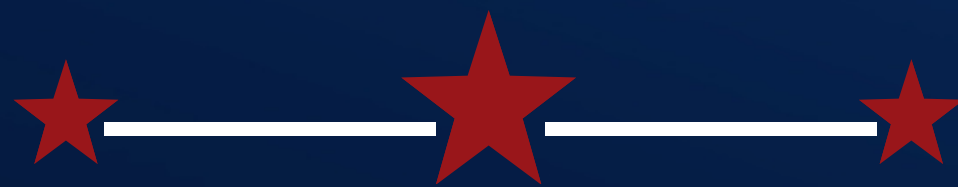


Art in Motion

Celebrating a Legacy of Art, Recreation, and Community



Where Art Meets Recreation

In 1974, Thunder Bay Arts, one of Michigan's oldest continuous arts councils, joined forces with the City of Alpena and the Besser Foundation to create something visionary: a sculptured bikeway and walkway system that would integrate art and recreation in celebration of America's Bicentennial.

Local schoolchildren voted to name it the "Alpena Bi-Path," symbolizing both its dual use—biking and walking—and the nation's Bicentennial (200th anniversary).

The first section, completed in 1976, connected the Besser Museum and Alpena Community College to the city marina. In 1979, the first sculpture was added—intended to be the first of many along the Bi-Path.

While the path evolved over the decades into a beloved network, the sculpture initiative came to a pause.

In 2017, as Thunder Bay Arts celebrated its 45th anniversary, the organization recommitted to the Bi-Path's original goal: to make art a natural part of community life and reinvigorate the concept of "recreation with art in nature".

Since then, 18 sculptures have been installed along the Bi-Path, inspired by nature, wildlife, and the local landscape. The 2026 Anniversary sculptures will bring the total to 20 sculptures added along the Alpena Bi-Path as part of TBA's Art Vision Alpena project.

Today, these sculptures bring joy, reflection, and civic pride to residents and visitors alike, blending artistic expression with the beauty of northern Michigan's natural surroundings.



THUNDER BAY ARTS

A Setting Like No Other

The Alpena Bi-Path is more than a trail — it's a living gallery in nature at the center of our community — a powerful canvas for public engagement with public art in nature.

The Alpena Bi-Path winds through the heart of Alpena, gracefully throughout neighborhoods, along the river, through our parks and the commercial centers, and around a vibrant wetland preserve at the center of our town, where the river flows to Thunder Bay.

What's more, the Bi-Path celebrates our history through historical artifacts, monuments, and memorials, inspiring reflection and engagement, as well as physical exercise and appreciation for art, history, and the natural world around us in which we live, work, and recreate.



Explore our sculpture collection and learn more about the Bi-Path's story@

www.thunderbayarts.org

Take the scenic route with the Sculptured Bi-Path Tour & Scrabble booklet.

You'll find an interactive and fun experience perfect for families and kids of all ages to explore and enjoy, whether you're a local or visitor seeking the unique charm of small-town America.

