

Alpena Port & Community Asset Inventory



Practicum Project: 2012

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Assisted By: City of Alpena, Michigan State University and Northeast Michigan Council of Governments



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY



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The statements, findings, conclusions and recommendations are solely those of the authors and publishers and do not necessarily reflect the views of any federal agency or Michigan State University.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Alpena is located in Northeastern Michigan along the coast of Lake Huron. The City of Alpena lies directly at the intersection of highways US-23 (north/south) and M-32 (east/west) in Alpena County. The port of Alpena is connected through Lake Huron, to the entire Great Lakes freshwater system (the largest in the world) and is linked internationally through the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Atlantic Ocean. Currently NEMCOG (North East Michigan Council of Governments) is working on a four-stage regional port initiative. Based on its prime location and current port activities, Alpena is one of three ports being assessed and analyzed. In order to complete the second and third stage of NEMCOG's port study, the MSU Practicum Team Alpena compiled an inventory of port and community assets and community and port background information.

The assessment is an on-site and off-site analysis where a range of information was compiled. Basic demographic and socioeconomic data was collected on the City of Alpena through the U.S Census. Each of the major property owners, LaFarge, Decorative Panels International (DPI), Alpena Marc LLC, and the City of Alpena on the port were also identified and described. Community planning also highlighted key visions of the Alpena Comprehensive Plan including existing and future land-use for the properties along the Thunder Bay River, zoning, plans for the downtown development towards the waterfront, as well as completed and current brownfield projects. Other characteristics identified including the status of the city's utilities systems, which indicate capacity for growth, an in-depth-look was given the transportation systems of Alpena as well as port navigability.

The intermodal capacity and capability of Alpena, specifically, was assessed. Although Alpena has rail, roadways, and a port, the connectivity between the commercial transportation systems is non-existent. Alpena currently has two docks, one owned and utilized by LaFarge and another, the West Dock, which is jointly owned by LaFarge and DPI. LaFarge is an active dock with a depth of 24 ft and is adequate for serving cargo freighters. However the West Dock is not active and would need to be dredged to accommodate cargo freighters as it is approximately 16 ft and would need to be at least 20-21 ft. In addition to the docks, the City of Alpena also owns a marina which has 143 boat slips and reaches approximately 60% capacity during peak seasons.

Another section of Alpena's port assessment was dedicated to identifying the economic activity of the port and details the activities of the port owners LaFarge, Decorative Panels International, Alpena Marc LLC, and the city. A detailed analysis was also conducted on the tourism and recreational economic activity of the downtown. Alpena is active in outdoor recreation including snowmobiling, fishing, and scuba diving. The policy framework of Michigan ports and several port case studies are noted and described to create an accurate paradigm from which to draw basic conclusions and recommendations. Furthermore a SWOT (Strength/Weakness, Opportunities/Threats) was conducted to outline the city's positive and negative characteristics.

After the compilation of data and analysis was completed, realistic recommendations were drawn and categorized as follows:

Tourism and Marketing

With the NOAA Maritime facility as well as the Fisheries and Wildlife office, Alpena has an intellectual focus on the rich shipwreck and maritime history of the city. The Thunder Bay has over 70 shipwrecks in the span of 65 miles, which makes it home to one of the largest concentration of wrecks in the world. Fostering awareness and continued education can make Alpena, MI a destination for tourists as well as academia, which would increase economic growth.

LaFarge Future Strategy

LaFarge is the largest private entity in the port of Alpena whose business relies on the life of the quarry. When the quarry's life expires in an estimated 75 years it is predicted LaFarge will shutdown their operations in Alpena. Therefore, it is in the city's interest to begin developing a relationship with LaFarge to determine and plan for the future land use plan of port. Encouraging cooperation would aid in sustaining the tax base of the property through the eventual transition.

Facilitate West Dock Dredging

Currently the West Dock is not active and has a 16 ft. depth. Although it could harbor most cruise ships and ferries it cannot harbor freighter cargo ships which usually require at least 20-21 ft.

Local and Regional Port Collaborative

While regional collaborative initiatives will be long term and highly adaptable, there is an immediate need to create a recognizable identity for the Port of Alpena and start opening up a dialogue about the future. As the first step, we would suggest the creation of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to begin steering port activity in Alpena. The organization would be mainly tasked with setting up a structure for communication among the different stakeholders of the Port of Alpena, as well as community members, to discuss needs of the port and growth opportunities as they come. All stakeholders and community members must have an awareness of the port's opportunities and assets in order for regional cooperation to move forward.

1.) OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Michigan State University's (MSU) Urban Planning practicum course for undergraduate and graduate students in their final semester is a tremendous teaching vehicle, helping students to increase their knowledge and confidence through the provision of a needed service to deserving communities. Through this course, Michigan State University faculty, students and clients will work together to provide an end product in which the client can utilize to determine the feasibility of their proposed initiative(s).

Introduction

The practicum team that has been designated the Alpena Inventory Analysis project consists of three undergraduates and three graduates that are enrolled in MSU's Urban Planning program.

- Marc Coburn, Master in Urban and Regional Planning
- Tatsuya Fukushige, Master in Urban and Regional Planning
- Evan Gross, Urban and Regional Planning
- Corey Jackson, Urban and Regional Planning
- Mark Jones, Master in Urban and Regional Planning
- Elizabeth Masserang, Urban and Regional Planning

The practicum team was guided by Prof. Rex LaMore and Prof. John Melcher. Both Prof. LaMore and Prof. Melcher provided feedback and direction of work throughout the practicum project. The end product is an original piece of work that the students are responsible for presenting to the Northeast Council of Governments.

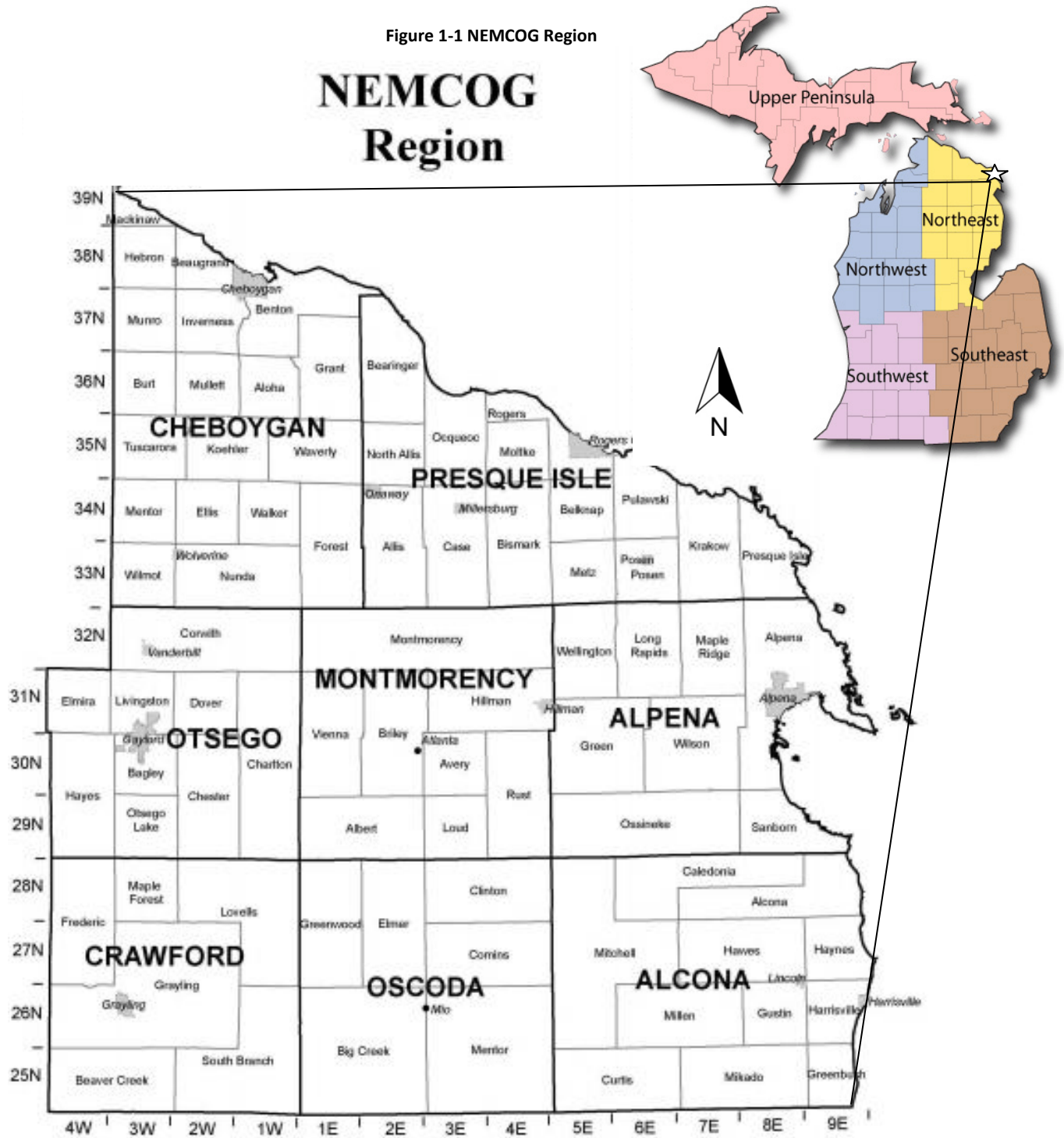
Client: Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Cities, townships and counties in rural areas often cannot afford the staff to do grant writing, comprehensive land use, zoning, transportation planning, digital mapping, economic & community development, integrated environmental planning, & the coordination of other services. The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) was established in 1968 as a multi-county organization to pool resources for the assistance of local governments in the region. NEMCOG is governed by a policy board that includes elected officials, business leaders and citizen representatives from throughout the eight-county region. Services are supported by local government appropriations, special services contracts and state and federal grants.

NEMCOG MISSION: NEMCOG is a team of highly motivated individuals who are dedicated to the betterment of the Northeast Michigan Region. The team is committed to facilitating the development of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination within the eight counties of the northeast region. The agency provides for controlled growth policy, to preserve, and improve the environment, to pursue greater efficiency and responsibilities of local units of government, and to improve their ecological, social and economic well-being.

NEMCOG encompasses 4,994.5 miles with eighty-one townships, fourteen cities and villages, 103 local governments and eight counties: Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego and Presque Isle represented in Figure 1-1:

Figure 1-1 NEMCOG Region



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG and StateParks.com

NEMCOG is a catalyst for strategic planning, and in this role has assisted local governments in obtaining millions of dollars in federal and state grants for vital local projects and services. In addition to planning, NEMCOG also sponsors many other programs, including Community Corrections and Watershed Projects.

The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments staff possess expertise in many areas, This expertise is used in assisting local governments prepare and write grant applications to receive state and federal funding for important local projects and services. Data Services, including research & analysis of census & other data, are offered on a wide range of topics: population, income, economic indicators, education, tourism, housing among others.

NEMCOG has been a leader in utilizing digital technology for the creation of accurate maps for counties, cities and townships for purposes of landuse information, parcel ownership identification, equalization, assessments, tax parcel identification and oil/gas pipeline location. The NEMCOG Geographic information Systems department provides direct mapping services in each of these areas. Computer services, including technical assistance for local governments to establish their own computer mapping systems are also offered.

The Northeast Michigan Council of Governments staff assists counties and local governments in the region develop comprehensive land use, zoning and transportation plans. Economic & Community Development are vitally important for the region's economic well being. The NEMCOG staff provides technical assistance and planning expertise to promote economic & community development in the region. NEMCOG has built strong relationships with environmentally concerned organizations in the region working with the public and local officials to improve public policy on such issues as water quality protection, soil erosion and recycling (www.nemcog.org).

Project Overview

NEMCOG received a grant from the Michigan Coastal Management Program in 2011 to study the economic potential of their regional ports (Alpena, Cheboygan, Rogers City). The goal is to provide the foundation for further development of existing ports by completing an inventory of port and community assets; and identify opportunities and constraints, strategies for future activities and opportunities for regional collaboration. (NEMCOG)

NEMCOG Goal

From this project NEMCOG's short term goal is to provide the foundation for further development of existing ports of Alpena and the surrounding regional ports by completing an inventory of port and community assets; and identifying opportunities and constraints, strategies for future activities, and opportunities for regional collaboration. The long term goal is to utilize this information to expand opportunities for commerce and recreation at the ports of Cheboygan, Rogers City, Presque Isle and Alpena.

Project Statement

NEMCOG has a four stage regional plan in a place to accomplish port initiatives. For the purposes of this study the Alpena Port Inventory will focus on stages two and three of the four stages listed below.

Stage One – Regional Ports Committee:

Establish a regional port’s planning committee comprised of key stakeholders including communities, organizations, individuals, businesses and users to participate in development of the study. The regional committee will meet three times over the project timeframe. Kick off meeting to discuss project and request information needed for inventory of assets. Meeting to discuss the inventory of assets section. Meeting to discuss opportunities, constraints and regional collaboration.

In addition, NEMCOG staff will meet with each community to identify opportunities, constraints, goals and strategies.

Stage Two - Inventory of Port Assets and Community Assets:

The inventory will include both on-site and off-site assets. Table 1-1 shows a listing of anticipated assets that may be surveyed. Where relevant, information will be incorporated into GIS data sets for use in the study and in a format that can be shared with port communities. Transportation between ports and transportation within the port community will be considered. The Port City Collaborative Inventory of Assets process will be utilized.

Table 1-1 Project Asset Inventory

On-site Inventory	Off-Site Inventory
Land use	Importers/Exporters
Zoning	Inland Transportation and Utilities
Property Ownership	Rail Transportation
Existing facilities, uses and ownership	Trunk Lines
Ferry service	Rail Car Switching
Environmental issues e.g. Brownfields	Highways and Arterials
Cultural	Projected Traffic Volumes
Recreational	Port Economic Improvements
Commercial businesses	Utilities
Industrial businesses	Water Service
Intermodal connectivity	Sanitary Sewers
Marine terminals for cargo and passengers	Drainage
Support facilities, dockage, wharfs, fuel	Natural Gas
Navigation systems	Electricity
Port communication system	Community Recreational
Navigation capacity and water depths	Community Cultural
Port Terminal Operators	Broadband Capacity
Broadband Capacity	
Environmental response capability	
Governmental Agencies and Organizations	
Financial assets and funding sources	

Source: NEMCOG

Stage Three – Community and Port Background Information:

Other information to be gathered as part of the study process will include community demographics and economic activity. Port information concerning legal authority, current organizational and management structure, marketing and port history and development will be collected. This information will be used to help in the identification of opportunities and constraints.

Stage Four – Regional Roles of Ports:

NEMCOG staff will meet with each individual community to assess the findings of the asset inventory. Each port community will identify opportunities and constraints, and establish goals and strategies. Industrial, commerce, recreational and cruise ships usage will be considered. The results will be incorporated in the study process. The regional committee will meet for the final time within the study timeframe to share information from each of their ports and identify strategies for regional collaboration.

MSU Practicum Team

The MSU practicum team will provide a framework for how to redevelop and maximize local economic potential to create viable, efficient and sustainable regional ports. This will be accomplished by conducting an asset inventory, SWOT analysis, and acquire demographic and economic information for the City of Alpena so that the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments can better achieve short term and long term goals of providing a foundation for further development of existing assets and potential strategies for developing future economic and recreational growth at the port of Alpena and the surrounding region.

Methodology

This goal is accomplished through an initial site visit and further evaluation of community assets, inventory, needs and wants. The team researched on-site (port land area) and off-site (surrounding community) land-use, demographics, technology, tourism and economic viability through local experts and state and national data-bases. Furthermore, collaboration with Team Cheboygan (another MSU practicum team conducting an asset inventory of the port in Cheboygan Michigan) helped create a sister study providing the region with multi-port analysis. Concluding in a final project document and presentation outlining findings and future recommendations for the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments local port communities.

2.) BACKGROUND – THE COMMUNITY OF ALPENA, MI

Location

Situated on the coast of Lake Huron, the city of Alpena (founded in 1871) acts as the major anchor for Northeastern Michigan. Lake Huron, along with the other four Great Lakes (Superior, Michigan, Erie, and Ontario), is part of a vast network of ports and markets that span across the largest freshwater system in the world. This system is linked internationally through Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Atlantic Ocean.

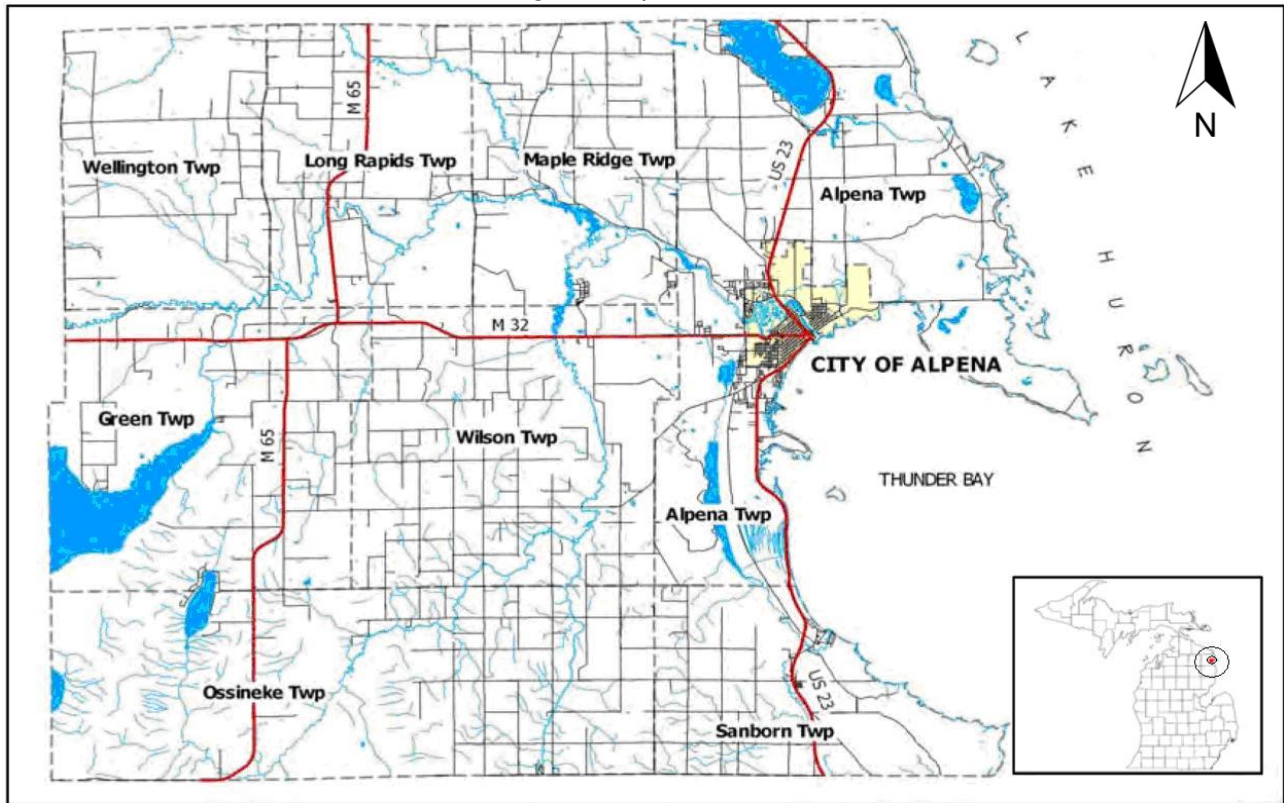
Figure 2-1 Downtown Alpena



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

With a population of 10,483 (U.S. Census 2010), Alpena is one of these ports. The City of Alpena thrives on outdoor recreation, tourism, and industrial manufacturing and is an urban core of Northeastern Michigan, surrounded by land that is mostly rural and sparsely populated. As shown in Figure 2-2, US-23 (which runs north and south) and M-32 (which runs east to west) serve as the main roadway arteries in and out of the city.

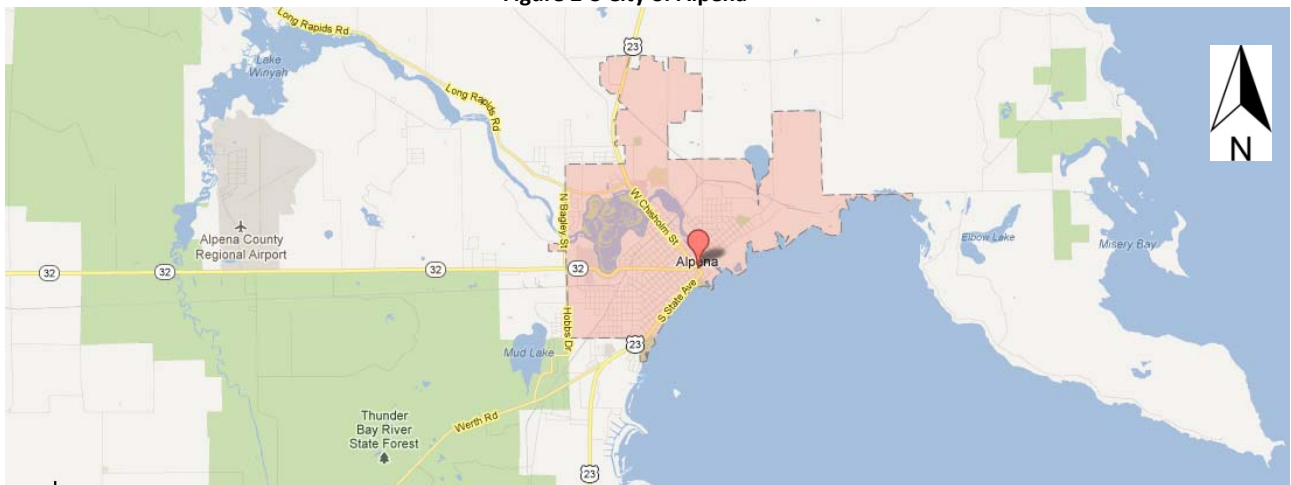
Figure 2-2 Alpena, MI



Source: Alpena Comprehensive Plan 3

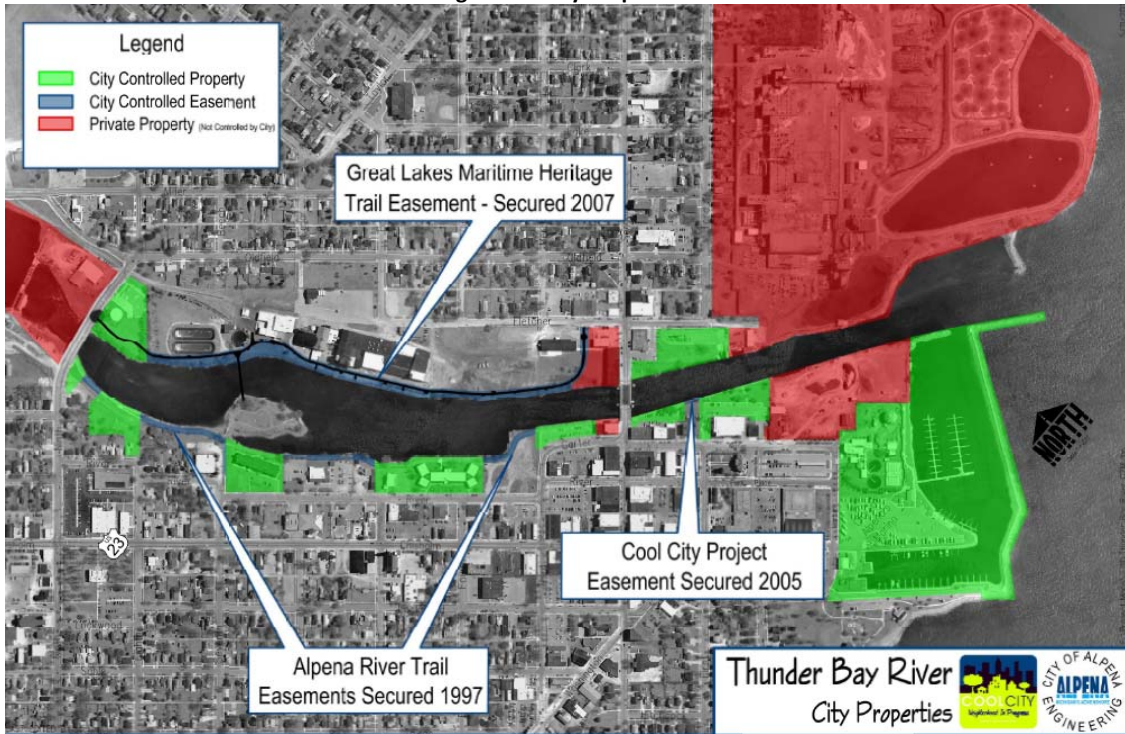
In the hopes of achieving its full potential, Alpena is aggressively seeking ways to strengthen its role as the anchor of Northeastern Michigan. This study seeks to assist Alpena in that task by specifically examining port economic activity.

Figure 2-3 City of Alpena



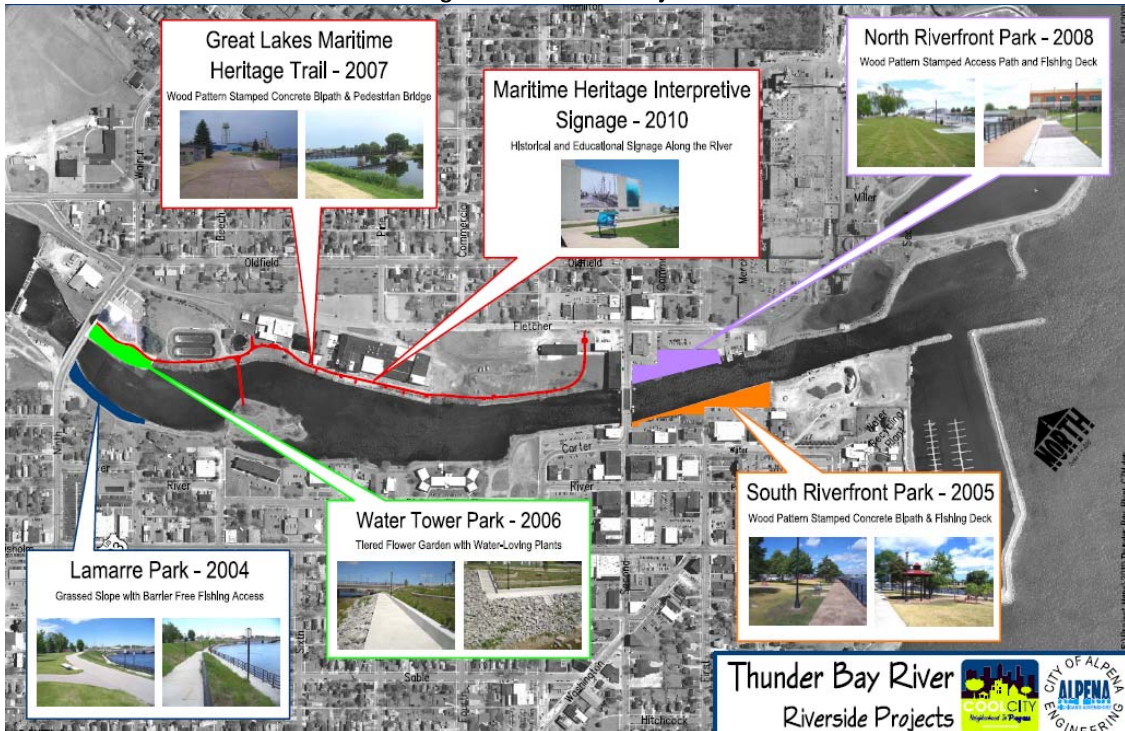
Source: Adapted from Google Maps

Figure 2-4 City Properties



Source: Alpena Riverscape CZM Grant Application

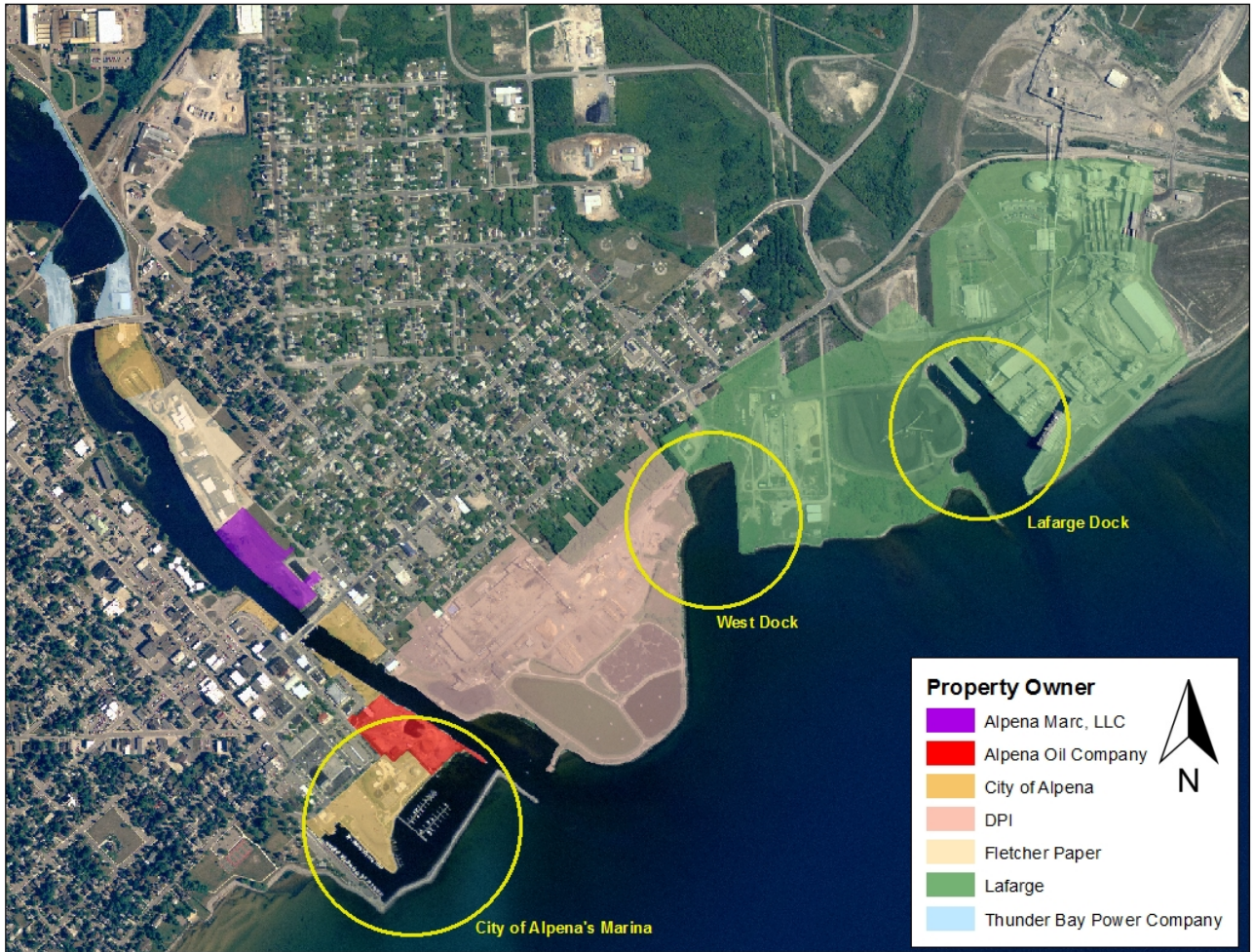
Figure 2-5 Riverside Projects



Source: Alpena Riverscape CZM Grant Application

As depicted in Figure 2-6, the properties along the ports are a mix of privately owned industrial sites and river front property owned by the city.

Figure 2-6 Map of Alpena Port Property Owners



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Port Properties

The following are parcel specific descriptions of key port properties in Alpena, MI and adjacent to the City of Alpena Marina, West Dock and LaFarge Dock. These parcels are crucial assets to Alpena’s current and future economic infrastructure and are focal points to the overall analysis of this document. More information regarding these properties is provided throughout the document and can be found under the “Community and Planning and Zoning” and “Economic Activity Analysis” sections.

LaFarge

LaFarge is a French owned industrial company specializing in: cement, construction aggregates, concrete and gypsum wallboard. In 2010 the company was the world's second-largest cement manufacturer by mass shipped. The LaFarge Alpena Plant produces cement and concrete, and is the largest dock in Alpena.

LaFarge North America is the largest diversified supplier of construction materials in the U.S. and Canada. It produces and sells cement, ready-mixed concrete, gypsum wallboard, aggregates, asphalt, paving and construction, precast solutions and pipe products (LaFarge North America).

The Lafarge Alpena limestone plant operates out of the Lafarge Dock at the Port of Alpena, which is privately owned and operated by Lafarge North America. The Lafarge dock is located north of the Port of Alpena channel and downtown Alpena (See Figures 2-6 and 2-9).

Figure 2-7 LaFarge Alpena Plant



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

Figure 2-8 LaFarge Plant from Thunder Bay



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

LaFarge manages the most private sq footage of lake front property on Thunder Bay. The property is private access only and is adjacent to both residential and commercial property on its west side. Approximately 230 employees work at the LaFarge Alpena Plant and the Alpena quarry has approximately 75 years of viability.

The port receives coal shipments by lake freighter 2-3 times per year for its generators and cement is transported from the plant continuously during the shipping season, which is when the waterways are not frozen over. More is discussed regarding the LaFarge Dock economic activity in the Economic Activity Analysis section of this document.

Figure 2-9 LaFarge Dock and Property



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Decorative Panels International (DPI)

DPI-Alpena Hardboard is located in downtown Alpena, Michigan, on the banks of Lake Huron's Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay River. The doors first opened as Abitibi in 1957. The plant currently has approximately 185 employees and has been an important part of the local community and economy. Since the opening of the facility in 1957 it has gone through a few changes. In 1967 the mill became an Abitibi-Price Corporation facility. Then in 1993 ABT Comp. purchased the facility and sold it to Louisiana-Pacific Corporation in 1999. The most recent change was in 2004 when the facility was purchased by Decorative Panels International and is now known as Alpena Hardboard (Decorative Panels International). More information regarding the economic activity of DPI is in the Economic Activity Analysis section of this document.

Coal is unloaded by cargo lake freighter for its generators 2-3 times per year. Shipments of finished wood paneling products are handled by truck utilizing highway US 23. DPI does not export any shipments by cargo lake freighter.

Figure 2-10 DPI Plant



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

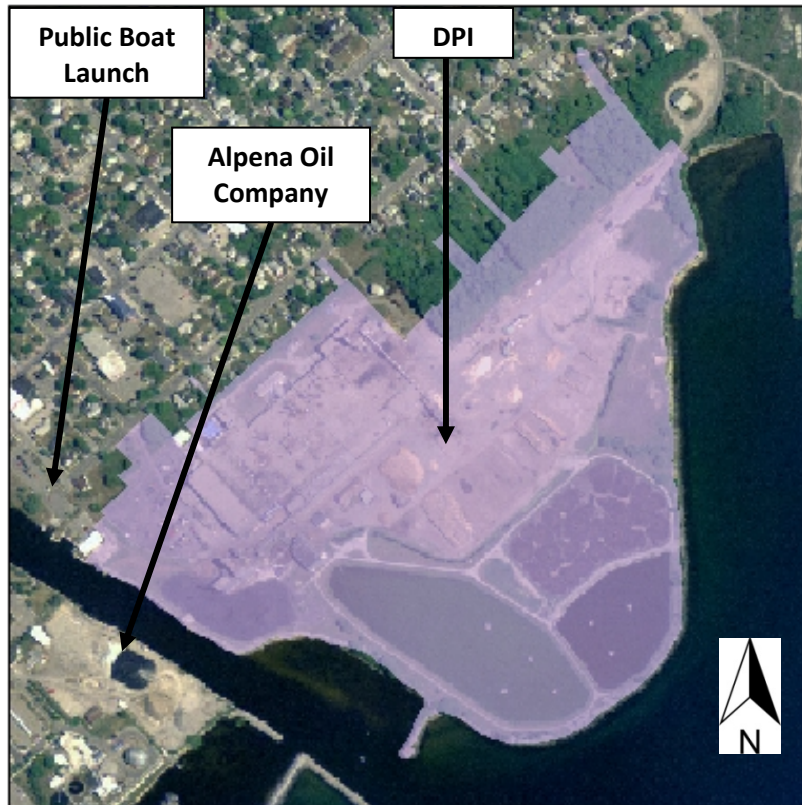
Figure 2-11 DPI Plant from Thunder Bay



Source: City of Alpena

The property is private access only and is adjacent to mostly residential as well as some commercial to the west.

Figure 2-12 DPI Dock and Property



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Alpena Marina and Waterfront Property

The City of Alpena's Waterfront property encompasses the City of Alpena Marina, two water front parks, as well as a public boat slip. All of these properties are open to the general public year round. Throughout the year the Marina employs three full-time and three part-time employees.

Figure 2-13 Alpena Marina



Source: City of Alpena

Figure 2-14 Alpena Waterfront Park



Source: City of Alpena

Figure 2-15 Alpena Small Boat Harbor



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

The Marina is adjacent to commercial property to the west and industrial property to the north. Both parks are bounded by commercial property. The public boat slip is adjacent to commercial, residential and industrial use. More information regarding the economic activity of the Marina is in the Economic Activity Analysis section of this document.

Figure 2-16 City of Alpena Marina and Water Front Property



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Old Fletcher Paper Company

The Fletcher Paper Company building dates back to 1856 when a lumber mill was established by George Fletcher in Alpena to harvest the lumber in the surrounding area of the Thunder Bay River. The property is upstream from Lake Huron on Thunder Bay. The business turned to paper in the late 1890s as part of several businesses in Alpena that were established by the Fletcher Family. The Fletcher Paper Company and its factory in downtown Alpena ceased operation in 2000.

Figure 2-17 Old Fletcher Paper Company



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

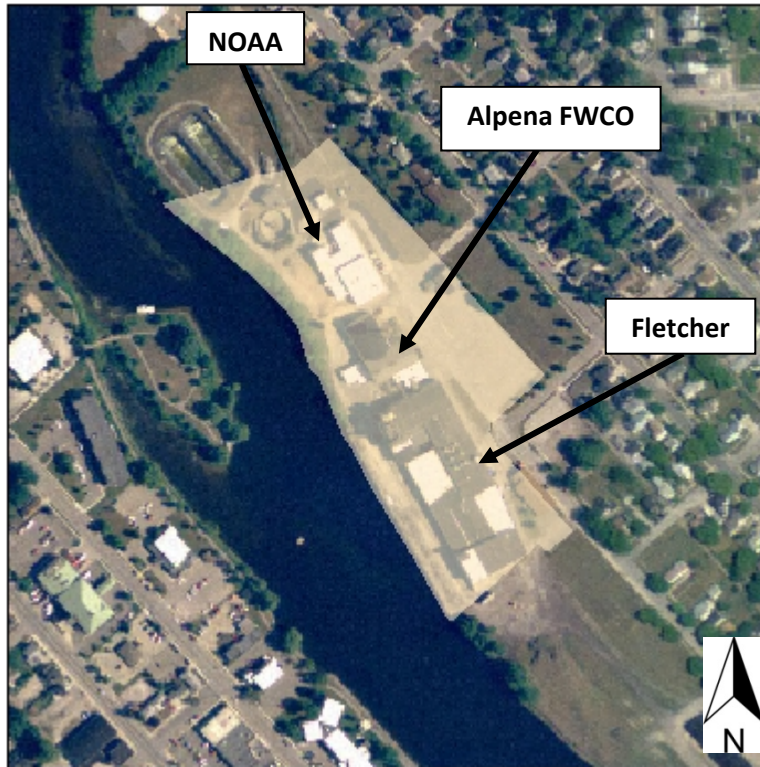
Figure 2-18 Fletcher Riverfront Corridor



Source: City of Alpena

The now vacant factory is currently a focus of the City's economic development plans and provides an attractive location for a future manufacture that can utilize the properties dock and port access. The property is currently owned by Alpena Marc, LLC. More information regarding this property is in the Community Planning and Zoning section of this document.

Figure 2-19 Old Fletcher Paper Company, NOAA and FWCO



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Great Lakes Maritime Center

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Great Lakes Maritime Facility is situated at the Port of Alpena on Thunder Bay just north of the Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and the Old Fletcher Paper Company building (Figure 2-19). This property was redeveloped by Alpena Marc, LLC for NOAA. The facility's dock is located west of the channel drawbridge and east of the Lake Besser damn. The channel's water depth becomes very shallow just past the NOAA dock to the Lake Besser damn side, making large ship access this far up river difficult.

Figure 2-20 NOAA front of building



Source: NOAA

Figure 2-21 NOAA from the riverfront



Source: NOAA

The NOAA Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center is a visitor center for the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve. The Center's 20,000 square foot river front facility is Gold LEED certified, and is managed jointly by NOAA and the state of Michigan. The building houses twelve full-time employees and several part-time and volunteer personnel throughout the year. The Michigan Historical Center represents the state in managing the sanctuary (NOAA). More information regarding the economic activity of the NOAA Great Lakes Maritime Center is in the "Economic Activity Analysis" section of this document.

Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (Alpena FWCO)

The Alpena Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (Alpena FWCO) is located in Alpena, on the channel of Thunder Bay between NOAA and the Old Fletcher Building (Figure 2-19). This property was redeveloped by Alpena Marc, LLC for FWCO. FWCO houses thirteen full-time employees and is part of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Region (Region 3).

Figure 2-22 Alpena FWCO



Source: FWCO

Figure 2-23 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Logo



Source: FWCO

The Alpena FWCO opened in June 1992 and was authorized through the "Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1990" which called for the establishment of Service operated Upper Great Lakes Fishery Resources Offices to provide "operational activities related to fishery resource protection, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement in the Upper Great Lakes." The office operates out of the Midwest Region's Division of Fisheries located in Fort Snelling, Minnesota (FWCO).

Alpena FWCO provides a regional focus for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's mission by providing assistance to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, States, Native American Tribes and other interested entities -- encouraging cooperative conservation, restoration and management of the fishery resources of the Great Lakes Basin (FWCO).

In addition to fisheries, the office houses an Aquatic Habitat Unit that addresses fish passage concerns and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. The Alpena FWCO conducts a number of fishery and habitat restoration activities. The station's area of coverage includes US waters of Lake Huron and western Lake Erie including connecting waterways - the St. Marys River, Detroit River, St. Clair River, and Lake St. Clair (FWCO).

Programs:

- Native Species Restoration
 - Lake Trout Restoration and Lake Sturgeon Investigations
- Treaty Fishery Assistance
- Refuge Fishery Assistance
- Aquatic Invasive Species Issues
- Aquatic Habitat Restoration
 - Fish Passage, Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership New and Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program

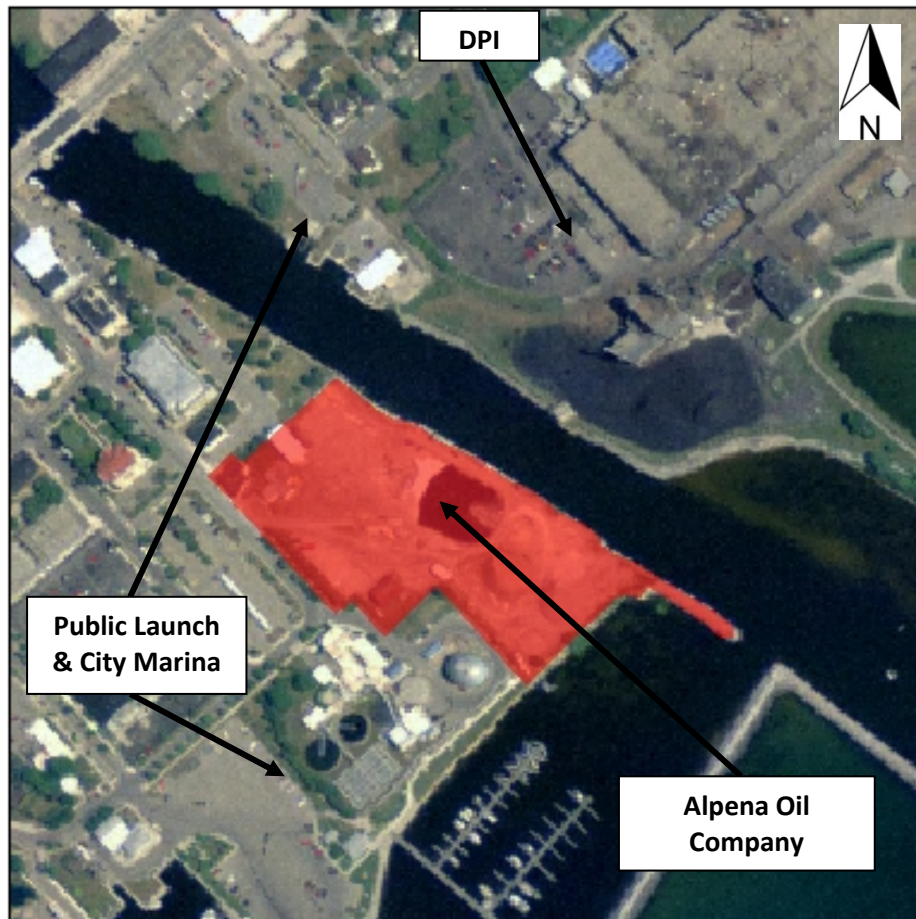
Alpena Oil Company

The Alpena Oil Company office is located on the Alpena channel adjacent to City Hall and the City of Alpena's Marina to the east and south, as well as commercial property to the west and south (Figure 2-24). This is private water front property. Alpena Oil has served Northern Lower Michigan as a Shell distributor for over 60 years and more recently also as a Marathon and Pacific Pride distributor. Alpena Oil Company provides the following services across Lower Michigan:

- Owns and operates retail gas/convenience stores
- Operates commercial fueling sites
- Sells and distributes gas, diesel fuel, fuel oil and lubricants

Gravel and road salt are unloaded from lake freighter and stored on site for distribution by truck to customers throughout Northern Michigan. However, only office functions for oil and fuel are performed at this site and these commodities are not shipped by lake freighter or truck. Two commercial fishing operations do however operate onsite, independently from the Alpena Oil docks. Approximately fifteen employees work at this location, including those that work on the fishing operations.

Figure 2-24 Alpena Oil Company



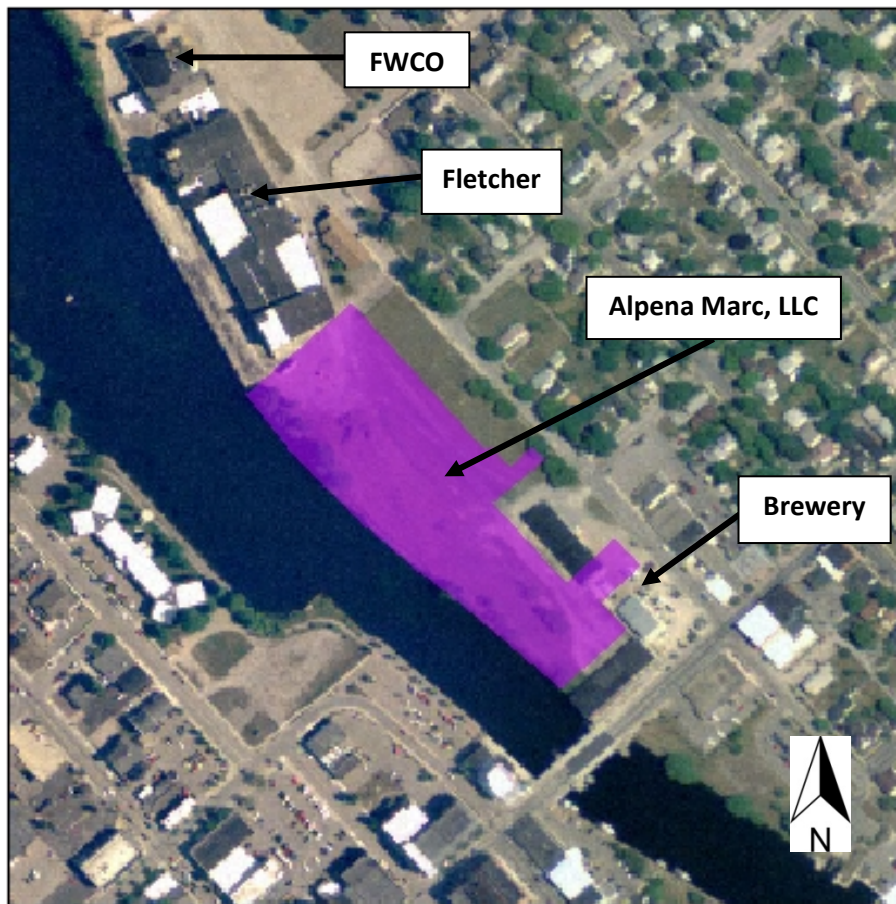
Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Alpena Marc, LLC

Alpena Marc, LLC was founded in 2002 and is in the Real Estate Agents and Managers industry in Alpena, MI. This company currently has approximately 5 to 10 employees and annual sales of \$500,000 to \$999,999 (Cortera.com). The intention of Alpena Marc, LLC is to redevelop the current site although concrete plans are not currently in place. However, The Brewery which is situated to the south east side of the property has been developed by Alpena Marc, LLC. As of 2010, the Alpena Marc LLC site along Thunder Bay (Figure 2-25) is registered as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Infrastructure Project. The property is surrounded by the vacant Old Fletcher Paper Building to the west and both commercial and residential properties to the north and east. More information regarding this property is located in the “Community Planning and Zoning” section of this document under “Brownfields”.

The Alpena Marc property has approximately 2,800 feet of river frontage. The old coal boat dock is approximately 600 feet in length and has been restored and is used by NOAA. For over 100 years the Alpena Marc property was part of the Fletcher Paper Mill. A former railroad depot is located at the east end of the site and it has recently been renovated into the current Fletcher Brewing Co. building.

Figure 2-25 Alpena Marc, LLC



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

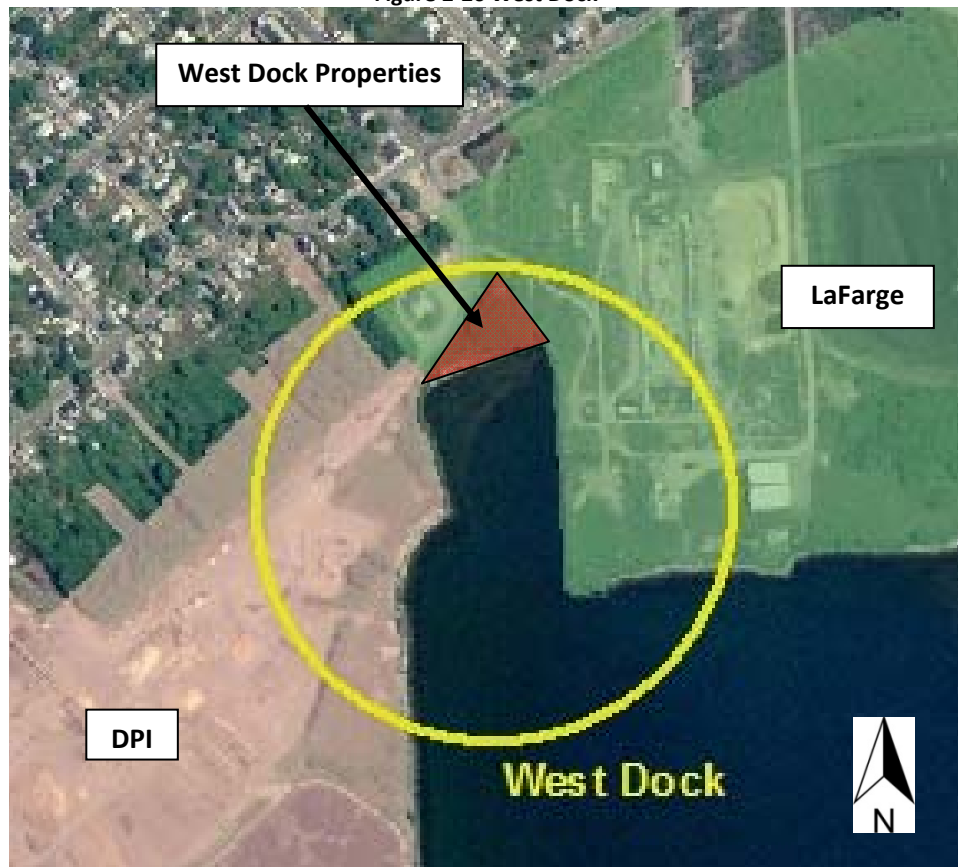
West Dock

The West Dock once was an active dock for the Fletcher Paper Company and logging operations. Currently the dock is not being utilized. The land abutting the dock is owned by LaFarge and DPI. West Dock Properties, which is owned by Steve Fletcher, currently owns a small piece of land near the LaFarge side of the dock with a land access to Ford Avenue which is the primary access road. All three companies have a say in the docks development and use.

Currently there are no plans for use or development for the dock and adjacent property. Target Alpena did apply for Federal Stimulus funds in 2010 to upgrade the dock with the support of LaFarge, DPI and West Dock Properties; however, funding was not approved and no specific activity relative to the future utilization of the dock has transpired since.

Although the City of Alpena does not own property at the West Dock, the dock has been a focus of future land development and economic activity for the City (City of Alpena). The dock, while not currently connected to Alpena's rail system, has feasibility for the northern section of rail that supplies LaFarge to expand to the West Dock property.

Figure 2-26 West Dock



Source: Adapted from NEMCOG

Overview of City

Alpena is most recognized as an industrial center for exporting cement and limestone. Its limestone quarry is one of the world's largest and is owned by Lafarge Corporation. Lafarge is an industrial company that extracts and exports limestone and other construction aggregates such as cement.

As the city's motto goes, "Alpena: A warm and friendly port," the city offers numerous historic, and recreational activities that draw a steady summer crowd every year. Alpena is home to the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, an exhibit sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which works to preserve local shipwrecks as well as educate the general public on this significant and nationally recognized collection of shipwrecks. Other forms of recreational draws of the city include fishing, hunting, camping, scuba diving, and snowmobiling.

Some other notable facilities that have taken up residence in Alpena is the Michigan Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center as well as the Alpena Regional Medical Center, which is the largest employer of the city (Target Alpena).

History

In the spring of 1840 the Surveyor General gave contracts to survey the area originally names "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 date 1688. In September 1844 the government lands in Alpena were offered for sale by the United States. Commercial fishing attracted the first European/American settlers to the area in the mid-1830. 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 of 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 15th 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, 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.¹

Climate

The climate in Alpena is greatly influenced by its topography and its proximity to Lake Huron. Temperature data from the Midwest Regional Climate Center indicates that 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. According to the Michigan State Climatologist’s Office the 30 year average July temperature is 67.9 degrees Fahrenheit. 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 19.9 degrees Fahrenheit. The average date of the first killing frost in autumn is October 4. The average date of the last killing frost is May 12, but frost has occurred as late as June 9.

Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year. Nearly all of the 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. Hailstorms average less than one per summer. The 30 year annual average precipitation is 28.59 inches. The precipitation includes the snowfall liquid equivalent. The 30 year average annual snowfall is 67.2 inches. Prevailing winds are from the northwest with the exception of May and June when southeasterly winds predominate.²

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 lake shore 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 La Farge quarry. The sharply sloping quarry walls define a hole that is approximately 80 feet below the surface level of Lake Huron.³

¹ This section taken from: The City of Alpena, Michigan. “Section 1: Introduction.” In *City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan Charting a Course for Alpena*. Alpena, Michigan, 2010.

² This section taken from: The City of Alpena, Michigan. “Section 5: Cultural and Natural Resources.” In *City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan Charting a Course for Alpena*. Alpena, Michigan, 2010.

³ This section taken from: The City of Alpena, Michigan. “Section 5: Cultural and Natural Resources.” In *City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan Charting a Course for Alpena*. Alpena, Michigan, 2010.

3.) DEMOGRAPHICS

The following section will examine the demographics of the City of Alpena and Alpena County compared to the greater NEMCOG region, the State of Michigan, and the United States of America. There are three trends that are occurring in the Alpena area:

- The population is decreasing proportionally faster in the City than in the County;
- There is population decline in both the City and County; and
- The age of the population is on average older in all parts of northeast Michigan than State and Nation.

Population

According to Table 3-1, in 1960 the City of Alpena accounted for approximately 51% of the total population of Alpena County. However, in 2010 the City accounted for only 37% of the population. This trend is not isolated to Alpena, but what makes this transition more alarming is that the population of Alpena County is decreasing at a faster rate than the other counties in the NEMCOG service area. From 1990 to 2010 the population of Alpena County decreased by 3% while the population of the rest of NEMCOG counties increased by 19.1%.

Table 3-1 Population Comparison: 1950-2010

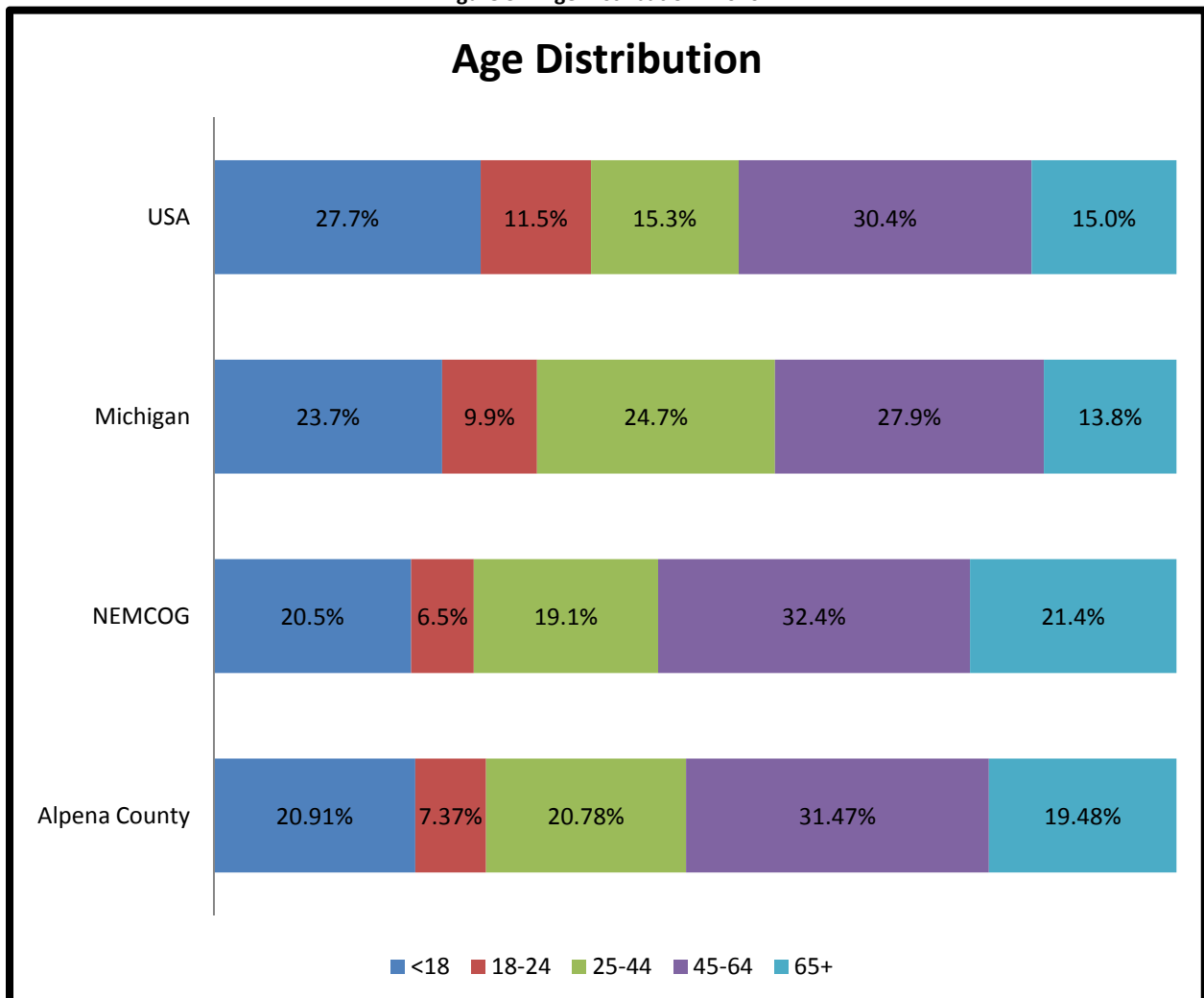
City of Alpena			Alpena County		NEMCOG Service Area		Michigan	
Year	Pop.	Pop. Change	Pop.	Pop. Change	Pop.	Pop. Change	Pop.	Pop. Change
1950			22,189	-	65,962	-	6,371,766	-
1960	14,682	-	28,556	28.69%	70,310	6.59%	7,823,194	22.78%
1970	13,805	-5.97%	30,708	7.54%	81,730	16.24%	8,875,083	13.45%
1980	12,214	-11.52%	32,315	5.23%	106,454	30.25%	9,262,078	4.36%
1990	11,354	-7.04%	30,605	-5.29%	117,321	10.21%	9,295,297	0.36%
2000	11,304	-0.44%	31,314	2.32%	141,322	20.46%	9,938,444	6.92%
2010	10,843	-4.08%	29,598	-5.48%	139,807	-1.07%	9,883,640	-0.55%

Source: United States Census Bureau

Median Age/Age Groups

The median age for Alpena County is 45.6 and 47.1 for the remainder of the NEMCOG counties. These counties are nearly 10 years older than Michigan (38.9) and the USA (37.2). According to the age distribution (Figure 3-1), only about 28.28% of the 2010 population of Alpena County is under the age of 24, while the national average is 39.2%.

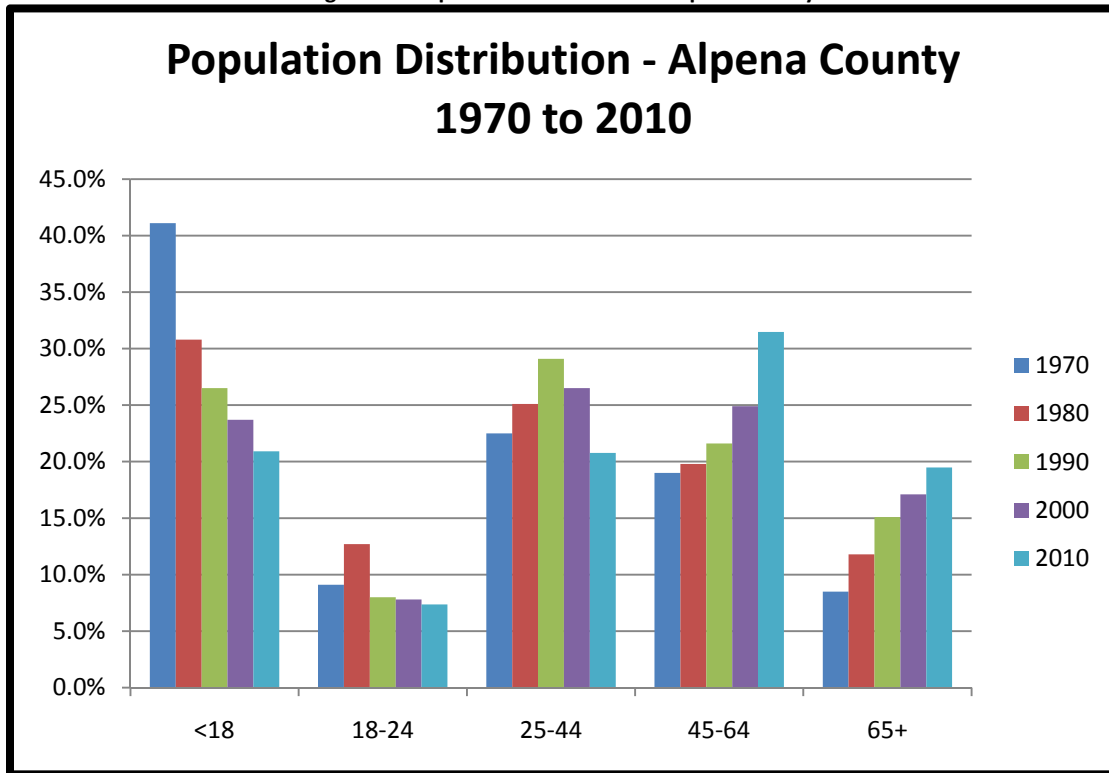
Figure 3-1 Age Distribution - 2010



Source: United States Census Bureau

The population aging has been a trend since the 1970's. According to the Census, in 1970 50% of Alpena County's population was under 25 years old. However, in 2010 that number has fallen to approximately 28%. Figure 3-2 depicts the shift from a younger population to predominately older population.

Figure 3-2 Population Distribution – Alpena County



Source: United States Census Bureau

Economic Status

This next section will look at socio-economic status of Alpena County. In January 2011, the unemployment rate reached 12.6% for Alpena County. However, that same month the unemployment rate was 17.3% for the rest of the NEMCOG counties. The national recession of 2009 has hit Michigan hard, especially northeastern Michigan.

Employment by Industry

A shift-share index is the change in local employment compared to that of the larger region. The shift-share index in Figure 3-3 was calculated by comparing changes in total employees per industry from the 2000 Census to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey for Alpena County and the State of Michigan.

A shift-share analysis is a useful way to compare job growth in a local sector relative to job growth in the same sector in a larger region, over a period of time. A negative comparative share occurs when the local economy had a decline or a smaller increase in employment within the same sector. Conversely, when the local region had larger growth in a sector compared to the region, it is called a positive competitive share.

Alpena County had a positive competitive share compared to the State of Michigan in the following sectors:

- Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
- Wholesale trade

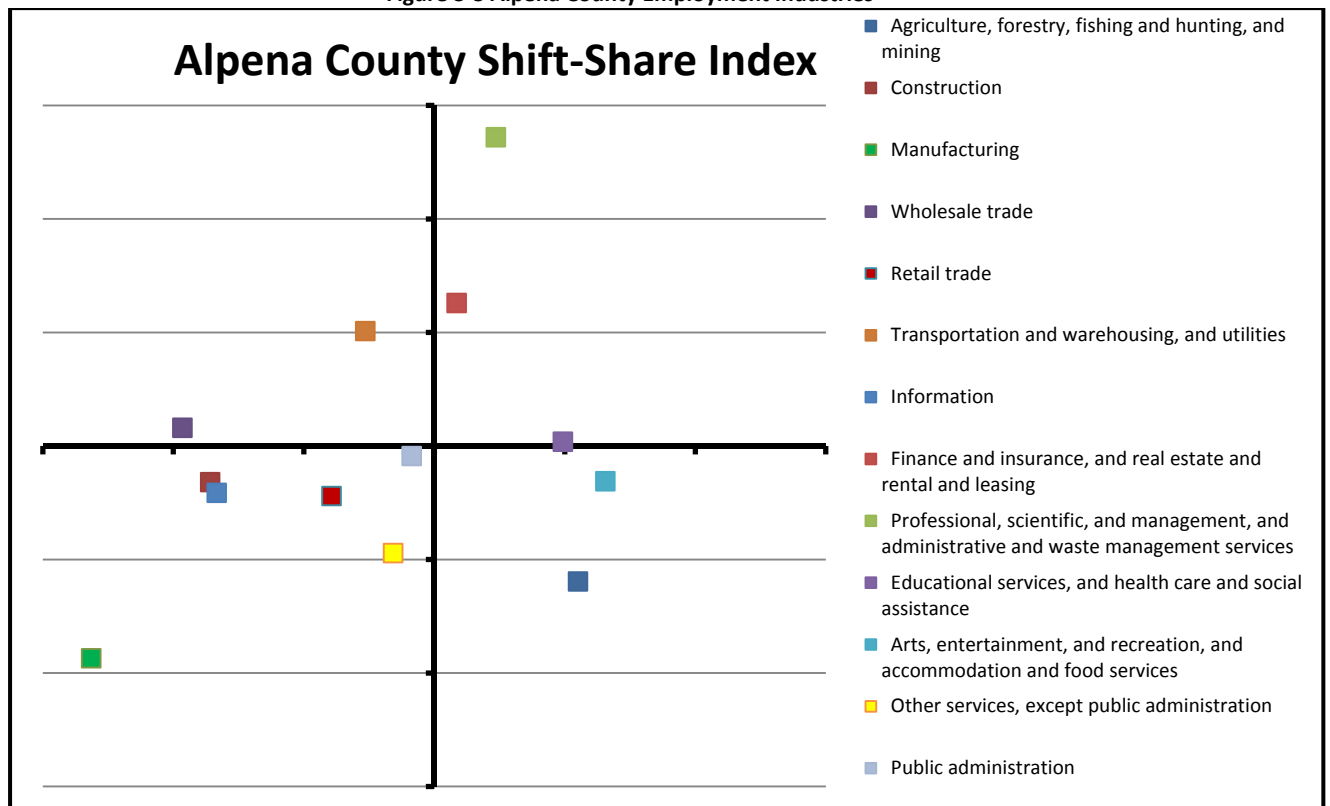
The sectors that are above the x axis have had positive growth in Alpena County between 2000 and 2009. The sectors to the right of the y axis had positive growth in the State of Michigan during the same time frame. Therefore, sectors in the bottom left quartile lost employment locally and regionally, while sectors in the top right quartile gained employment locally and regionally.

The following sectors had positive gains locally and regionally:

- Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
- Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing
- Educational services, and health care and social assistance

Alpena County has a number of declining industries within its economy, most notably, Manufacturing. The manufacturing sector had huge decreases in the State of Michigan and Alpena County in the past decade. In Alpena County, approximately 881, or 37.4%, of jobs within the manufacturing sector were lost between 2000 and 2009.

Figure 3-3 Alpena County Employment Industries



Source: United States Census Bureau

Unemployment

The increase in the yearly unemployment rate from 2007 to 2010 in Alpena County was consistent with the other regions. Alpena County jumped by 4.8%, similarly to the rest of NEMCOG (4.5%), the State of Michigan (5.4%), and the USA (5.0%). Although, as the State of Michigan and the rest of the nation seemingly hit their unemployment high marks in 2009, northeastern Michigan has not returned to prerecession unemployment levels, yet.

Table 3-2 Unemployment Rates

Year	Alpena Co.	NEMCOG Service Area	State of Michigan	USA
2000	5.5	6.2	3.7	4
2001	7.7	7.5	5.2	4.7
2002	8.5	8.7	6.2	5.8
2003	9.1	9.3	7.1	6
2004	8.4	9.1	7.1	5.5
2005	7.4	8.3	6.8	5.1
2006	7.5	9.25	6.9	4.6
2007	8.2	9.7	7.1	4.6
2008	8.9	10.9	8.3	5.8
2009	13.4	15.2	13.3	9.3
2010	13	15.2	12.5	9.6

Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics

Income and Poverty

According to the 2008-2010 American Community Survey, Alpena County has a median household income of \$36,242. The State of Michigan has a median income of \$46,861 and the national average is \$51,222.

The median income is a reflection of educational attainment. In 2010, 15.5% of the population in Alpena County had at least a bachelor's degree, while in Michigan 25% and nationally 28% possess one. However, this is an increase from 13.2% of the population in Alpena County that had at least a bachelor's degree in 2000.

Household/Housing Characteristics

It is important to account for the housing stock of the city to determine the urgency of developing goals and objectives focused on retaining residents and renters alike. Table 3-3 below indicates that one tenth or the housing stock in Alpena is vacant (10.3%). The Alpena Comprehensive Plan stresses a more general goal of city vitality and efforts to retain the young population (18-35) after graduation (Comprehensive 8-5).

Table 3-3 Household/Housing Characteristics

Characteristic	Alpena's Number of Units	Percentages (Alpena)	Michigan Number of Units	Percentages (Michigan)
Average Household Size	2.13	N/A	2.53	N/A

HOUSING OCCUPANCY

Total Housing Units	5,278	100	4,529,680	100
Occupied Housing Units	4,734	89.7	3,843,997	84.9
Vacant Housing Units	544	10.3	685,683	15.1
For Rent	155	2.9	-	-
Rented, Not Occupied	9	0.2	-	-
For Sale Only	106	2	-	-
Sold, Not Occupied	30	0.6	-	-
For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	70	1.3	-	-
All Other Vacants	174	3.3	-	-
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (percent)	3.20%	-	-	-
Rental Vacancy Rate (percent)	8.80%	-	-	-

HOUSING TENURE

Occupied Housing Units	4,734	100	3,843,997	100
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	3,145	66.4	2,853,374	74.2
Population in Owner-Occupied Housing Units	7,080	-	-	-
Average Household Size of Owner Occupied Units	2.25	-	-	-
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	1,589	33.6	991,623	25.8
Population in Renter-Occupied Housing Units	3,017	-	-	-
Average Household Size of Renter-Occupied Units	1.9	-	-	-

Source: U.S. Census 2010 American Community Survey

Another characteristic to note is the large portion of the occupied houses in Alpena are rented (33.6%). The amount of rental housing is an important percentage to track as it corresponds with many persons who visit Alpena seasonally in both the summers and winters. Furthermore there have been ongoing projects that are creating more rental housing above commercial development in the downtown to

encourage residents to live there. This is in the hopes of increasing business as well as growth while making the housing market competitive. In light of this the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) has given Alpena a \$300,000 grant through the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to continue efforts (Comprehensive Plan 2-12).

Summary

The demographics and economic trends of Alpena County do not paint a bright picture. Alpena County has a predominately older population, compared to the State of Michigan and National demographics, and the total population is at a 50 year low. The educational attainment has increased since 2000, however, not at the same rate as the State of Michigan. Economically, Alpena County, along with the rest of the NEMCOG service area, have not recovered from the 2001 recession. Most notably, job losses in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors have increased considerably in the County since 2000.

4.) UTILITIES

Utilities are important to many industries and businesses that operate out of a port. Facilities are likely to need water, sewer, electric, and gas availability for all port activities, manufacturing processes, offices, or commercial activities. The capabilities of a port and the success of its industries are dependent on the availability and capacity of the utility system that serves the port. Overall, the Port of Alpena has comprehensive utility connectivity, with capacity for water, sewer, electric, and gas connections. Figure 4-1 below represents the utility providers for the City of Alpena.



Water and Sewer

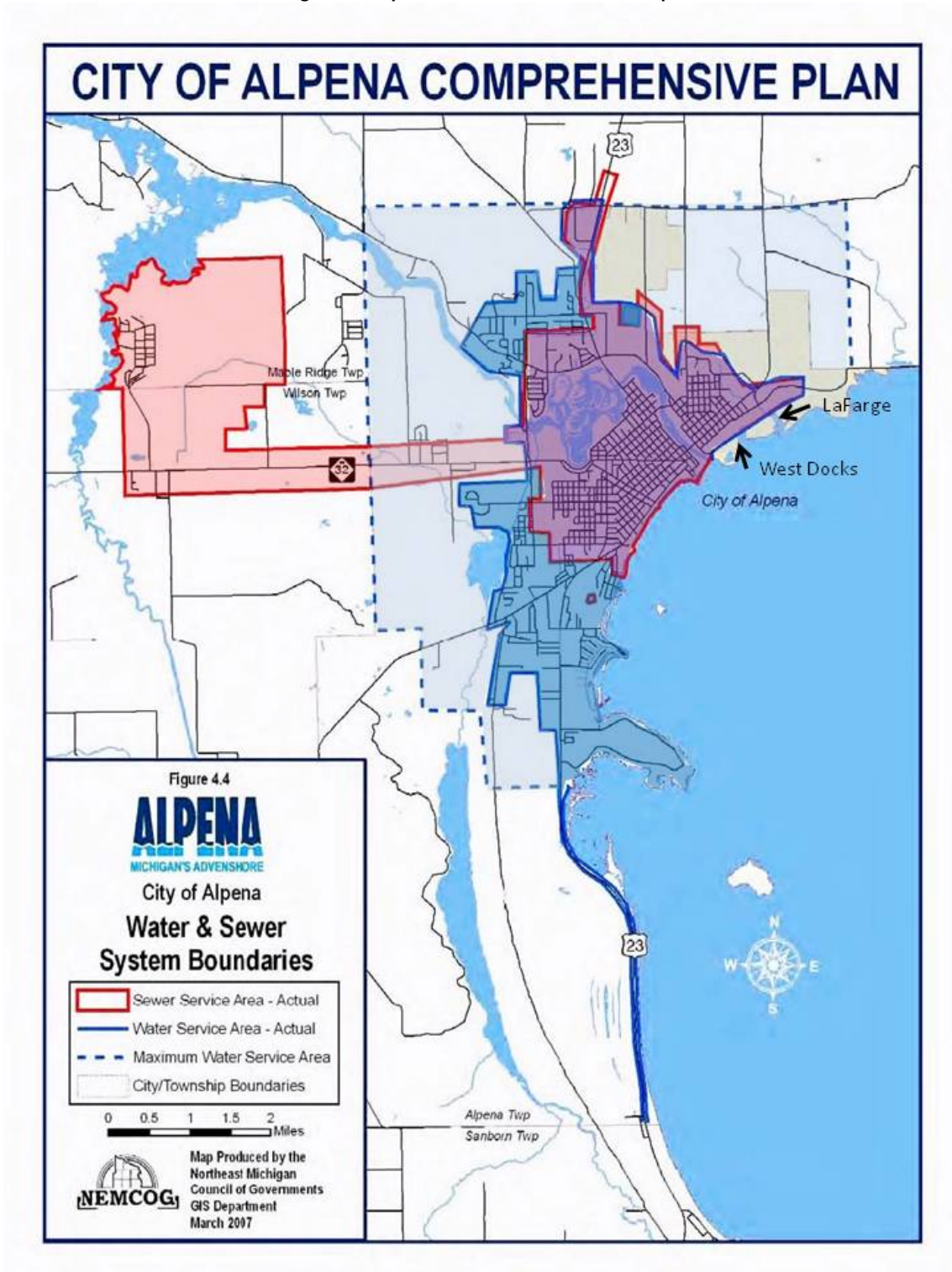
The Alpena public water system serves the City of Alpena and the Township of Alpena. Thunder Bay is the water source, with a water treatment plant located on the lakeshore south of downtown. Operation of the facilities is contracted out to Earth Tech Operation Services, Inc. As of the last Comprehensive Plan for Alpena, there is a capacity of 6 million gallons per day and an average use of 2.1 million gallons per day.

Sanitary Sewer System: The City's wastewater treatment plant serves both the city and township and includes an industrial pretreatment program. Methane gas from the treatment process is used to power the plant. The plant has a capacity of 5.5 million gallons per day and an average use of 2.3 million gallons per day.

Both the City Water and Sewer system provide service throughout the port area as shown in the map below. Red areas are only sewer service, blue areas are only water service; but the overlapping area covers the port area and most of the population center. (City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan, 2007)

City of Alpena Utility Boundaries

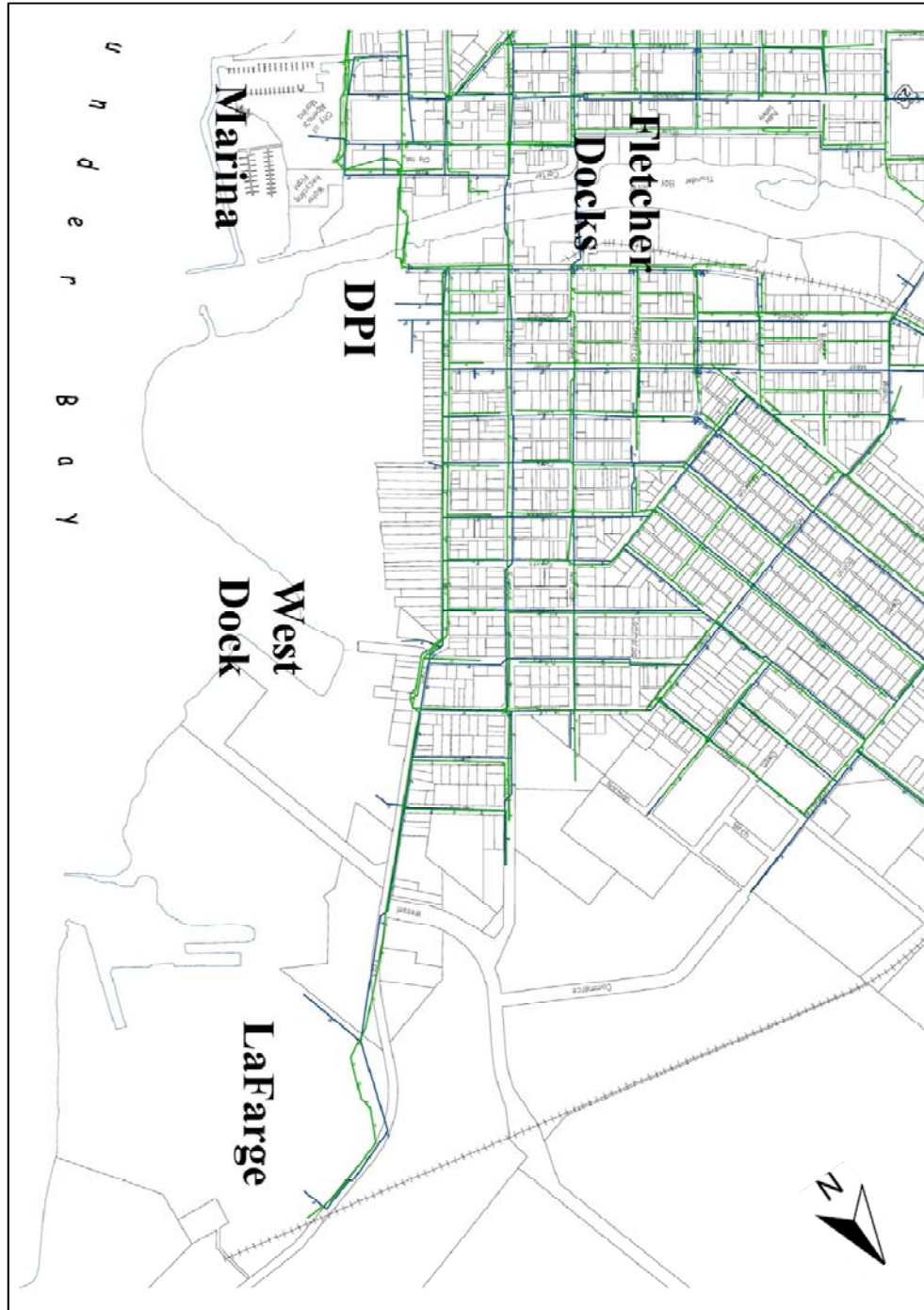
Figure 4-2 Alpena Water and Sewer Zone Map



Source: Alpena Comprehensive Plan

The following maps show water and sanitary sewer maps for the Port of Alpena and surrounding area. The Blue lines represent the water pipelines, and the green lines represent sanitary sewer lines. Black lines are property lines. As shown, all port areas are easily connected to comprehensive public service utilities.

Figure 4-3 Port of Alpena Water and Sewer Lines



Source: City of Alpena

Figure 4-4 Fletcher Utilities



Source: City of Alpena

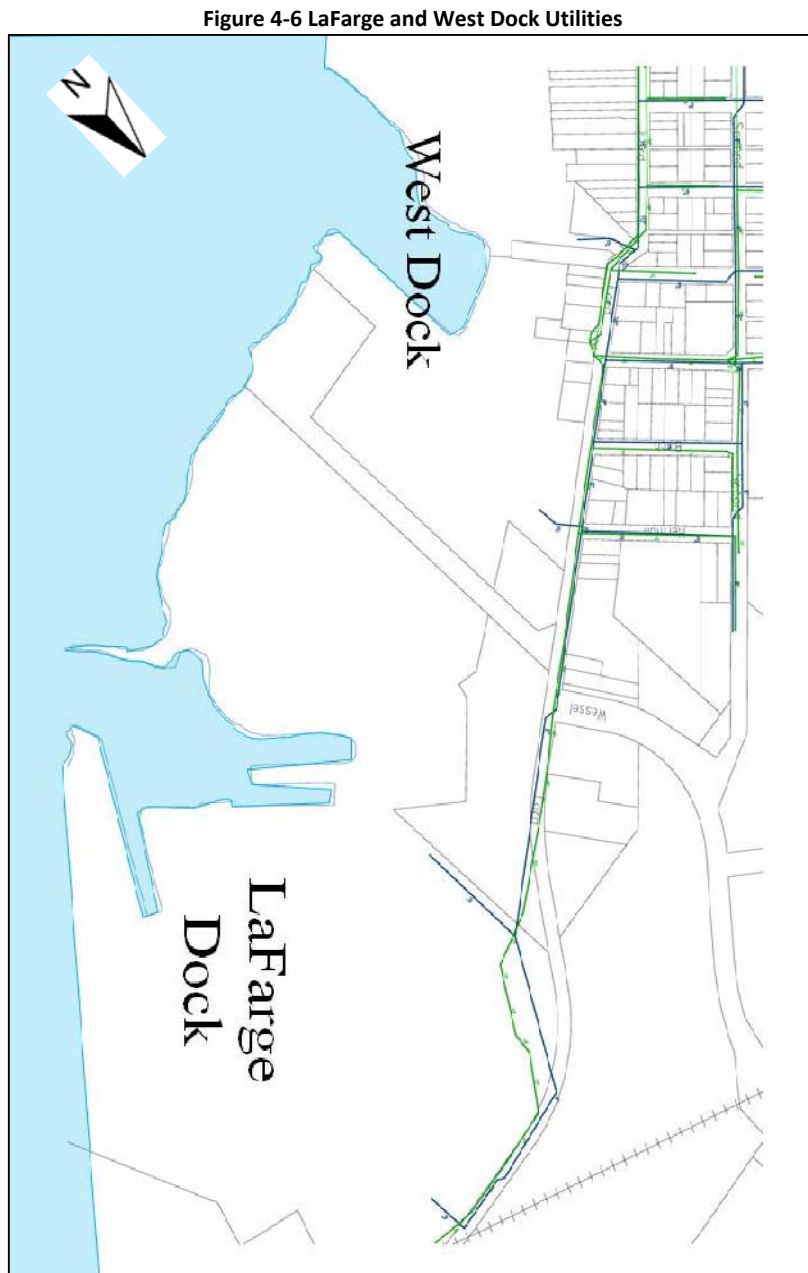
Figure 4-5 shows a localized area around the Thunder Bay River docks near the Fletcher Plant as well as parts of downtown Alpena. Green lines are sewer lines and blue lines are water mains.

Figure 4-5 DPI Utilities



Source: City of Alpena

Figure 4-6 shows a localized area around the lower Thunder Bay River docks including the Decorative Panels International (DPI) facility and parts of downtown Alpena. Green lines are sewer lines and blue lines are water mains.



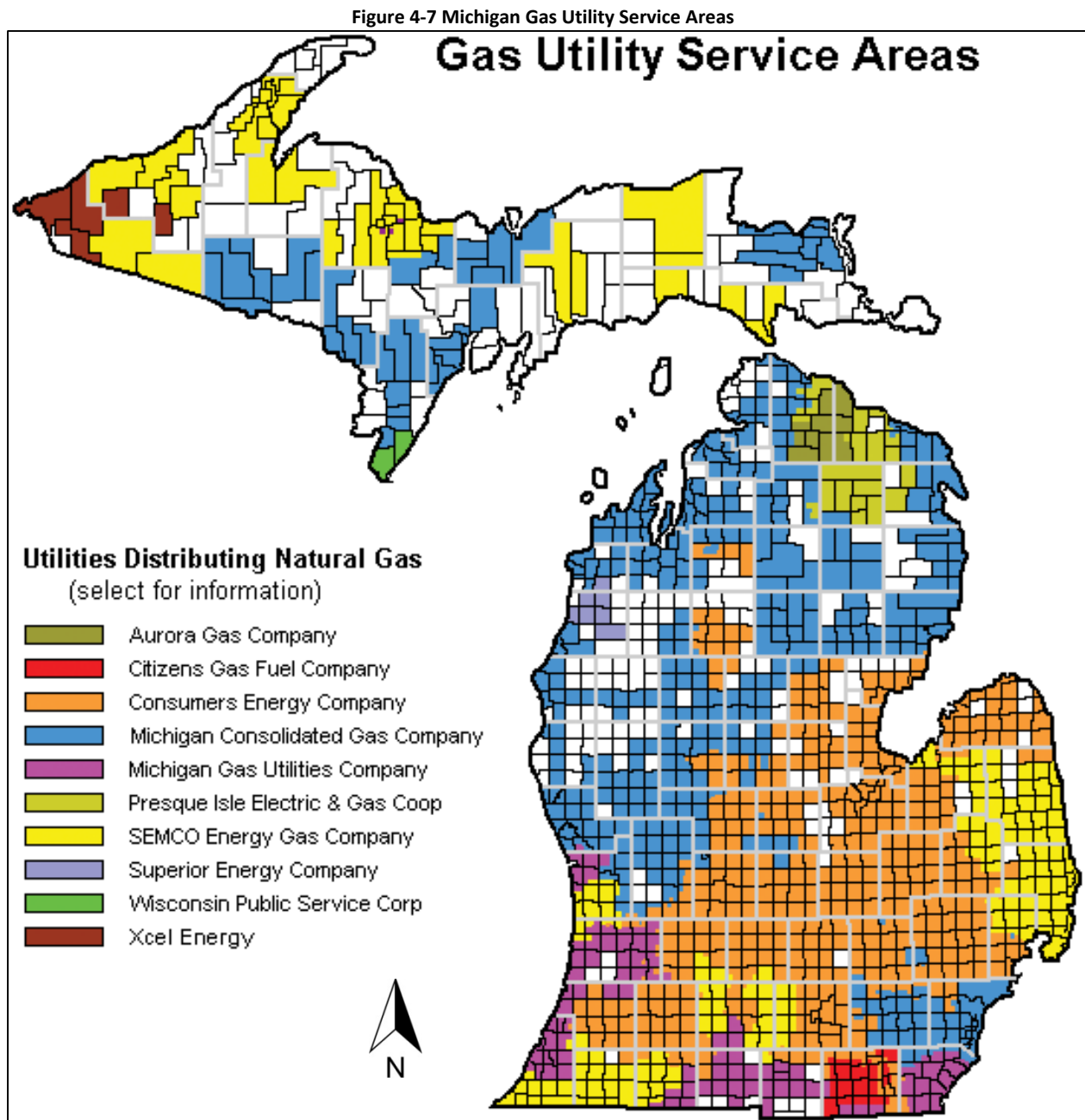
Source: City of Alpena

Figure 4-5 shows a localized port area around the LaFarge and West Docks on Thunder Bay which is about 1 mile northeast of downtown Alpena. Green lines are sewer lines and blue lines are water mains.

Gas

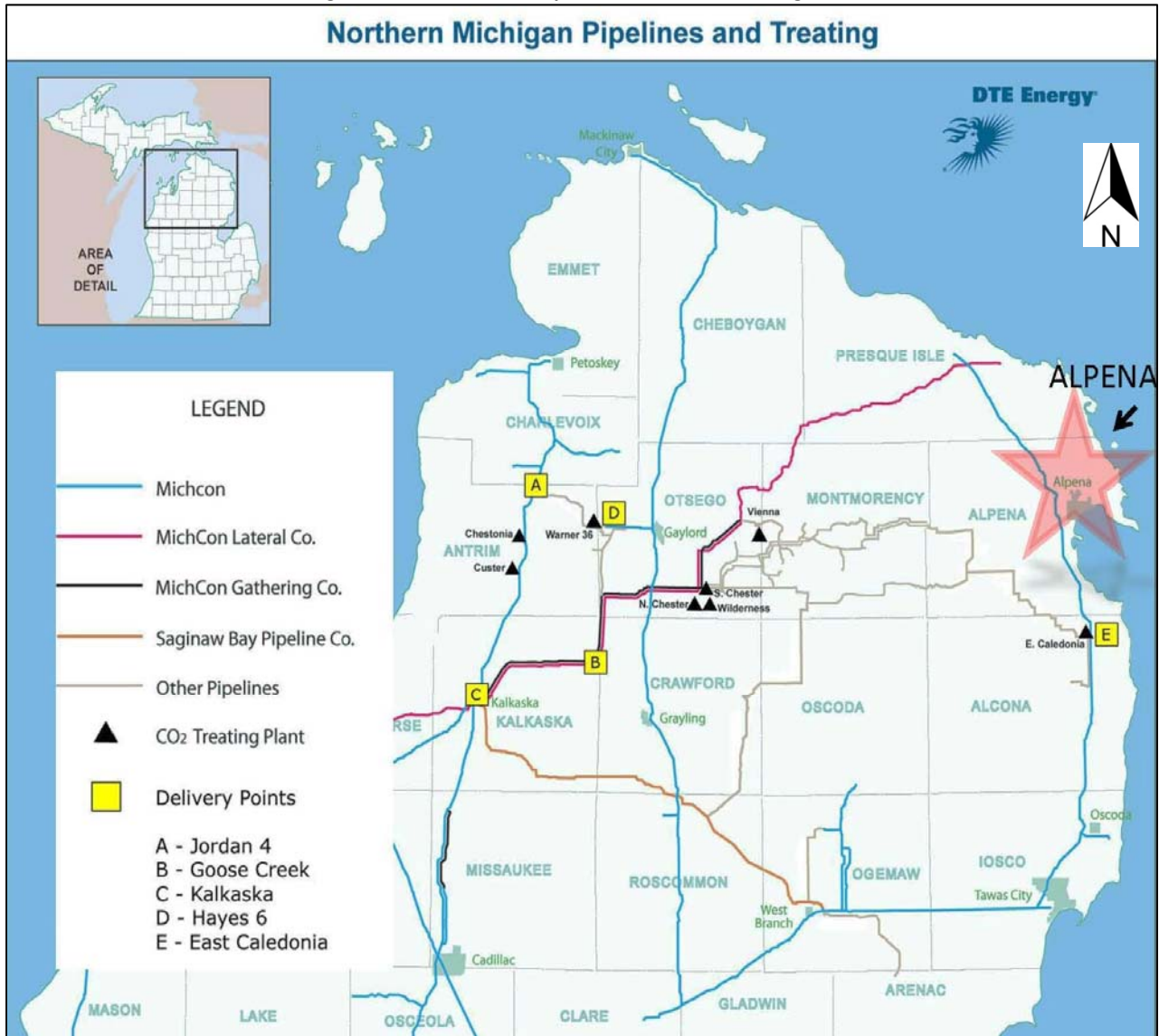
DTE Energy provides natural gas services for Alpena and Port area through the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company as shown in the maps below. DTE is a private entity.

Figure 4-7 shows gas company service areas in Michigan. Alpena is covered by Michcon.



Source: Michigan Public Service Commission, 2009

Figure 4-8 Intrastate Gas Pipelines for Northern Michigan



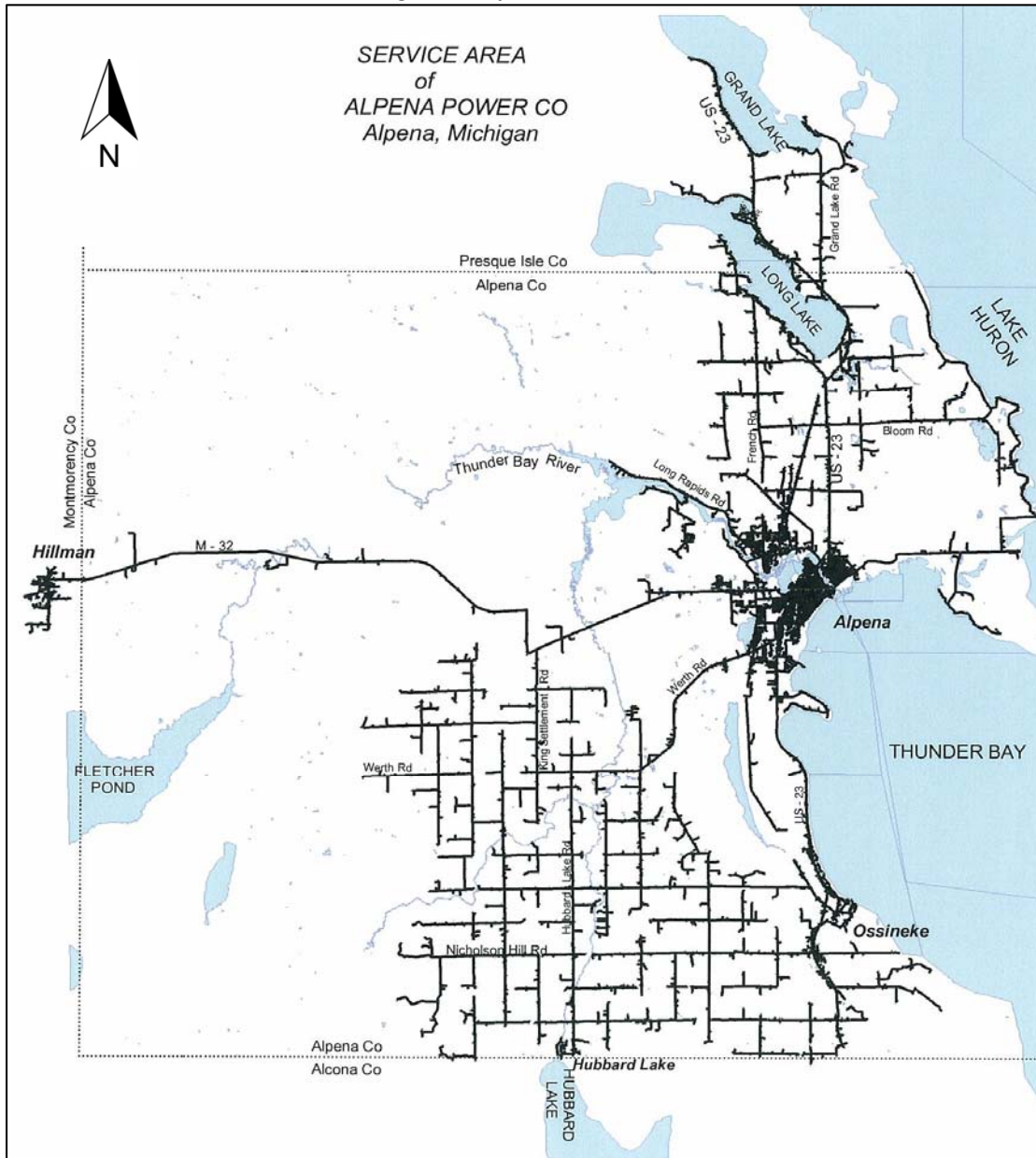
Source: DTE Energy, 2009

This Map shows natural gas pipelines in Northern Michigan operated by the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company (Michcon) which is owned by DTE and provides gas utility service to Alpena. These regional lines provide services to local communities through delivery points which transfer the natural gas to local services. The Light Blue line along the lakeshore of the Northeast Lower Peninsula represents Michcon service to northeastern communities in Iosco, Alcona, Alpena, and Presque Isle counties.

Electric

Electric Service: The Alpena Power Company provides the electric service for the City and port. Alpena Power Company is a private entity with service agreements with other utility providers in Michigan. Electricity generation is 62.1% coal, 20.9% nuclear, 11.4% gas, and 5.4% renewable (including hydro). Alpena Power Company provides service to 16,500 residential, commercial, and industrial customers. (Alpena Power Co.)

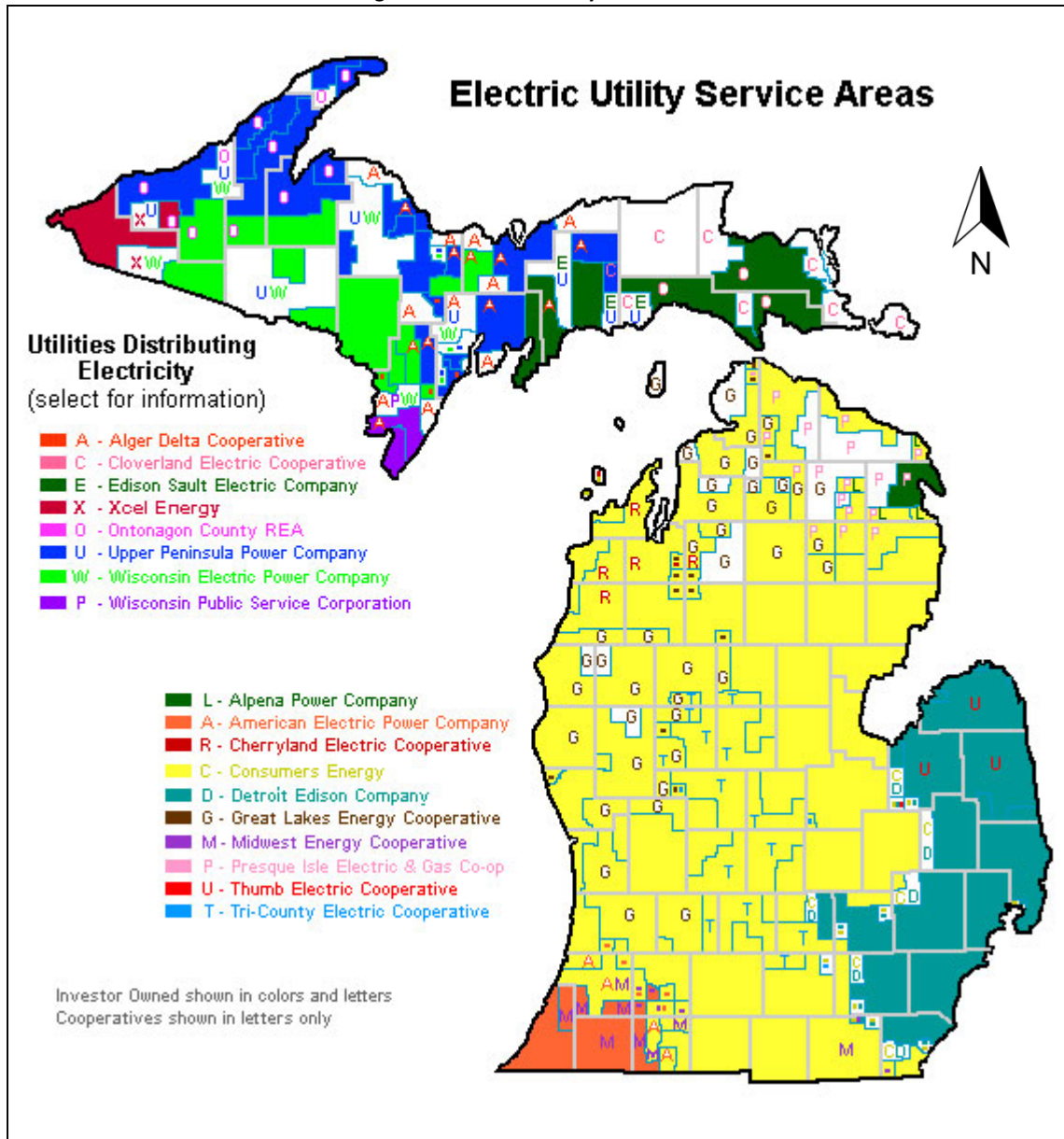
Figure 4-9 Alpena Electric Lines



Source: Alpena Power Company

The lines in Figure 4-10 represent Alpena Power Company electric lines.

Figure 4-10 Electric Utility Service Area



Source: Michigan Public Service Commission, 2011

In terms of area, most of the Lower Peninsula is covered by Consumers Energy, but Alpena in the Northeast Corner is covered by the Alpena Power Company as seen above.

Summary

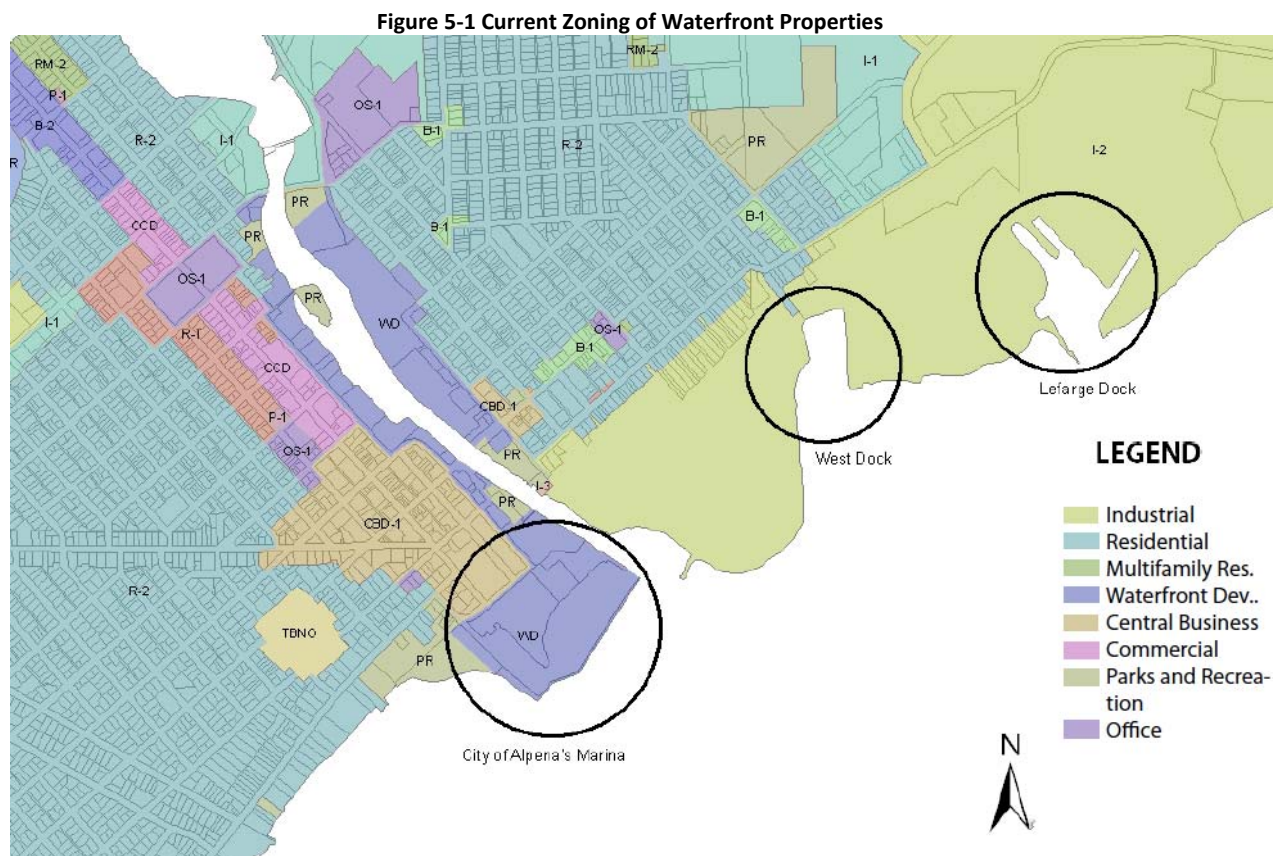
At this time the Port of Alpena has adequate utility service to support existing port operations and new developments. Electric and natural gas systems are interconnected to larger networks. Water and sewer systems are overseen by the city and provide some service to surrounding townships. Most of the port area already is connected to the city's utility system. Any expansion of port activities into the West Dock would require new utilities connections. Most of the shoreline North of LaFarge would not have easy access to water and sewer systems, but this area is not developed and not generally considered part of the Port of Alpena.

5.) COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ZONING

Community planning and zoning provides an in-depth look at the zoning, current land use, and future land use of the city and particularly the waterfront. Examining the land use and zoning regulations as well as the desired future land use is crucial in understanding the larger picture for the port of Alpena. Having this information is important when planning further actions.

Zoning

Zoning is a tool utilized by local governments to regulate and map out the permitted uses of land. According to the current Comprehensive Plan, there are twenty zoning districts throughout the City of Alpena (Comprehensive Plan 10-3). The areas that encompass the ports are comprised of I-2 (general industry), WD (waterfront development), PR (parks and recreation), and some R-2 (one family residential).

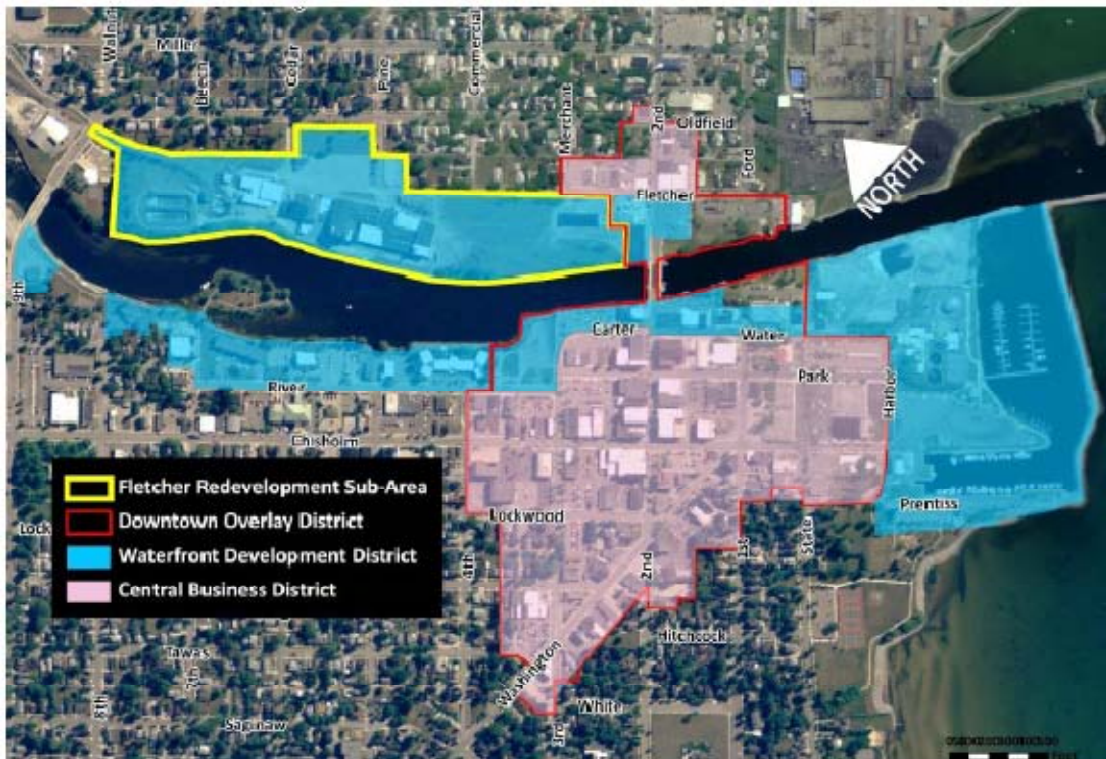


As seen in the zoning map (Figure 5-1), Lafarge, the West Dock, and DPI (Decorative Panels International) are zoned as I-2. According to the Comprehensive Plan, this means the land can be utilized

as light industrial processes, warehousing, etc. so long as the physical effects do not interfere with the surrounding areas (10-3).

The Alpena Marina, across the river from DPI, is zoned as waterfront development (WD). Following the Thunder Bay River inland the waterfront land is also zoned as WD, including the NOAA (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration) facility. The Waterfront Development Districts are meant to foster mixed-use development and institutional development. A more general goal for the encompassed area is to create a seamless entry into the downtown urban core from Lake Huron (Zoning Ordinance 154) and to encourage the engagement of the public.

Figure 5-2 Fletcher Redevelopment Sub-Area



Source: Alpena Zoning Ordinance 169

In order to further promote major development in the downtown, there is a Fletcher Redevelopment Sub-Area established within the WD District. The area's building standards is in accordance with the Planned Unit Development with one exception of a maximum of 4-story building limitation (as oppose to 3-story limitations).

The remaining coastline is zoned as a combination of PR (Parks and Recreation) and R-2 that as it suggest, encourages public spaces and residential development.

Brownfields

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines "with certain legal exclusions and additions, the term 'brownfield site' means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be

complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant (EPA).”

Under Public Act 381 Alpena created a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) in 1997. In overview, the authority works to identify, assess, and approve of projects on Alpena's brownfields. The BRA must approve of brownfield projects before they occur. The state must furthermore approve of any Michigan Business Tax Credits offered to facilitate redevelopment. In accordance with P.A 381 there is also eligibility for a tax increment financing (TIFs) on certain environmental activities.

Because Alpena has experienced a decline in industry, abandoned sites have the potential to be contaminated and are suspected so. In light of the need for redevelopment of this land, the city has received two grants from the EPA for Hazardous Waste cleanup as well as another for sites affected by petroleum products. Each assessment grant was for \$200,000 each (Alpena Brownfields).

It is important to note the location of current brownfields as well as sites that can or will eventually be brownfields. Awareness of such future land changes allows for adequate time to plan for the funding and redevelopment of such sites. In particular, it is important for the City of Alpena to keep in mind that the existing industrial land uses along the port have a strong potential for becoming brownfields should the land require clean up or be zoned differently in the future.

The city developed a Brownfield Redevelopment Plan in 2001 which identified brownfield project sites throughout the city. Table 5-1 below details the locations and types of brownfield clean-up. Of the current ten project sites, seven are located on or near the waterfront. They are the Fletcher Motel, Freese Hydraulics, River’s Edge, Harkins Property, Summit Sports, Alro Steel, and Alpena Community College East Building. Baseline Assessments and Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessments were performed on each site with the grant money Alpena received from the EPA.

Table 5-1 Alpena Brownfields (Shown in following Map)

No. on Map	Project Site Number	Brownfield Site	Parcel_ID	Site Address	Contamination	Site Owner
1	3	Oxbow Village	04-091-016-000-536-00	Pinecrest	Hazardous	Walden Properties, LLC
2	5	Gorski Property	093-417-000-842-00, 09	117 & 123 South Ripley	Hazardous Substance	William Gorski, ET UX
3	9	Fletcher Motel		1001 US-23 North		
4	4	Freese Hydraulics	093-637-000-983-00	324 N 11TH	Petroleum	James Campau, ET UX
5	1	RiversEdge	04-093-637-000-240-00	201 North Third	Hazardous	RiversEdge - Alpena, L.L.C.
6	10	Harkins Property		200 East Chisholm		
7	8	Summit Sports		224 East Chisholm		
8	7	Alro Steel	094-999-000-355-00	817-819 W Miller	Hazardous Substance	
9	6	ACC East Bldg	091-022-000-018-00	600 Walnut St (& Mille	Hazardous Substance	Alpena Community College
10	2	Lafarge	04-091-024-000-256-00	Commerce Street	Hazardous	Lafarge Corporation

Source: Alpena Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

Figure 5-3 Current Brownfield Sites in Alpena, MI



Source: Alpena Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

Brownfield Sites that have been Assessed with EPA Grant Money

Fletcher Motel (No.3)

Figure 5-4 Fletcher Motel



Source: modernmichigan.org

Freese Hydraulics and Equipment Repair (No.4)

Industrial machinery repair shop.

Figure 5-5 Freese Logo



Source: Freese Hydraulics and Equipment Repair, Inc

River's Edge Property (No.5)

This property is now utilized as a parking lot for visitors of downtown.

Figure 5-6 River's Edge Property



Source: Google Maps

Harkins & Karsten: Karsten Mark OD (No.6)

Optometrist Office, 3 blocks away from port

Figure 5-7 Karsten Mark OD



Source: Google Maps

Formerly Summit Sports now Alpena Florists (No.7)

Picture was taken in 2008 during an interim between Summit Sports and Alpena Florists. During this period, the building was used as an election candidate's headquarters.

Figure 5-8 Alpena Florists



Source: Google Maps

Alro Steel (No.8)

Alro Steel is a supplier of metals, plastics, and industrial supplies and services.

Figure 5-9 Alro Steel

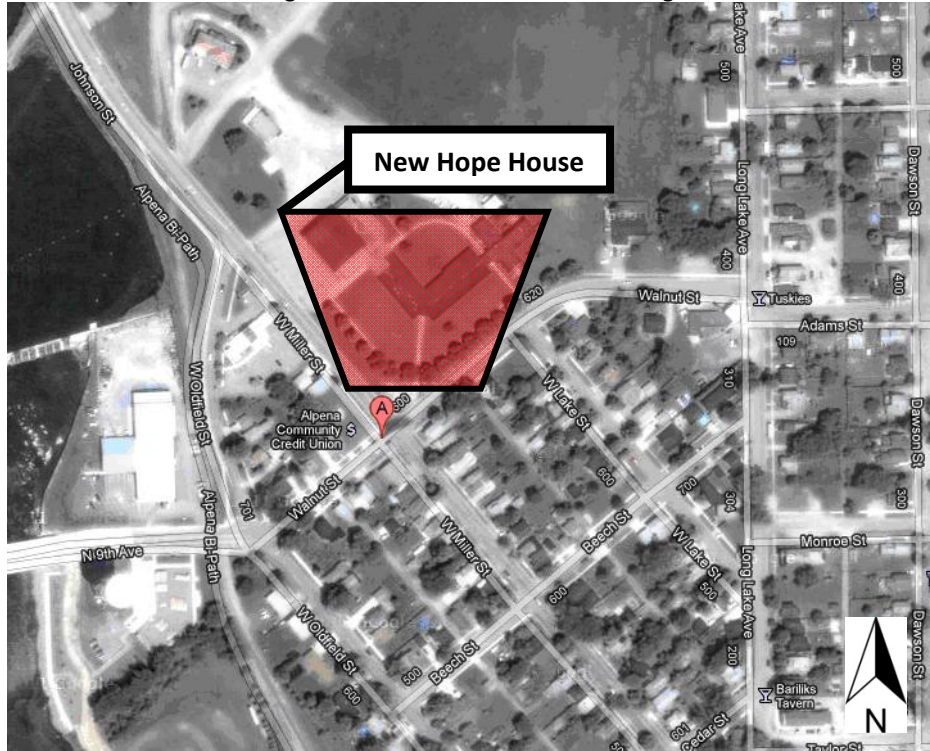


Source: Alro Steel

Former Alpena Community College (ACC) East Building (No. 9)

This building was renovated by Child and Family Services of North East Michigan Inc. after ACC donated it to them to become a new Hope House. The photos below depict the location of the building.

Figure 5-10 Location of ACC East Building



Source: Google Maps

Figure 5-11 New Hope House



Source: Child and Family Services

Current Brownfield Projects

Currently there are four ongoing active brownfield projects underway they are the NOAA Maritime Heritage Center and the Fletcher Brewing Company both owned by Alpena Marc LLC along the riverfront as well as LaFarge and the Dean Arbour Ford Car Dealership.

NOAA Maritime Heritage Center and the Fletcher Brewing Company (Alpena Marc LLC)

These sites are situated on what once was the Fletcher Paper Mill on the northern riverfront across from downtown Alpena. The site has been converted from industrial to mixed-use, which cost approximately \$12 million, and will most likely continue gaining investment for the next several years. NOAA received a Brownfield TIF which aided in supplying public infrastructure upgrades. NOAA as well the Fletcher Brewing Company, which is located within an old factory building and retains its original style, both received tax credits for their development.

Figure 5-12 Alpena Marc, LLC Property



Source: Google Maps

Figure 5-13 Fletcher Street Brewing Company



Source: BeerAdvocate.com

Figure 5-14 NOAA Thunder Bay



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

LaFarge

LaFarge is in the process of receiving a brownfield TIF as a \$1.5 million reimbursement for the demolition of an old concrete storage building on their property adjacent to their boat dock. This is part of a \$45 million upgrade to the cement plant.

Figure 5-15 LaFarge Cement Plant & Arial View of Property



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum & Adapted from NEMCOG

Dean Arbour Ford Car Dealership

Dean Arbour Ford Dealership is located 2 miles south of the downtown area along US-23. Dean Arbour's brownfield TIF will reimburse the dealership for the demolition of an existing building on the site. This TIF which is for roughly \$150,000, will start being reimbursed in 2012.

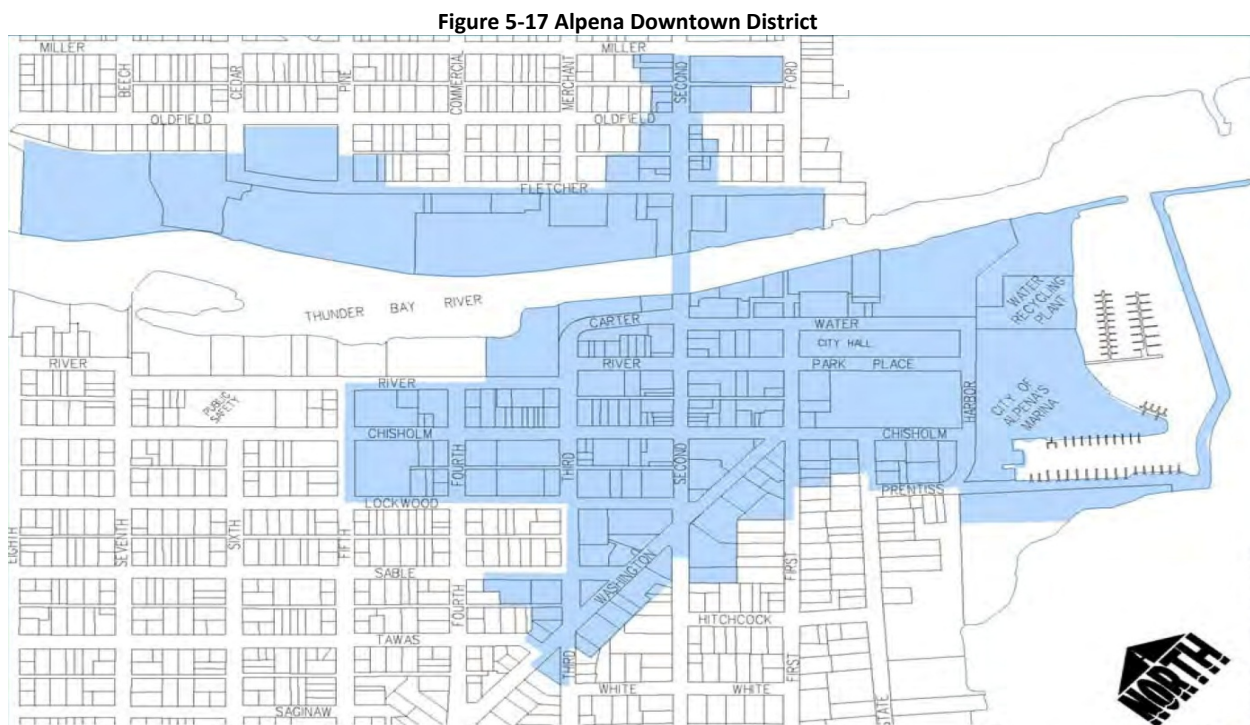
Figure 5-16 Dean Arbour Dealership



Source: Dean Arbour Ford

TIF's and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

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.



Source: Alpena Comprehensive Plan 2010

In July of 1981, the first Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan were adopted for the DDA. These plans were amended in January of 2005. Traditional brick and mortar projects as well as historic preservation activities have remained key elements of the DDA's initiatives. Additionally, the DDA is organized under the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Main Street" 4-points approach. According to the organization, The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program.

Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district.

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets — such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets — is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer.

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

The DDA works closely with the Downtown Alpena Business Association (DABA) to promote activities in the business district. Promotional activities to strengthen the downtown include: sidewalk sales, a sand castle building competition, Friday Nights Downtown, Picnic in the Park, Movies in the Park, and Riverfest. The DDA has a strong working relationship with the City, Alpena Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce and Target Alpena. In the fall of 2004, the DDA initiated a Façade Grant Program that provides a 50% match up to \$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. To date, nine projects have been completed with \$31,705.43 paid out in grants. These property owners have invested \$256,421 in rehab of downtown buildings. Proposed projects are too numerous to list here, but can be found in the amended and restated Development Plan No. 1 and Tax Increment Financing Plan No. 1. Four short term priority projects are developing a Way finding Plan (directional signage project), completing parking lot improvements, establishing a low interest loan pool, and developing a DDA web site. The overall vision of the DDA is to have a 24 hour downtown, a variety of housing options, first floor retail establishments, a mix of retail, residential and professional uses, more use of waterfronts, hotel and convention center, and sidewalks filled with people.⁴

In relation to the waterfront and port of Alpena, the Comprehensive Plan expresses interest in strengthening the relationship between the core of downtown Alpena with the waterfront property it includes. One recent expansion includes the old Fletcher Paper Mill site which is located on the Thunder Bay River. Successful economic development in Downtown Alpena can simultaneously encourage coattail development along the waterfront. Therefore when further developing the downtown, this connection should be considered.

⁴ This section taken from: The City of Alpena, Michigan. "Section 3: Economic Profile." In *City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan Charting a Course for Alpena*. Alpena, Michigan, 2010.

Figure 5-18 Mixed Use Development along Second Avenue in Downtown Alpena



Source: Team Alpena, MSU Practicum

Existing Land Use

It is important to understand the current land uses and their locations prior to any future planning in the city. Table 5-2 below details the percentages of land uses in the city. The City of Alpena Comprehensive Plan notes “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” (Comprehensive Plan 6-4).

Table 5-2 Existing Land Cover/Use Statistics

Land-Use Category	Number of Acres	Percent of City
One and Two Family Residential	1,374	23.6
Multi-Family Residential	70	1.2
Office	45	0.8
Commercial	138	2.4
Downtown Business District	62	1.1
Mixed Use	67	1.1
Light Industrial	225	3.9
Heavy Industrial	1,038	17.8
Parks	182	3.1
Institutional/Public	515	8.9
Non-Forested Uplands	321	5.5
Forests	768	13.2
Non-Forested Wetlands	457	7.9
Water	557	9.6
TOTAL	5,818	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

It is apparent that at 21.7% of the existing land use, industry (both light and heavy) is a major component of the city. It is only second to the 24.8% that details the residential land uses. The existing land-use around the ports is mostly industrial along with institutional-public, parks, mixed-use, and a little amount of residential parcels. The largest current use located on the port is industrial which includes Lafarge, DPI (Decorative Panels International), the Alpena Power Company and other smaller industrial companies. The institutional-public along the port includes the NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary as well as some waterfront parks.