

Alpena Asset Inventory



Recommendations

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 Exit 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. Continued work towards funding and federal support in dredging is recommended as the dock is a very underutilized asset to the city.

Local and Regional Port Collaboratives

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.

Background



Alpena, is located in the northeastern portion of lower Michigan on the coast of Lake Huron. It was founded in 1871 and was a prosperous lumber and logging community. Today, with a population of 10, 483 (U.S Census 2010), Alpena's main employers are medical and health, education, and manufacturing. The port of Alpena is one of 36 in Michigan and is part of the largest freshwater port systems in the world.

Properties on the Port



Thunder Bay Power Company- The Thunder Bay Power Company is a private entity that provides electricity for the City of Alpena as well as the port.

City of Alpena- The City of Alpena owns a few properties along the Thunder Bay River, the largest being the city's marina which has 143 boat slips and reaches about 60% capacity during peak seasons

Fletcher Paper- The site dates back to 1858 when it was established as a lumber mill and turned to paper in the late 1890s. The factory ceased operations in 2000.

Alpena Marc LLC- Alpena Marc LLC is a development agency that owns a portion of waterfront property and has successfully redeveloped a brownfield as a NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Maritime Center as well as a Fisheries and Wildlife Center.

Alpena Oil Company- The Alpena Oil Company is a Shell oil distributor.

DPI (Decorative Panels International)- DPI is a manufacturer of wall panels and is partial owner of the West Dock though the company does not use the dock.

LaFarge- LaFarge produces cement and concrete and is the largest port in Alpena. It extracts limestone from the quarry which is estimated to have approximately 75 years of viable life left. It is also a partial owner of the West Dock.

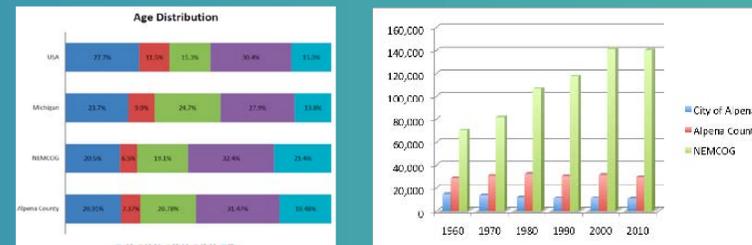
Research and Findings

Land-Use on the Thunder Bay River

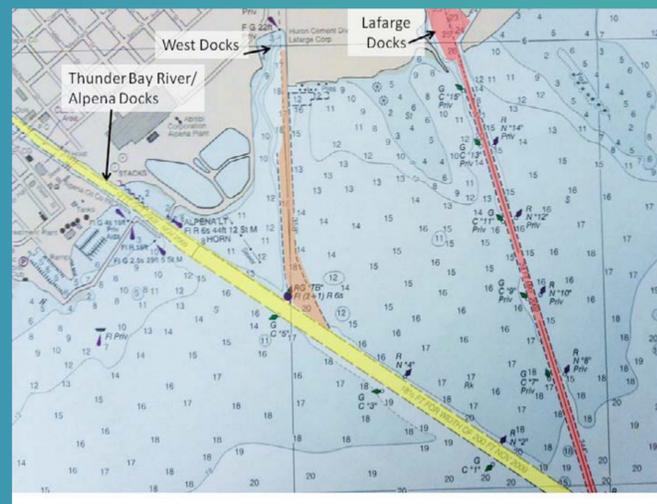


The figures above depict the current and future land use goals of the city's development along the Thunder Bay River (Alpena Comprehensive Plan). Along the south coast of the river, there is currently office, multi-family residential, institutional-public, a couple of parks, and a small portion of the downtown business district. The goal is to eventually transition the strip into waterfront mixed-use development.

Basic Demographics



Port Navigability



The three shipping channels are shown here. Red is the LaFarge Channel, orange is the West Dock Channel, and yellow is the Thunder Bay River Channel.

The LaFarge Channel is currently dredged to a depth of 24 feet. This meets the standards for a large cargo port in the Northern Great Lakes.

The West Dock is a minimum of 16 feet deep. While this is adequate for most cruise and ferry boats on the Great Lakes, it would not be adequate for any large industrial cargo dock which would usually need a minimum depth of 20-21 feet.

The Thunder Bay River Docks are dredged to a depth of 14 feet. This is adequate for some smaller cargo ships, most types of ferries and cruise ships, as well as recreational boats.

Comparison to Other Ports

Ports	Toledo	Detroit	Hamilton	Green Bay	Monroe	Muskegon	Alpena	Rogers City
Water Depth (ft)	27	27	30 ft.	26 ft.	21 ft.	27 ft.	16-24 ft.	21 ft.
Dock Space	1,054 ft.	5,500 ft.	36,089 ft.	n/a	5,300 ft.	3,500 ft.	N/A	5,600 ft
Cargo (in millions tons/yr)	12	80	10.4	2.5	1.8	n/a	18.26	n/a
Transport Facilities	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport	Rail, Highway, Airport
Recreation	Boat shows, kayaking	Eco-tourism, boat rentals, fishing	Sailing school, waterfront trails	Golfing, boating, hiking	Bike trails, boat rentals, fishing	Boat rentals, fishing	Bike trails, glass bottom boats, tall ships, fishing, tourism	Bike trails, hiking, fishing
Ferry & Cruise Service	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes,	No	No
Import / Export	Both	Both	No	Both	No	Both	Both	Both
International Foreign Trade Zone	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	n/a
Port Authority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	N	No	No

For more details and further reading please refer to: http://spdc.msu.edu/spdc/urp_showcase

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