



Welcome
to Downtown Alpena!

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Welcome!

On behalf of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), welcome to the Downtown Alpena community!

Downtown Alpena is home to nearly 200 businesses, over 800 employees, and nearly 50 residents. Our downtown has been the historic, commercial, and cultural center of our community since Alpena's early days as a lumber town. Shops restaurants, bars, offices, non-profits, event spaces, and entertainment venues: Downtown Alpena is home to a diverse set of businesses that each bring something unique to our district. I am excited that you have decided to open or locate your business here in our beautiful downtown.

In this packet, you will find information about the downtown district, what the DDA does, and other helpful information about topics such as parking downtown, snow removal, and opportunities available to you through the DDA. If you have any questions or would like more information about anything covered in this packet, please let us know.

On behalf of the Downtown Alpena community, welcome!



Anne Gentry, Executive Director, Alpena DDA

Downtown at a Glance

185 businesses downtown

30 retail | 11 restaurants, lunch spots, and bars | 2 coffee shops

800+

downtown employees

90

hotel rooms

51 & 8

apartments & single-family residences

~\$7,781,055

capital investment in the last five years into the district

7,669

average daily traffic count on Chisholm St.

~28,405

residents in the County (2019)



Drive Times:

5

minutes to Alpena Community College

7

minutes M-32 corridor

16

minutes to Alpena County Regional Airport

What is the DDA?

DDA= Downtown Development Authority

The Alpena Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was created in 1980 by the City of Alpena with the goal to implement positive physical, economic, and aesthetic changes in Downtown Alpena.

In 1975 the State of Michigan enacted Public Act 197, which allowed municipal governments to create DDA's to encourage reinvestment into their traditional downtown districts. This legislation was created in response to a growing amount of investment across the state that was moving away from historic, traditional downtowns and into suburban environments, big-box stores, and malls. DDA's were created to help encourage reinvestment into historic downtowns, invest in public improvements, and raise property values in the downtown district.

What is our mission and what are we responsible for?

According to PA 197, the mission of every DDA is:

- Correct and prevent deterioration within 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
- To promote the economic growth of the district.

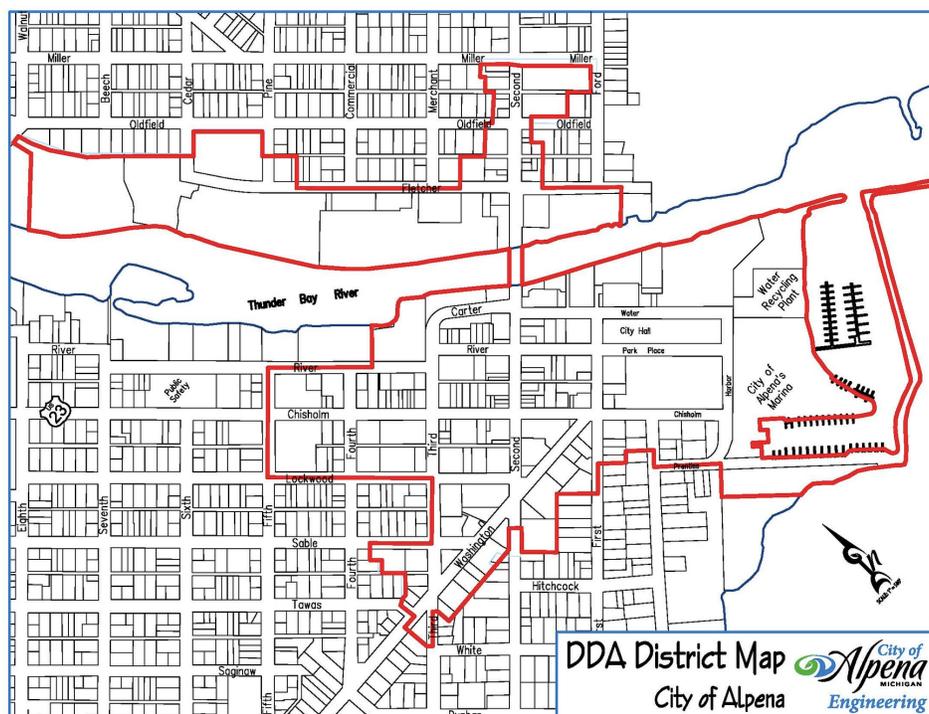
Communities large and small have DDA's, and while the activities and projects that each DDA undertakes varies, each is guided by this same mission. The Alpena DDA is governed by a Board of Directors and overseen by Alpena City Council. The Alpena DDA has various committees who implement the goals and projects of the authority.

Some of the ongoing activities of the Alpena DDA include:

- Investing in hanging flower baskets, outdoor furniture, and holiday decorations
- Marketing the downtown district as a whole to visitors and residents, including managing the Downtown Alpena social media accounts and www.downtownalpenami.com
- Connecting property owners with relevant grant information and small business resources
- Hosting and organizing promotional events for the downtown district, such as the Chili Chowder Cook-off, Visit with Santa weekends, and Sidewalk Sales

Where are the DDA boundaries?

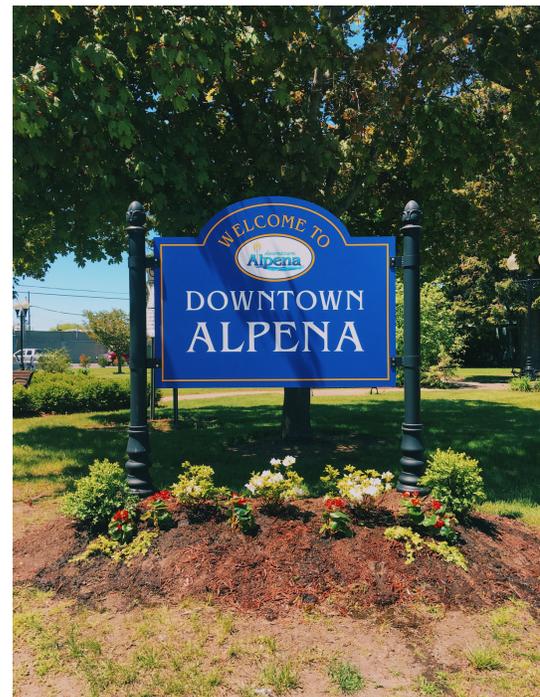
The Alpena DDA has legally drawn boundaries that determine how we are funded and where projects can happen. The boundaries have been expanded three times since the DDA was formed in 1980. View the map below.



How is the DDA funded?

The DDA is funded through Tax Increment Financing (TIF)-- a mechanism used by municipal governments to reinvest a portion of property taxes paid by a district back into that district. No one pays extra taxes for TIF; tax revenue is diverted from the City to the DDA to reinvest into projects.

The DDA is also funded by a 1.98 special assessment which goes towards the DDA's operations, which is paid by property owners in the downtown district.



DDA Plans + Priorities for the Future

The DDA's most recent Strategic Plan + Market Analysis was completed in 2017 and was developed through months of study and public input sessions. The DDA is also guided by its 2003 Development + Tax Increment Financing Plan, which is the foundational document for projects and priorities to be completed with the TIF funds we receive.

In 2019, the DDA also conducted a Strategic Planning Session with its board members, committee members, and staff to review progress on established priority projects and to set priorities for the upcoming year.

All of these documents can be viewed here:

<https://www.downtownalpenami.com/your-dda.html>



DDA Staff Members

- *Anne Gentry, Executive Director.* Leads, manages, and executes the projects and goals of the DDA as guided by the DDA Board of Directors. Serves as a liaison between government officials, business and property owners, granting organizations, and community organizations. Oversees the daily operations of the DDA and

keeps all records, minutes, and documents.

- *Kingsli Kraft, Marketing & Outreach Coordinator.* Leads the communications and marketing of the Alpena DDA and Downtown Alpena brand. Creates content for Downtown Alpena's social media outlets, manages the website, writes blog posts, and assists with promotional events. Serves as a liaison to business owners and merchants and organizes Merchant Meet-Ups.

- *Savannah Peterson, Parking Ambassador.* Monitors downtown parking spaces and issues citations as necessary for parking violations.

- *NEMROC Partnership:* Each May through October, the DDA hires two-three employees through NEMROC who pick up trash and cigarette butts, keeping our downtown looking beautiful.

DDA Board of Directors

The DDA is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who represent a diverse set of individuals who have downtown's best interests in mind. Board members are appointed by Alpena City Council.

- **Mike Mahler**, Chairman, *Director of Economic Development, Target Alpena & Former President & CEO of First Federal of Northern Michigan*
- **Matt Wojda**, Vice-Chairman, *Attorney, White & Wojda*
- **Todd Britton**, *Owner, Meridian Contracting Services, LLC*
- **Joanna Cooper**, *Owner, Ashney Homes by the Bay*
- **Griffin James**, *Owner, The Local Basket Case*
- **Cristi Johnson**, *Manager of Sales, Project Management & Operations, Family Enterprise, Inc.*
- **Jennifer Calery**, *Public Relations & Communications Consultant, Cinnaire*
- **Corey Canute**, *General Manager & Senior VP, Omni Metalcraft Corp & Co-owner, Red Brick Tap & Barrel*
- **Rachel Smolinski**, *Alpena City Manager*

DDA Committees

The Alpena DDA has six established committees, four of which are based on the National Main Street Program. The tasks and goals of the strategic plan are implemented by the work of these committees, who report to the Board for final action.

- Design & Beautification: Works to create a safe, physically sound, inviting atmosphere for shoppers, workers, and visitors. Attention to all of its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, and window displays. Design is also responsible for the Facade Grant program, hanging flower baskets, and holiday decorations.
- Promotions & Marketing: Works to support positive economic development by strengthening the image and identity of Downtown Alpena through facilitating, implementing, and promoting downtown events, activities, and programs. Oversees the general branding and marketing activities of Downtown Alpena.
- Economic Development: Works to strengthen downtown's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. The goal is to build a commercial district that responds to the needs of today's consumers through attracting new businesses and assisting current ones.
- Parking: The parking committee continues to review the downtown parking plan for all day and two-hour parking and to create parking plans that respond to downtown's needs.

Ad-hoc committees include Personnel and Budget & Finance, which meet on an as-needed basis.

Where are we located and how can you contact us?

The Alpena DDA Office is located at 124 E. Chisholm Street., the small wedge building located next to Culligan Plaza. General hours of operation are 9 am- 5 pm. Since there are only two of us that work in the office, we recommend calling ahead if you are planning on stopping by.

We can be reached at 989-356-6422 or by emailing downtownalpenami@gmail.com.

How can you get involved?

Interested in volunteering as a committee member or board member? Want to make a certain project happen in our downtown or help out at a DDA-led event? Please reach out to Anne at the DDA to learn more about volunteer opportunities and upcoming projects.



General Overview of Downtown Events

*- denotes a DDA led event

We do our best to update our website (downtownalpenami.com) as dates for events are announced. If there isn't an official date listed on our website for an event, an official date has likely not yet been determined.

This is not a complete list of events that happen downtown! There are plenty of fun activities and events that occur downtown throughout the year. This list mainly covers the events that draw large gatherings of people, close the street or otherwise impact other businesses in the downtown area.

Spring (March-May)

- New Spring events to be discussed and shared later in 2021 when gathering is safe again.

Summer (June-August)

- June
 - Spirit of the Blues hosted in partnership with the Alpena Blues Coalition and the Fresh Palate
 - Blues Fest Family Zone*
- July
 - 4th of July Parade
 - Maritime Festival hosted by Friends of the TBNMS
 - Brown Trout Festival
 - Art on the Bay hosted by the Thunder Bay Arts Council
 - Sidewalk Sales*

- August
 - Fresh Waves: The Downtown Alpena Mural Project Celebration*

Autumn (September - November)

- September
 - The Harvest Festival hosted by Thunder Bay Winery
 - Sunrise Suds Tap Takeover hosted by the Fresh Palate
- October
 - Chili Chowder Cook-Off*
 - Fall Shopping Event
- November
 - Bard at the Bar- A Shakespeare Themed Bar Crawl*
 - Small Business Saturday (*this is a nationwide movement/event held the Saturday after Thanksgiving to encourage people to shop small*)
 - Small Biz Countdown (virtual)*
 - Bolenz Thanksgiving Parade hosted by Bolenz Jewelry (*usually held in the evening the day after Thanksgiving*)
 - Culligan Plaza Tree Lighting Ceremony (*immediately follows the Bolenz Thanksgiving Parade*)

Winter (December - February)

- December
 - Santa Visits*
 - Holiday Shopping Event
- February
 - Hot Cocoa Crawl (hosted collectively by merchants)



Other recurring events

Downtown Street Performers - During the summer months, every Friday evening from 6-8:00pm there are street performers in Avery Park, Pocket Park, and Culligan Plaza. For more information, check out our website.

Alpena Art Walks - Throughout the year, the art galleries and organizations in Downtown Alpena collaborate to host the Art Walks. In the summer, galleries stay open late on the last Friday of the month until 8:00pm. In the spring, fall and winter the galleries host special artwalks. Dates for the artwalks are usually determined in January and February. For more information, check out our website.

Downtown Parking Guide

Throughout Downtown Alpena, there are 1,000 public parking spaces and over 600 private parking spaces available for short and long-term use.

All downtown parking is free; however, parking limits are enforced in short-term lots from 8:00 am - 6:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. Most of our on-street parking has a two-hour time limit, especially in the downtown core. Please check signage before you park.

All-Day Parking

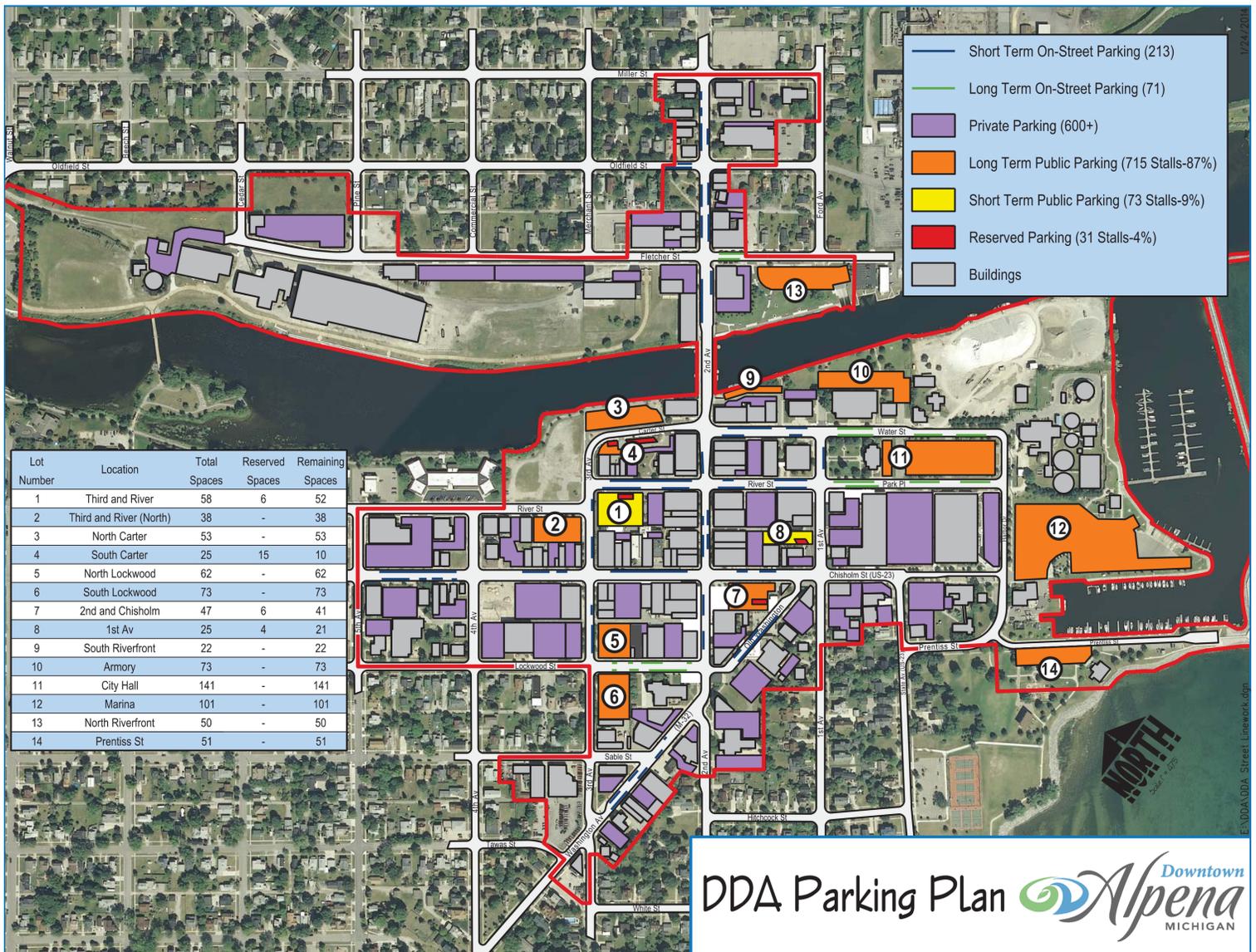
If you work downtown, you can park in the following lots all day:

- **Lot 2.** Located on River St. & Third St.
- **Lot 3.** Located next to the river on Carter St.
- **Lots 9 & 10.** Located next to the river on Water St.
- **Lots 5 & 6.** Entrances on Lockwood St.
- **Lot 7.** Entrance located on Old Washington Ave.
- **Lot 11.** Located behind City Hall off of Park Place or Water St.
- **Lot 12.** Parking next to the Alpena Boat Harbor & Marina.

Overnight Parking

Lot 3 has all-day and overnight parking, all-year-round. **Lot 3** can be accessed off Carter St.

Overnight parking is prohibited in all other parking lots unless you have an overnight permit issued through the DDA. Parking overnight on streets is prohibited from November 1st to April 1st for snowplows to come through.



Customer Parking

We encourage business owners and employees to keep short-term and on-street parking available for customers coming downtown. The following locations offer short-term parking. If you park overtime, you will receive a parking violation.

- **Lot 1.** Located behind the Center Building & Mango's Tequila Bar. Entrance off Third Ave. or River St.
- **Lot 8.** Located behind Sherwin Williams & The Alpena News. Entrance off First Ave.
- On-street, as spaces allow.

Parking Permits

The Alpena DDA rents out limited spaces throughout the downtown to downtown residents, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis. If reserved spaces are available, business owners and employees may rent out these spaces, but are subject to forfeiting them (with a refund issued) if a downtown resident requests to reserve that space.

Parking Violations

Received a parking ticket? Parking tickets can be paid in-person at City Hall in the City Clerk's office (first floor), located at 208 N. First Ave. or mailed to Alpena City Clerk, 208 N. First Ave., Alpena, MI 49707. Please note parking violation rates increase after 10 days and after 20 days if they go unpaid.



A Guide to Marketing Events, DDA Promotional Opportunities & more

Social Media Boosted Post Matching Program

For the July 2020-June 2021 fiscal year the DDA introduced a Social Media Boosted Post Matching Program. The DDA will 50/50 match a merchant's marketing request of either \$25 or \$50 on a Boosted Post on Downtown Alpena's Facebook and Instagram pages for a total of \$50 or \$100 (\$25/\$50 from the merchant and \$25/\$50 from the DDA). You can find all of the information about this program here on our website.

Coffee with Kingsli

Coffee with Kingsli is a Facebook Live Series hosted by our Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, Kingsli Kraft, every Friday at 9:30am on Downtown Alpena's Facebook Page. Kingsli sends an Announcements and Updates submission form to all merchants earlier in the week before the Facebook Live where merchants, business owners, nonprofits, etc. can submit updates about their business or organization. The link to the form is always the same and you can find it by clicking here.

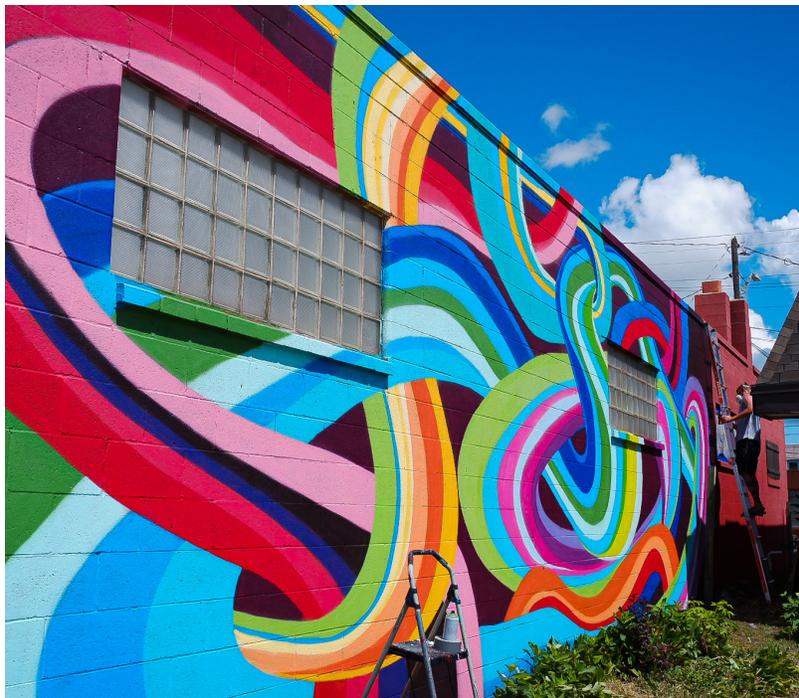
General Marketing Requests

Are you having a special promotion or sale at your shop? Is your nonprofit hosting an event? Did you recently add a new product to your store? Is your organization beginning their annual sponsorship or membership campaign? Are you just trying to get the word out about something cool your business or organization is doing?

We are happy to share any of these things on Downtown Alpena's Facebook Page or Instagram or Blog.

While we do our best to stay up to date with what's going on in Downtown Alpena, it can be difficult to keep up with the more than two hundred businesses that exist within the DDA district. So, if we haven't shared about your business on our social media in a while, or we missed covering your promotion, it's nothing personal, downtown is a busy place and we may have just missed it! You can always email us at downtownalpenami@gmail.com or give us a call at (989)356-6422 to let us know what you have going on and ask us to share your post you've made on social media, or create a whole new post! We're happy to help promote and share what you have going on, you just have to let us know!

One thing to note is that we usually avoid posting anything political or controversial. Thank you for understanding.



How do we market our events?

When the DDA hosts events or other promotional activities in Downtown Alpena, we:

- Make a Facebook event/Facebook Post and an Instagram post
 - We'll often boost these posts as well to get them in front of a larger audience
- Design, print and distribute flyers throughout downtown and the Alpena Area
- Run ads on True North Radio Network
- Run ads in the Alpena News
- Send out Press Releases to all the news outlets in Northern Michigan
- Send out monthly & event reminder email newsletters to all of our subscribers through Mailchimp
- Send out an update to all merchant emails in our email list approximately weekly
- Add the event to the CVB events page

Other Marketing Opportunities

Other things that the DDA does/has done to market the downtown district:

- Regularly update our outdoor posting boards to reflect what's currently going on downtown. Posting boards located in Culligan Plaza, the Pocket Park, near the Glass Bottom Boat Dock, and the Marina.
- Run a digital campaign throughout Michigan to attract people to the Downtown Alpena Area using graphics produced by a marketing firm and photographs taken by a local photographer.

- Write and share blog posts covering topics from downtown events, to business/organization spotlights, to current DDA projects, to lists of activities to do downtown, to historical features about downtown and more! You can read all of our blog posts on www.blogdowntownalpena.com.
- Produced four promotional videos with Irving Entertainment. (Summer, Fall, Winter and Reopening after COVID-19 Video)



Other Helpful Information

Bike Racks & Outdoor Furniture

The DDA currently rents out bike racks/flower planters to downtown businesses for the summer season. The rental is \$35 and the DDA is responsible for dropping it off early summer, picking it up in the fall, and storing it. Businesses are responsible for filling the planter with flowers.

Downtown picnic tables and benches are distributed around Memorial Day/early June, depending on the weather. They are placed near restaurants and eateries first, then in open spaces (like Culligan Plaza) or where they do not provide a hindrance on the sidewalk (wide, uncluttered sidewalk spaces like in front of the State Theater.) The DDA rents the picnic tables out from a downtown property owner and a private contractor places them.

Once picnic tables are placed, they cannot be moved. This is the DDA's policy to keep things fair for all merchants. If you think it makes sense for a picnic table to be placed in front of your business, send us an email at downtownalpenami@gmail.com and we'll make a note to consider it for the distribution of the tables the following year.

Downtown benches and trash cans are distributed by the City of Alpena Department of Public Works (DPW) around Memorial Day as well, weather permitting. They are placed in accordance with similar rules and regulations. If you notice a need for a trash can or bench near your business, send us an email at downtownalpenami@gmail.com and we will do our best to remedy the situation.

Please note, we are unable to guarantee you will receive a bench or trash can due to budget, accessibility and sidewalk clearance. Topics like these usually go through our **Design and Beautification Committee** and you are welcome to attend one of those meetings if you have a concern. [You can find out more here on our website.](#)



Downtown Dollars

Downtown Dollars are gift certificates that can be used throughout the downtown at various shops, restaurants, theaters, galleries, and more. These multi-merchant gift certificates are paper and behave just like cash. Downtown Dollars can be purchased at the DDA Office, Chamber of Commerce, or Bolenz Jewelry.

Downtown Dollars are available in \$5 or \$10 increments. If an order is less than the Downtown Dollar value, give the customer cash back. Example, if the purchase is \$3.00 and they give you a \$5.00 certificate, give them \$2.00 cash back. When you receive Downtown Dollars, stop by either the DDA or Chamber of Commerce (235 W. Chisholm St). to turn in the Downtown Dollars and get a reimbursement check.

If you would like to accept Downtown Dollars, please let us know and we will include you on our list!

Grants

If you own a building downtown and are interested in renovating it, there are grants available that your project may be eligible for.

- **DDA Facade Grants:** The Alpena DDA offers facade grants to projects that improve and preserve the exteriors of historic buildings within our district. Grant funding is up to \$10,000 and is on a matching basis. All applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. To learn more, visit here:

<https://www.downtownalpenami.com/facade-grants.html>

- **State grants:** Projects in downtown may be eligible for grant funding through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, especially those that are mixed-use, full building rehabs, or second-story residential. Please reach out to Anne for more information or to schedule a meeting with our regional representative.





Living Downtown

Did you know Downtown Alpena is home to over 50 apartments and eight single-family residences? Many of these apartments are located on the second story of buildings above the various shops and offices downtown and have been renovated through state grants. As our downtown has grown, so has the demand for living downtown, as downtown residents are able to live within walking distance to shops, restaurants, and offices and be a part of our vibrant downtown scene! Downtown apartments are rarely advertised when they are available for rent, since landlords often have a waiting list of potential tenants. The DDA Office maintains a list of downtown landlords and their contact information, which is given out to individuals who inquire about living downtown.

If you own a building and are interested in renovating the second story to residential, please reach out to Anne to learn more about grant opportunities that may be available to you.

Properties for Rent or Sale

Have a storefront, office space, or property that is available for rent? The DDA maintains a page on its website that lists properties available for rent or for sale, which we try to keep as current as possible. If you have a space available, please send us the information. You can view the page here:

<https://www.downtownalpenami.com/available-properties.html>

Merchant Meet-Ups

Quarterly, or as needed, the DDA hosts Merchant Meet-Ups. Each meet-up starts with information and updates from the DDA or other community partners, or an educational opportunity with a special guest speaker, and concludes with time for merchants to ask questions and also converse and collaborate with one another in a freeform, semi-structured setting. Merchant Meet-Ups are an opportunity for merchants to gather, share information about new things they've tried, or collaborate on events. We usually hold Merchant Meet-Ups in the morning. Before the meet-ups we send out an agenda about what we know we'll cover, and offer the opportunity for merchants to add to the agenda if they need to. After the meetings we send out a summary of what was talked about to all merchants. We've hosted Merchant Meet-Ups virtually and in-person. [You can view an example Merchant Meet-Up summary here.](#)

Snow Removal

Merchants, either as owner or occupant, are responsible for removing the snow on the sidewalk in front of their building. Some merchants pay snow removal companies or individuals to remove the snow and take it off-site. Please see Appendix A for a list of snow removal services.

According to the City of Alpena ordinance:

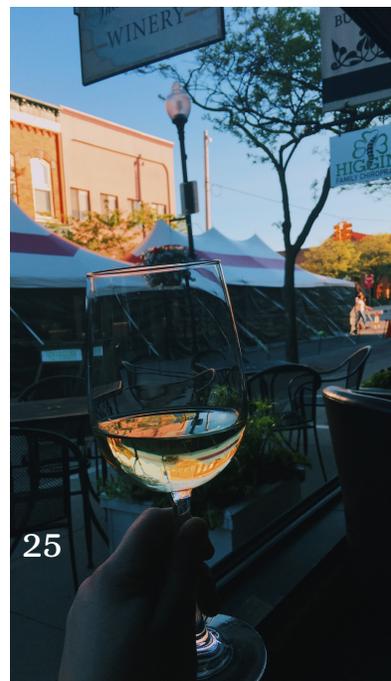
- Each person, as owner or occupant, is responsible for promptly removing all snow and ice from the sidewalk in front of their building.
- No snow or ice may be put into the right-of-way of any street, alley, or highway.

As the snow builds up between the sidewalk and the curb, if time and resources permit, the Department of Public Works may remove the build-up. The DDA will also remove the snow as it builds up from plows on the corners of intersections where the curb meets the sidewalk.

Other Helpful Resources:

- [The Downtown Development Authority](#)
- [The City of Alpena](#)
- [The Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau](#)
- [The Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce](#)
 - [Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation](#)
- [The Small Business Administration](#)
- [The Michigan Small Business Development Center](#)

The DDA maintains relationships with many organizations, associations, etc. If you are in need of assistance or looking for specific resources (for example, historic preservation, retail-specific, etc.) there may be other organizations we can connect you with. Just give us a call at (989) 356-6422 or send us an email at downtownalpenami@gmail.com.



Frequently Asked Questions

How is the DDA funded? If I own a business downtown do I pay taxes to the DDA? If I own a building downtown do I pay taxes to the DDA?

The DDA receives its funding from property taxes in the district in two primary ways:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF): a mechanism used by municipal governments to reinvest a portion of property taxes paid by a district back into that district. No one pays extra taxes for TIF; tax revenue is diverted from the City to the DDA to reinvest into projects.
- A special assessment (1.98 mill) which goes towards the DDA's operations.

If you own a business downtown, you do not pay taxes that go to the DDA. If you own property or a building downtown, a portion of your property taxes paid may go to the DDA and you pay the 1.98 special assessment.

Are there any apartments available for rent downtown?

There are approximately 50 apartments throughout the downtown district, many of which are usually occupied and filled quickly when there is a vacancy. The DDA Office maintains a list of downtown landlords and their contact information, which we are happy to pass along to anyone interested in living downtown.

I just got a parking ticket, where can I pay it?

You can mail it in to the address marked on the back of the ticket, you can drop it off at the City Clerk's Office located in Alpena City Hall (208 N. 1st Ave.), or you can drop it off in the little green dropbox behind City Hall.

Where can I park all day without getting a ticket?

You can park in the following lots all day:

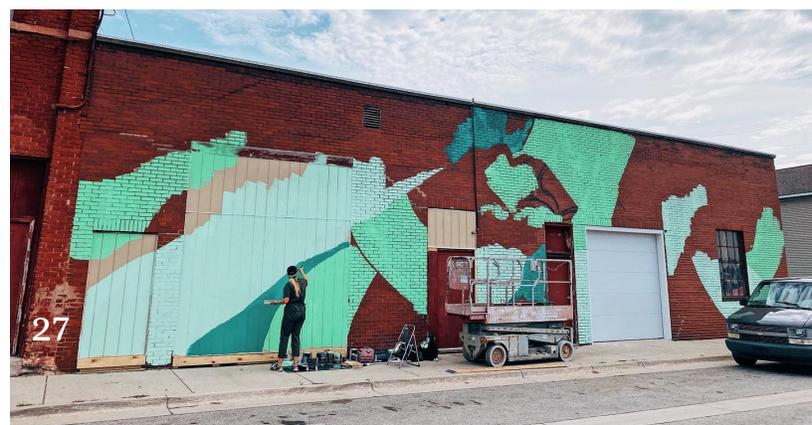
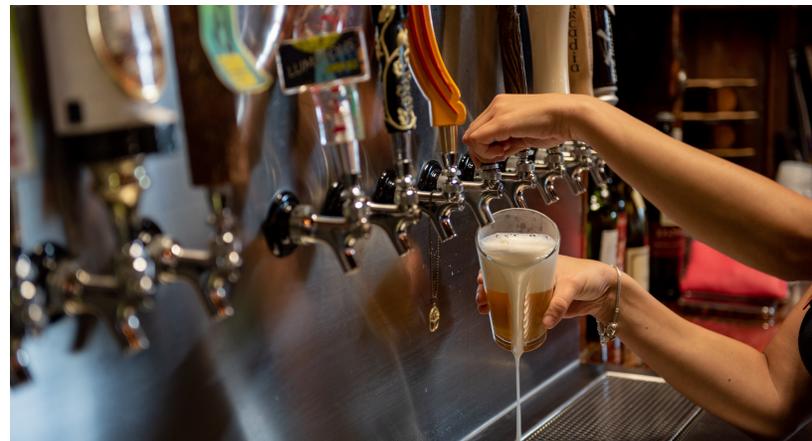
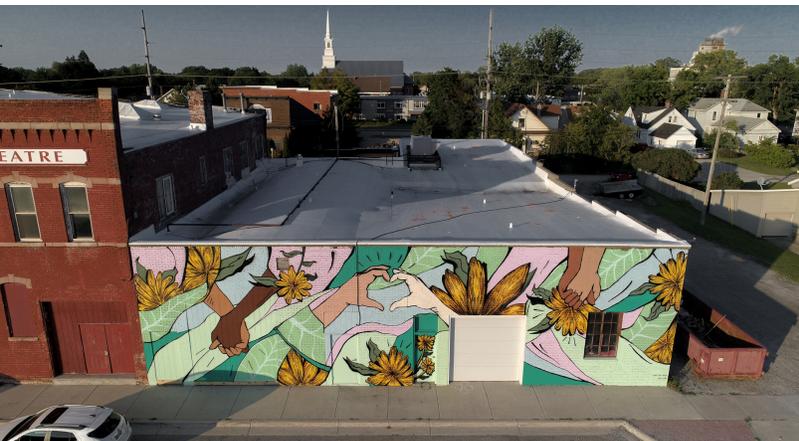
- Lot 2. Located on River St. & Third St.
- Lot 3. Located next to the river on Carter St.
- Lots 9 & 10. Located next to the river on Water St.
- Lots 5 & 6. Entrances on Lockwood St.
- Lot 7. Entrance located on Old Washington Ave.
- Lot 11. Located behind City Hall off of Park Place or Water St.
- Lot 12. Parking next to the Alpena Boat Harbor & Marina.

Where can I park overnight without getting a ticket?

Lot 3 has all-day and overnight parking, all-year round. Lot 3 can be accessed off Carter St.

Can you void my parking ticket?

The DDA Office does not void parking tickets. If you would like to refute a parking ticket that you received, please contact Joel Jett at the Police Department at (989) 354-1800.





What's the difference between the DDA, the CVB and the Chamber of Commerce?

	DDA:Downtown Development Authority	CVB: Convention & Visitors Bureau	Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce
Type of organization	Government/ Authority of the City of Alpena	Convention & Visitor Bureau	501(c)6 private business organization
Mission & focus	Works to improve and revitalize the downtown district through physical improvements, beautification projects, economic development, and marketing the district as a whole	Official destination marketing and management organization for the Alpena area. Markets our area to the rest of the world as a tourism destination.	Works to serve its members through championing economic development and improving the quality of life. Works to promote businesses and the business environment in the area they work in.
Funding	Funded through Tax Increment Financing (property taxes) and a 1.98 mill special assessment on downtown properties	Funded through a visitor assessment who stay in the area overnight	Funded by membership revenue and non-membership revenue, such as events
Website	www.downtownalpenami.com/	www.visitalpena.com/	www.alpenachamber.com/
Associated events & activities	Downtown Alpena's social media and website Chili Chowder- Cook off, Visit with Santa, Sidewalk Sales, hanging flower baskets	Visitor's Guide to Alpena, Visit Alpena social media, Alpena Visitor Center	Good Morning Alpena events, Chamber Annual Dinner, Holiday Parade

I stopped by your office during business hours and no one was there; why is that?

While DDA staff is in the office most of the time, occasionally things like off-site meetings, presentations, conferences, downtown events, lunch breaks and occasionally vacation take us away from the office. The best way for you to ensure that you get your questions answered or your business with the DDA done in a timely fashion is to call us, (989)356-6422, or send us an email, downtownalpenami@gmail.com, to schedule an appointment.

I noticed you haven't posted about my business on any of your social media in a while, why is that?

It's nothing personal! At the beginning of each month we put together a social media calendar that allows us to have a high level overview and equally distribute the social media spotlight to all of our amazing downtown businesses. We do our best to post and promote all of our downtown businesses regularly and fairly, and there are nearly 200 businesses in downtown so it can be a challenge to know what everyone is up to at once. If you want us to post or promote your business, you can always reach and let us know what you have going on, ask us to share a post you've made, or just say "hey, would you mind working my business into your social media schedule this month?" and our Marketing and Outreach Coordinator will happily fit you into the schedule.

Why can't you post on social media or otherwise promote my business or event if I'm not in the Downtown District?

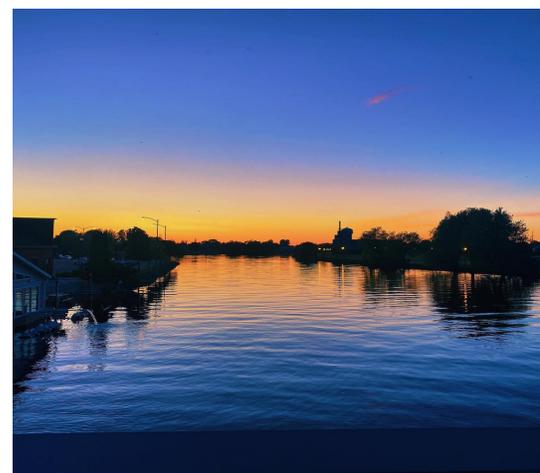
Our legal boundaries determine how and where we spend our money and we cannot spend money on projects or promoting businesses outside of the district.

***Who is responsible for snow removal on the sidewalks downtown?
Why is the snow piled up between the sidewalk and the streets?
Why doesn't the DDA remove the snow?***

Business owners/building owners are responsible for the removal of snow from in front of their properties, just like when you own a house in residential areas. The snow is often piled up between the sidewalk and the street because it's the easiest place to put it. Some snow removal companies are able to remove the build-up and take the snow off-site completely. Please see **Appendix A** for a list of snow removal services.

The City of Alpena Department of Public Works (DPW) does its best to remove the snow piles along the sidewalk when they have time (which is often reliant on the weather and other duties they have to work on during the winter months.) DPW works hard to make sure the streets are clear as well as sidewalks adjacent to or on city owned property, like around Culligan Plaza and City Hall.

The DDA does pay to have snow removed from the intersections as it builds up. If the DDA were to pay to have all of the snow removed throughout downtown every time it snowed in the winter, that alone would consume most of our budget, meaning we couldn't do other things like host events, market the district, order flower baskets, offer educational programming to businesses, or any of the many other things that we offer.



Can I get a table or bench outside of my business?

If the tables and benches have already been placed for the summer, they cannot be moved. Unfortunately, if we moved the tables and benches everytime someone requested we would end up playing a never ending game of musical tables and benches. That being said, if the tables and benches haven't been distributed for the summer yet, you can always request one and we will do our best to have one placed near you; however, we cannot guarantee that you will receive a bench or a picnic table.

I want to host an event in a downtown park or close the street for my organization's festival. What do I need to do?

To host an event on City-owned property or parks, such as Culligan Plaza or Second Ave., you will need approval from the City of Alpena. In some cases, there may be an associated fee. You can begin the request process through Kate Szydowski at the City of Alpena, who can be reached at kates@alpena.mi.us or by stopping by the City Clerk's office on the first floor of City Hall (208 N. First Ave).

I want to start a new business downtown! Where do I start?

If you are interested in starting a business or want to see how feasible your idea is, we always recommend reaching out to Carl Bourdelais at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The Northeast Chapter of the SBDC provides free one-on-one business counseling to registered clients, including assistance with creating a business plan, reviewing financials, providing market research, and more. View **Appendix C** for contact information and business resources.



Appendices

Please note these lists may not represent all companies who offer the following services but have been compiled based on companies that downtown businesses currently utilize. We are happy to update this list to include any business we do not have listed below.

A. Snow Removal Services

Everett Goodrich

989-356-1791

Georgies Wrecking & Towing

989- 356-3807

Larry Sanderson

989-350-2168

Wally Smith of Grasshoppers Lawn Care and Snow Removal
989-884-1316 - *Will remove snow completely off-site (build-up between sidewalk and street).*

B. Window Washing Services

Denise Schuch- Cleaning Unlimited

989- 255-4937

Small Business Resources

To request one-on-one business counseling, including assistance with writing a business plan, reviewing financials, and accessing market research:

Carl Bourdelais, Senior Business Consultant
Michigan SBDC – Northeast Michigan
Room 110 WCCT - Alpena Community College
Office: 989-358-7383 Cell: 989-619-1348 Email:
carl.bourdelais@outlook.com

For information about Michigan's Small Business Development Center, free webinars and workshops, and online resources about opening or owning a business:

Michigan Small Business Development Center
<https://sbdcMichigan.org/>

To discuss starting or expanding your business in Alpena, selecting a site, or applying for small business loans through the USDA or EDA:

Mike Mahler, Alpena Economic Development Director
Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce
Office: 989-354-2666
Email: mmahler@alpenachamber.com