



---

CONTACT: Anne Gentry, Executive Director  
Alpena Downtown Development Authority  
124 E. Chisholm St. Alpena, MI 49707  
989-356-6422 anneg@alpena.mi.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

---

## **DOWNTOWN ALPENA SOCIAL DISTRICT OFFICIALLY OPENS THIS WEEKEND**

July 23, 2021

ALPENA, MI – The Alpena Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is excited to announce that the Downtown Alpena Social District is officially open as of Friday, July 23, 2021 at noon. Within the district, patrons twenty-one and older will be able to purchase an alcoholic beverage from a participating restaurant or bar and carry and consume it outdoors on sidewalks and in public parks such as Culligan Plaza, Avery Park, and Bay View Park. The Social District is open seven days a week from 11 am-midnight.

Earlier this summer, Alpena City Council created the Downtown Alpena Social District, whose boundaries incorporate most of the DDA Downtown Alpena district. Businesses that have an eligible liquor license contiguous to the district are able to apply to receive a Social District permit through the Michigan Liquor Control Commission to be able to sell alcoholic beverages to take into the district. All beverages must be sold in designated Social District plastic cups with each business' logo on it where it was purchased. Cups cannot go from one licensed establishment into another. Cups are recyclable and patrons are encouraged to recycle them in designated recycling bins found throughout the downtown.

Currently, you can purchase an alcoholic beverage to take into the Social District at the following establishments who have received Social District permits:

- The Fresh Palate
- Hopside Brewery
- JJ's Steak & Pizza House
- Mango's Tequila Bar
- Rusty Petunias Marketplace
- Thunder Bay Winery

When using the Social District, customers are reminded to follow these rules:

- Customers cannot carry an alcoholic beverage purchased from a permit holder:
  - Outside of the designated Social District boundary.

- Into another licensed establishment (indoors or outside). For example, a customer cannot take a drink purchased at Thunder Bay Winery into Mango's or onto their patio.
- Into a food establishment that does not have a liquor license (Downtown Scoops, Cabin Creek, Bigby Coffee, Bob's Bullpen, Take 5 Deli, Freier's Pizzeria).
- Customers cannot consume an alcoholic beverage on a public highway.
- Some retail businesses may allow food and drink into their stores, customers should check and respect each business' rules surrounding beverages.
- All State of Michigan and City of Alpena laws apply, including those prohibiting public intoxication, impaired driving, and serving alcohol to minors.

"We are thrilled to officially launch the Downtown Alpena Social District," said DDA Executive Director Anne Gentry. "Currently, we are the only community in Northeast Michigan to establish a Social District. We believe this will not only support our hospitality businesses but encourage more people to walk around, shop, and enjoy all Downtown Alpena has to offer-- whether it be the Alpena Street Performers, a relaxing afternoon in Culligan Plaza, or a stroll down Second Avenue."

Over the last few months, the DDA has worked with City staff to install signage to demarcate boundaries, place recycling bins for Social District cups, and create a Maintenance and Operations Plan for the district. For any questions about the operation of the district or rules surrounding it, please contact DDA Executive Director Anne Gentry at [anneg@alpena.mi.us](mailto:anneg@alpena.mi.us) or 989-356-6422.