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# Target Alpena launches Small Business Support Hub to boost entrepreneurship



Site Staff

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ALPENA — The Target Alpena Development Corporation has launched the Target Huron Small Business Support Hub, a comprehensive resource for entrepreneurs and small business owners in Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Iosco and Presque Isle Counties.

The Hub aims to ensure that small business owners throughout the Northeast Michigan region can effortlessly connect to extensive support operate and grow their businesses.

“OUR Target Huron Small Business Support Hub is the single biggest source of support for small businesses in our 5-county region along the Huron lakeshore,” Target Alpena’s Director of Economic Development Mike Mahler said. “Our team and our partners are bringing the programs and funding necessary to help businesses get started or grow their existing business in the Northeast Michigan area.”

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Target Alpena aims to connect with small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout our region to make sure they find the resources and programming they need to be successful, as well as connect with each other and the greater business community.

To take on this endeavor, Target Alpena has established its Small Business support team which now includes Joe Carr, Small Business Development Director covering all five counties, Anna Sangster, Small Business Program Manager for Cheboygan and Presque Isle Counties, Tammy Kline, Small Business Program Manager for Alcona, and Iosco Counties.

Also working with Target Alpena across all five counties is Tim Rygwelski, Small Business Consultant at the Small Business Development Center. The Small Business team manages the Target Huron Hub and its partners.

“This dream team has the right experience, getting their feet out on the street and connecting with small business owners. They are committed to bringing the right programming and opportunities to the right clients,” Carr said. “Our team is dedicated to fostering a thriving small business community. By providing tailored support and resources, we empower entrepreneurs to turn their visions into reality and drive economic growth throughout the region.”

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Partnership plays a significant role in the Target Huron Hub as shown by the contributions received from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Small Business Development Center, and Michigan Works.

Each organization brings its own programming, support, and staff to help businesses in their growth journey.

Regional partners include Develop Iosco and Northern Lakes Economic Alliance are also supporting the Target Huron effort in their respective districts.

Programs currently being offered include:

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- **Innovation Launch by Bold Growth** — The Bold Growth Innovation Launch program is for early-stage entrepreneurs to brainstorm, build, and launch businesses. Entrepreneurs in the

- **The Exit Strategy for Business Owners workshop by Exit Factor** — a program that will take business owners through the exit process, from early-stage preparation to listing their business for sale.
  - Topics will include how are businesses valued, what factors help to make a business more valuable and more appealing to potential buyers, what professionals should sellers engage with and when, and what information or documents will potential buyers ask for.
- **The All-Hands Mentorship program** — designed to foster meaningful connections between emerging entrepreneurs and seasoned local mentors.
  - Through this program, clients will be paired with a mentor who brings a wealth of professional expertise and life experience. These mentors are committed to guiding through the various stages of business growth, offering personalized advice, practical insights, and valuable support. Whether help is needed with strategic planning, overcoming challenges, or exploring new opportunities, mentors will be there to help navigate the complexities of running a business.
  - This mentorship not only enhances your business acumen but also strengthens the entrepreneurial ecosystem within the community.
- **The Huron Forward Fund** — a strategic funding initiative designed specifically for emerging businesses. This opportunity aims to provide essential financial support to help new ventures lay a solid foundation.
  - By offering this funding, the Huron Forward Fund enables businesses to invest in critical areas such as forming their LLC, website development, marketing, legal service, and operations, setting them on a path to generate revenue and achieve sustainable growth. This initiative not only supports individual business success but also contributes to the broader economic development of the region.
- **The Direct Grant program** — offers established businesses funding to drive revenue and growth.
  - This grant can be used to purchase new equipment, marketing materials or services, inventory, hardware or software, and specialized consulting services.
  - By leveraging this support, businesses can make strategic investments that enhance their operations and contribute to regional economic development.

Partners in the Target Huron Hub that will support entrepreneurs include the All-Hands Mentorship; Alcona County Economic Development Committee; Alpena Chamber of Commerce; Bold Growth; Develop Iosco; Exit Factor; Michigan Economic Development Corporation; Michigan Works, Northeast Consortium; Northern Lakes Economic Alliance; and the Small Business Development Center, Lake Huron Region.

Michigan by the U.S. Department of the Treasury as part of the American Rescue Plan.

For more information on the Target Huron Small Business Support Hub and its programs, [click here](#).

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