow the City to prioritize and focus its spending decisions and refine its capital planning to key areas.



## **Recreation Plan**

The City of Alpena actively updates its Recreation Plan and implements planned recreation improvements through its capital improvements program. The goals and objectives contained in Chapter 7 will guide future Recreation Plan updates and the implementation of recreation related capital improvement projects. In addition, the goals pertaining to recreation found in both the Comprehensive Plan and Recreation Plan will facilitate grant applications to fund identified projects.