

SOUTH BAY HISTORY AND GOALS

Vision:

Businesses, citizens, governments, and agencies working together to improve the appearance and vitality of the US 23 South Corridor area in Alpena Township from Mich-e-ke-wis Park to Squaw Bay and east to Lake Huron.

Strategies:

- Redevelop two miles of the commercial corridor from Bare Point Plaza to Mich-e-ke-wis Park to make it pedestrian friendly with green lighting, benches, trees and artwork. Reduce the number of driveways and implement service roads, where feasible, to reduce congestion and traffic crashes.
 - Adhere to current Placemaking strategies to create vibrant, multi-use pedestrian friendly places with amenities such as entertainment, activities, and walkways where people want to live, work, and visit.
- Increase recreational amenities by adding parks at the 45th Parallel; with an interactive kiosk and ship sculpture; and Alvar Shoreline on Partridge Point, with a canoe/kayak launch tying into the Lake Huron Blueways Route. Connect these two parks with bike paths and upgrade and extend the current bike path on the east side of US 23, and add new bike paths to the east of US 23- creating loops.
- Improve aesthetics by executing a multifaceted cleanup effort involving annual highway cleanups, painting projects, and flower plantings.
- Reduction of blight through ordinance enforcement and grants.

Results

- Since 2013 we have executed a major highway cleanup of US 23 each spring with scores of volunteers.
- During the summers of 2013-2015 Habitat for Humanity, Boys and Girls Club, the Navigators Scout Crew, and residents have painted numerous houses, garages, fire hydrants, and sign posts.
- Businesses have cleaned up their property and many have painted their buildings.
- Forty flower pots have been placed on the east side of US 23 South by Plowman's Collision since 2013. Businesses have participated in keeping the flowers watered.
- Created a "South Bay Corridor" neighborhood.
- A steering committee of several business leaders, citizens, NEMCOG, and township trustees has been formed to address economic and aesthetic development of the US 23 South corridor.
- Active participation in the US 23 Heritage Route project; which seeks to improve economic development, recreational opportunities, and community aesthetics for 200 miles of US 23 from Standish to Mackinaw City.
 - US 23 South in Alpena has been selected as the initial project for economic development due to the strong volunteer effort!
 - Public Input Sessions were held at the Alpena Mall in 2013, 2014, and 2015 to determine the public's likes and dislikes regarding the area. In 2014 eighty (80) participants gave their recommendations for enhancement of the area. These ideas were incorporated into a "South Bay Corridor Vision Plan" by NEMCOG, which is our blueprint for redevelopment.
- Formed the South Bay Corridor Association (SBCA) to generate income, provide communication, enlist ideas, garnish support, and improve volunteerism.
- Submitted, through NEMCOG, a \$35,000 DEQ Coastal Zone Management grant in December, 2014 for planning and design work on several new projects:
 - We raised over \$36,000 in cash! However, in August, 2015 we received notification that the grant was denied as we did not have the grant match funds up front.

- Secured acceptance in MSU's School of Planning, Design, and Construction outreach programs in the two specialties of Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning.
- Hired a professional landscape architect, Beckett & Raeder, to perform a comprehensive planning and design study incorporating the MSU Landscape Architect student's ideas when feasible.
 - Conducted our Fourth Public Input Session on January 26, 2016 and are completing the design study
- Secured a 501c3 tax exempt status and elected a board of directors
- **Five new businesses have committed to locate on the corridor!**

Goals

- Continue our work with NEMCOG in the US 23 Heritage Route Program.
- Continue the highway cleanup, painting, and flower planting programs.
- Request that Alpena Township reconsider the development of a Corridor Improvement Authority to give us varied options for securing funding for construction projects.
- Approach federal and state agencies, local businesses, governments, and organizations with requests for grants and donations when appropriate.
- Upgrade our Facebook page, develop a website, and select a crowdfunding platform to distill information and request funding.
- Participate in the Branding of Alpena initiative of creating a Sanctuary for residents and visitors.
- Proactively address the effect blighted properties has across the area with the image it portrays to visitors and potential employers, new workers, as well as property values and the consequent tax base.
- Encourage Alpena Township to enforce its blight and dangerous building ordinances
- Analyze the market analysis submitted by the MSU Urban and Regional Planning department on April 29 and look for opportunities for economic expansion
- Work toward implementation of the planning and design study
 - Perform the initial background work needed of investigating grant opportunities and grant writing services, traffic studies, meetings with interested stakeholders, and securing match money before applying for federal and state funding
 - Prioritize the development of a new roadway for the commercial corridor while also pursuing development of the parks and recreation