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## ALPENA DDA CANCELS FALL EVENTS

August 10, 2020

ALPENA MI— Last week the Alpena Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Promotions Committee made the difficult decision to cancel the DDA’s Annual Chili Chowder Cook-Off due to concerns and restrictions around COVID-19.

“The whole purpose of the Chili Chowder Cook-Off is to bring our community together with a little friendly competition to celebrate the beginning of the fall season and encourage people to gather. Unfortunately, there is just no way we can hold the event safely in a way that holds true to the purpose of the event and makes sense for both our competitors and community,” explained DDA Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, Kingsli Kraft.

The DDA’s other signature fall event, Bard at the Bar, has also been cancelled this year. This would have been the third year that the Alpena DDA partnered with Thunder Bay Theatre to host Bard at the Bar, a Shakespeare-themed bar crawl. This cancellation is due in part to the restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 and the recent fire damage at Thunder Bay Theatre. For both of these reasons, Thunder Bay Theatre leadership and the DDA has determined that the event will not be possible this year.

“It was really difficult to make the call to cancel these events this year. We love seeing our community come together downtown during Chili Chowder Cook-off. We love laughing along with everyone over a glass of wine as we watch a scene from a famous Shakespeare work performed at our favorite downtown spots. We hope to be back to planning these events next year, and for now we’re brainstorming how we can encourage people to come downtown in a safe, socially-distanced way, and working on some other projects and programming behind the scenes to continue to promote positive change in Downtown Alpena.” said Kingsli Kraft.

For more information about the Alpena DDA, you can visit our website at [www.downtownalpenami.com](http://www.downtownalpenami.com).