



CHEBOYGAN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Strategic Plan

2009-2014

Adopted: September, 2009

History and Enabling Legislation

The Cheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) was established in the 1976 under Public Act 338 of 1974. This act charges the EDC with the responsibility of preventing conditions of unemployment, assisting and retaining local business, strengthening and revitalizing our economy, encouraging expansion of local businesses, promoting economic activity in forestry and agricultural sectors, encouraging export activity, protecting farm lands, and encouraging development of renewable energy facilities.

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Executive Summary

There are many organizations that have some hand in economic development in our region. Cheboygan County is establishing its longstanding Economic Development Corporation (EDC) as a coordinator of the County's economic development efforts. It is important that, at the county level, there is a coordinating body that communicates a shared vision and coordinates the efforts of local economic development organizations.

The Cheboygan County EDC has undertaken a strategic planning process to communicate this shared vision. To make this vision a reality there will be a long-term effort of communication and cooperation among all economic development entities in the county and the region.

This Strategic Plan provides a vision and mission statements, goals & objectives, and a thorough list of action items. These action items are provided to show both what the EDC plans to undertake and the items which would be strongly supported if our partners chose to undertake them.

Vision

To establish an environment that will expand opportunities for our residents and attract individuals, allowing them to be successful in living wage jobs while protecting and enhancing our abundant resources.

Mission

We are the strategic lead in economic development in Cheboygan County. Through strong partnerships we utilize the social capital within the county and the region to provide the means for residents to create living wage jobs and sustain a high quality of life to ensure Cheboygan County is a lifetime destination.

Existing Economic Environment

In order to choose the best economic development strategy an analysis needs to be done of the existing economic environment. This analysis will indicate the state of the existing workforce (level of technical training, skills, and education), population and income growth, and the growth industries that should be pursued. Existing industry will also be analyzed in order to determine the sectors that are dominant in the local economy. These sectors will have the most potential to create sales to the larger economy outside of Cheboygan County, thereby having the greatest economic impact on our county.

Demographics

Centrally located at the tip of the northern region, Cheboygan County is 10 miles from Lake Michigan and its northern border extends for 32.5 miles along the Straits of Mackinac and Lake Huron.

Cheboygan County has a total land area of 715.6 square miles. The county is comprised of 19 townships, one incorporated city (Cheboygan) and two incorporated Villages (Wolverine and Mackinaw City).

Population changes - Cheboygan County has an estimated population in 2008 of 26,354 (US Census Bureau). This estimate shows an approximate 0.4% decline in population from 2000. In comparison, the State of Michigan grew an estimated 0.7% in that same time period.

It is well known that there are more retirees settling in the region and fewer young people. In comparison with the nation, Cheboygan County has many more older persons as a percent of the total population and it is growing. The 2007 US Census Bureau estimate of the 65 and older population was 18.7% for the county compared with 12.5% for the nation. In 2000 the county's 65 and older population was lower, at 17.9%.

There is potential to tap into this aging market for their business experience and potential to become angel investors in local businesses. The baby boomers are leaving their steady jobs to retire and move to a place with a higher quality of life. Many of these retirees will still be active in business after adapting their skills to a semi-retired lifestyle. They will also create a demand for new health care services and assisted living facilities.

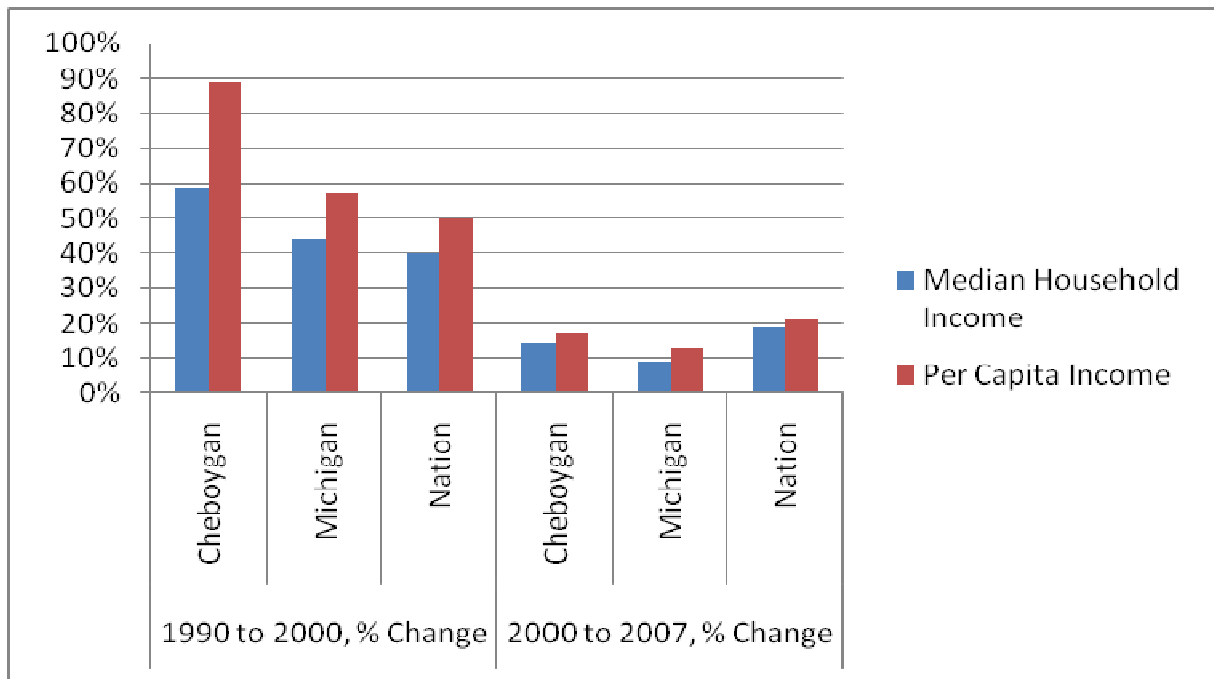
Homeownership - Homeownership data in Cheboygan County when compared to the State of Michigan shows that more of the county's population own homes, they stay in them longer, and there are slightly fewer people living in each house.

Educational attainment - When analyzing our local economy we will take a good look at the strength of our workforce. For a strong economy the workforce needs to be highly skilled. This means that extensive and technical job training programs that build the local human resource base around the local industries are essential to attracting high value firms.

Cheboygan County has a slightly higher percentage of its population with a high school education (86%) when compared with the nation (84%). However, the county saw fewer of its residents receive bachelor's degree or other higher education according to 2007 Census Bureau estimates. Only 17.2% of the county's residents 25 and older received a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with the nation's 27% estimate in 2007.

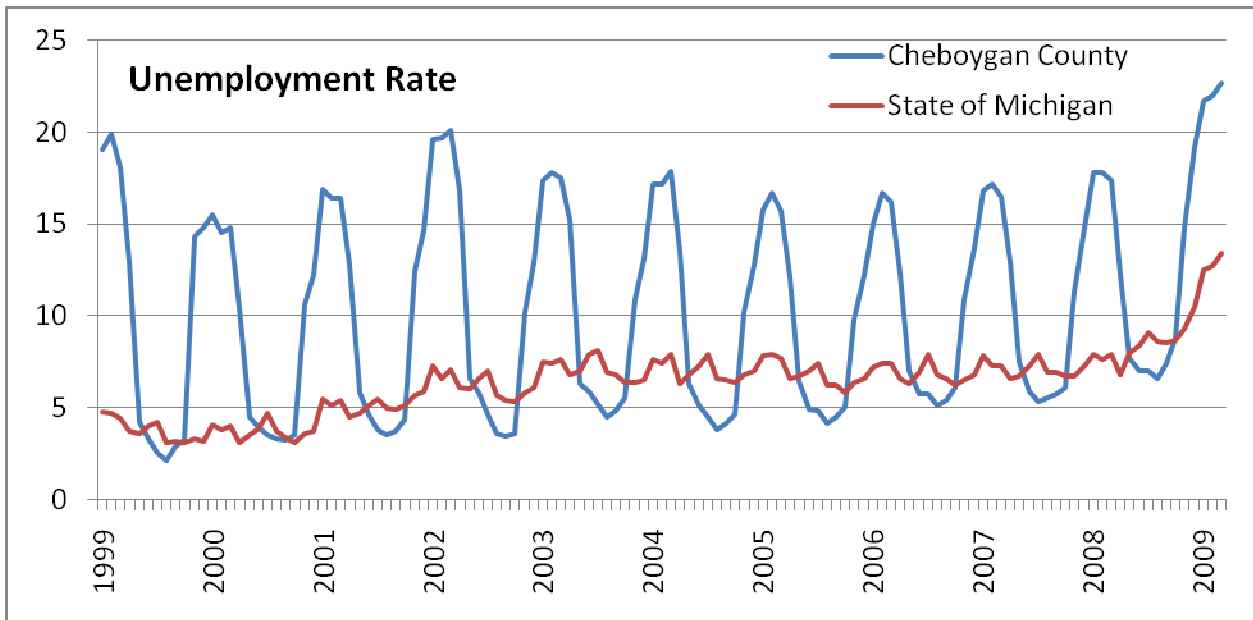
In order to have a more highly educated workforce, we need to create more educational opportunities for our residents. This can be achieved by creating more links to universities and community colleges. There are existing links to North Central Michigan College in Petoskey through satellite classrooms located in the city of Cheboygan. In Gaylord, the M-Tech Center and University Center provide technical and higher education opportunities. Also, there is a very large and prestigious satellite learning facility in Cheboygan County called the University of Michigan Biological Station, located on Douglas Lake. Many well-educated scientists have developed long-term attachments to Cheboygan County while studying there during their summers. Efforts should be made to encourage greater use of this camp and to find ways to tap into the brain trust that staff the facility every summer.

Household income - Between 1990 and 2000, the County and the state of Michigan both experienced greater increases in median household income than the nation. Between 2000 and 2007, Cheboygan County did better than the State of Michigan in income gains. Cheboygan County experienced 14% increase in median household income and the State of Michigan saw a 9% gain. However, the national average was still greater with a 19% gain in median household income. This increase in median household income may be due to early retirees, with higher incomes, moving into the area on a more permanent basis.

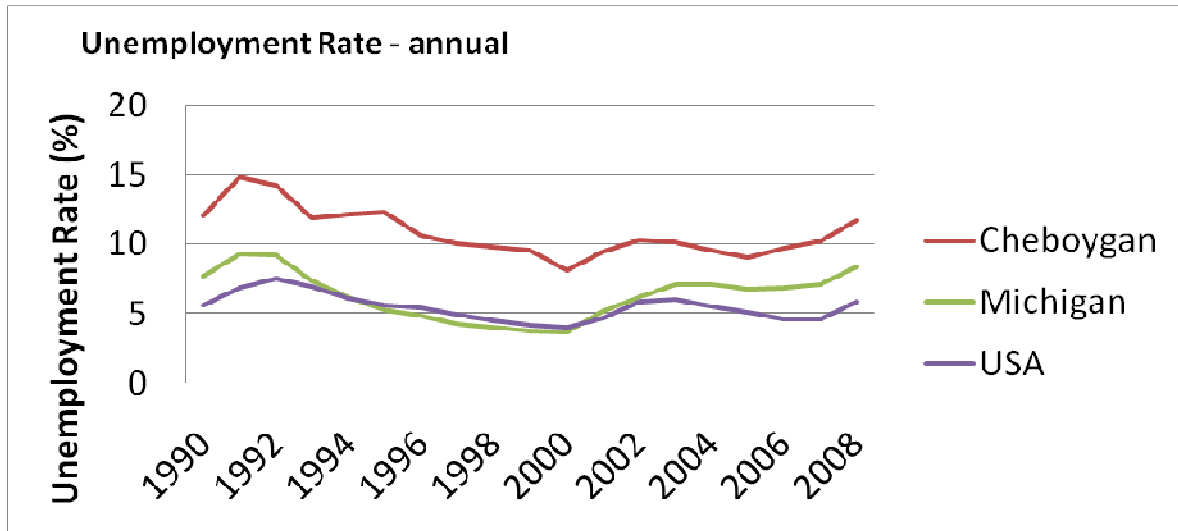


Employment/Unemployment

The following is a snapshot of unemployment trends, showing seasonal changes in Cheboygan County compared to the state of Michigan. Cheboygan County experiences a large fluctuation in seasonal employment levels due to the strong tourism industry. There are sustained periods during the winter where the county's unemployment levels are much greater than the state's average. Clearly, efforts need to be made to create more year-round employment and create employment opportunities in the winter months.



Annual unemployment rates have risen over the last 3-4 years at the county, state, and national levels. Cheboygan County has consistently experienced higher annual unemployment rates than both the state of Michigan and the nation. Although Cheboygan County saw a greater rate of increase in unemployment from 2005 to 2008 this *rate of increase* has more closely matched the state and the nation in recent years than it has in the past.



Industry Analysis

According to Blakey and Bradshaw in Planning Local Economic Development – Theory and Practice, some of the most common mistakes made in creating local economic development strategies involve inadequate assessments of the existing industries and local development capacity. Often, assumptions are made that any industry can locate in your area and the workforce will adapt. However, if local industry has historically been in natural resources sectors there is little innate ability of the existing workforce to handle an influx of, for instance, high tech firms. Also, local economic development strategies often pursue fad industries popular at the national or international level that may not necessarily survive in a local economy. There simply may not be the needed linkages (broadband, airports, railroads, schools) in the local economy to the larger national/international economies to sustain some industries. Therefore, it is important to analyze existing industries and know how to play to the region’s unique strengths.

An important point to make is that there is a myth that all rural economies are the same and that all rural economies will benefit from one rural development initiative. This is far from the truth. Each rural area is very unique and rural areas are unique compared to urban areas. In a 2004 report by the United States Economic Development Administration, titled *Competitiveness in Rural US Regions: Learning and Research Agenda*, a new thinking about regional rural economies is needed. The study found that industry clusters, which are broad networks of companies, suppliers, service firms, academic institutions, and related industries together bring new products or services to market. Each rural area has its own unique industry clusters. Not all rural areas are centered around traditional farming.

The U.S. EDA study stated that “clusters possess the primary elements needed to transform ideas into prosperity”. These elements are described in the study as follows:

1. **Universities and research centers** create new knowledge.
2. **Companies** transform this new knowledge into new services or products;
3. **Suppliers** provide critical components or equipment;
4. **Marketing and distribution firms** deliver the product to customers.

A strong regional cluster has more of these four elements within the region. A stronger cluster provides higher average wages, higher productivity, and greater innovation. This is important to the Cheboygan County strategic planning process because it is these unique clusters within our rural county that we need to identify and promote.

In January of 2009, Whittaker Associates, Inc. completed a study called the NLEA Targeted Business Development Strategy for the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA). NLEA is a four-county non-profit economic development organization, of which Cheboygan County is a partner. This study includes a thorough analysis of the existing industries in the region. The strongest local industries are identified as well as potential growth industries. This is a synopsis of that local industry analysis as it relates to Cheboygan County.

There are many ways to examine a local economy, one of which is to analyze the *location quotient* of a community. This method collects employment data within industry sectors from the nation, the state, and the local community to find out how the local mix of industries compares with the mix of industries at the national level. An industry with a higher location quotient employs a higher percentage of the local population than are employed as a percentage of the nation's workforce. More employees derive their income from an industry with a high location quotient and, therefore, the community will be more positively and negatively impacted by changes in that industry as a whole.

In Cheboygan County there is a much higher percentage of our workforce in the accommodation and food services industry compared to the nation. Other concentrations of employment are in retail trade, construction, health care and social services, and arts/entertainment/recreation.

Table of Location Quotients

(Higher concentrations of Cheboygan County employment are highlighted)

Industry	State of Michigan	Cheboygan	Traverse City MSA
Base Industry: Total, all industries	1	1	1
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	0.69	0.56	0.49
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas exploration	0.30	NC	1.33
NAICS 23 Utilities	1.18	1.10	1.25
NAICS 23 Construction	0.69	1.50	1.01
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	1.44	0.47	0.99
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	0.89	0.23	0.53
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	1.00	1.70	1.36
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and warehousing	0.77	0.57	0.36
NAICS 51 Information	0.68	0.45	0.88
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	0.81	0.59	0.97
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	0.79	0.44	0.76
NAICS 54 Professional and technical services	1.02	0.73	0.81
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	1.00	NC	0.10
NAICS 56 Administrative and waste services	1.04	0.29	0.57
NAICS 61 Educational services	0.85	0.50	1.14
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	1.09	1.45	1.40
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.00	1.40	0.73
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	0.96	1.80	1.27
NAICS 81 Other services, except public administration	0.92	1.03	0.84
Unclassified	3.47	NC	0.02

Source: US Census Bureau, as presented in *NLEA Targeted Business Development Strategies*, Whittaker Associates, 2008.

Whittaker Associates studied the recent industry expansion activity in the four county region of Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, and Emmet counties. Through a voluntary survey that sampled some of this activity 14 projects were identified. The most common types of projects included five in the accommodations industry and two were in miscellaneous manufacturing.

By analyzing employment data in various sectors in this same four-county region, Whittaker found growth in the following areas:

- Health and allied services
- Foundries
- Wood products
- Government services, including police and fire protection
- Automotive stampings
- Business services
- Building materials

- Construction
- Residential, skilled nursing and elderly care facilities
- Clinics and offices of doctors and dentists
- Metal fabrication products
- Certain machinery manufacturing
- Publishing
- Eating establishments

This is a regional study and not all of these sectors are active in Cheboygan County. It is important to note that this growth is recent and already occurring in the region. These are industry sectors that deserve support through tailored workforce training programs and expanded financing options.

State of Michigan Economic Development Efforts

The State of Michigan has an economic development corporation (MEDC) that has identified growth sectors for the state. There are six industries that are identified which are especially appropriate for our state.

Michigan's Growth Sectors

1. Renewable energy manufacturing
 - a. Wind generation
 - b. Advanced energy storage
 - c. Solar Cells
 - d. Cellulosic Bio-fuel
 - e. Hydro-Electricity
2. Automotive Engineering
3. Life Sciences
4. Homeland Security and Defense
5. Advanced Manufacturing
6. Film Industry

Our state is uniquely qualified to expand our economy into advanced manufacturing and high tech industries. The state's extensive network of manufacturers and skilled engineers that have supported automobile manufacturing can be applied to renewable energy manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, and the defense industry. There is also strong potential for growth in life sciences in the state.

The state has also provided extensive incentives to recruit the film industry through a 40% refundable tax credit on Michigan expenditures while filming in the state. An additional 2% can be added to this tax credit if filming in a core community, which includes the city of Cheboygan.

In addition to the MEDC's recommendations for targeting new business, Whittaker Associates in their regional study recommended similar industries. They distinguished between primary and secondary targets.

Primary Targets

Professional, Technical, and Scientific Service – these industries include research and development firms. In the four-county area there are approximately 1,900 people employed in such firms. Possible attractions in Cheboygan County for these firms include Cheboygan’s Hospital, the University of Michigan Biological Station, and the construction trades’ need for engineering services.

Health Care and Social Assistance – Cheboygan County has been a retirement destination for some time. With extensive lakeshore properties attracting wealthy retirees, the county is a potentially desirable location for these industries.

Metal and Plastic Parts Manufacturing – Whitaker Associates found this to be a “mature market” and the supply chain well established in our region. Because of this and promises of federal spending in these sectors it is believed that there will be an expanding market for these products which would make it beneficial to seek expansion of this industry sector in Cheboygan County. These industries also show promise in expanding to related industries such as renewable energy component manufacturing and medical devices.

Secondary Targets

- **Alternative, Renewable, and Produced Energy**
- **Accommodations, Food Service and Destination Resorts**
- **Agriculture, Food Processing, and Natural Resource Products**
- **Film, Arts, Music, and Entertainment**

Cheboygan County has some businesses that support the auto industry and some businesses which do related manufacturing and are uniquely qualified to be part of this statewide effort. In addition, the county has a biological station which is a well-utilized satellite facility for the University of Michigan. This link should be more thoroughly investigated for its spin-off life sciences research and development business potential.

Strategic options for EDC's

There are many roles an EDC can take in order to achieve its goals. The choice is based on the unique mix of economic development partners in the county and the resources available to the EDC. Blakely and Bradshaw, in Planning Local Economic Development, outline four basic strategic models. The chosen strategy for Cheboygan County is a mix of these options.

One option is to create a *local development* strategy that focuses on the built environment. This model focuses on creating the physical infrastructure that supports economic growth such as providing attractive streetscapes, sewer systems, broadband, affordable housing options, and better roadways to name a few. Some EDC's choose to focus on the demand side of the economic development equation and build a *business development* strategy. This model focuses the energy on recruiting new business, creating venture capital funds to retain and help local businesses expand, and creating a one-stop shop for business assistance.

An EDC can also focus on the supply side by creating the best possible workforce through a *human resource* strategy. A well-trained workforce is supported with programs such as custom training, welfare-to-work and school-to-work, and targeted placement. This requires businesses to receive government assistance for training and hiring local residents.

Depending on the size of the area the EDC serves, some take the opportunity to assist at the neighborhood level through a *community-based employment development* strategy. This strategy includes efforts to facilitate the establishment of cooperatively owned businesses where employees own and/or manage jointly held resources. EDC's using this strategy can assist in creating community-based development organizations. These are usually non-profit organizations that assist moving difficult-to-employ people into employment. Land trusts are also employed under this strategy option. Land trusts are a means for local governments to take control of economic opportunities by making more land available for business growth.

It is a combination of these four strategies that the Cheboygan County EDC will pursue. The county is very large and rural. The county will employ a *local development strategy* to assist local communities to best use their assets and create their own "sense of place". For instance, there is a need for sewers in the Indian River community, without which the community has severe growth limitations. Streetscape projects will be supported by the EDC to create attractive downtowns throughout the county.

The County EDC will use a *human resource* strategy to create additional training opportunities for our workforce. This effort will build our competitive edge in an increasingly global economy and will be a partnership with local educational institutions. Using a *business development* strategy the EDC will work to create the funding sources necessary for a revolving loan fund and venture capital funds for local business start-ups and to help local businesses expand.

Implementing a *community-based employment development* strategy, the EDC will seek opportunities to create cooperatives of local businesses. These could include cooperatively-owned business assets among compatible businesses.

Summary

For an economic development strategy to work in any community it must focus on creating successful industry sectors – networks of complementary businesses which support each other and utilize local resources. These sectors need to be supported by a well- and appropriately-trained workforce. New businesses in these sectors need a support network. Youth within the community need training in these growth sectors so that they remain in the community and support its growth.

Cheboygan County has many of these qualities. The county's workforce has low-turnover, is loyal, and skilled. There is great potential to tap into the brain trust created by being a valued vacation community that attracts many high-income, well-educated summer residents to its lake shores. There is also the potential to tap into the financial resources of these individuals to create venture capital or angel funding mechanisms. Many of the summer residents are business owners from the Detroit and Chicago areas which creates an opportunity to attract businesses from those areas also.

The region has quality schools and extensive business and industry workforce training programs. The workforce in the region is under-employed, which means they are not working to their full potential. There are many who have moved to the area for its natural beauty who have underemployed but highly educated spouses.

Cheboygan County also has the natural beauty and historic locales which are attractive to the film industry. An informal group has formed to create more opportunities to market all of Cheboygan County the Michigan Film Office and film location scouts.

The county has a very high quality of life which is well known by the residents and the visitors. Many people have a long history of visiting cabins here during the summer, hunting in the fall, and skiing or snowmobiling in the winter. From these memories emerge a strong connection to the land. These visitors and long-time residents have what can be called a strong "sense of place". A sense of place comes from a knowledge of the history, natural resources, and character of an area. Finding the characteristics that are shared by most people can help in creating a strong branding message for the county. A community with a strong sense of place is a community with a strong identity and character. It is more likely that people will remember having visited a community with a strong sense of place.

An example of a community that has implemented a strategy to develop a strong sense of place is Gaylord, Michigan, and their Alpine design requirements. Good examples of communities with a weak sense of place are those places along the highway that are clusters of franchise retail and restaurant businesses.. There is no clear identity, no sense of where you are.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

To achieve the mission, the Cheboygan County EDC established five strategic goals.

GOAL 1: Become a distinctive tourism destination

- Objective 1.1** Coordinate county-wide/regional tourism strategies
- Objective 1.2** Enhance natural assets
- Objective 1.3** Promote proper conservation
- Objective 1.4** Improve appearance of commercial areas

GOAL 2: Be recognized as a community that achieves energy independence and energy efficiency

- Objective 2.1** Review ordinances and other regulations as they relate to renewable energy
- Objective 2.2** Enhance community education relative to a systems approach to energy/energy conservation
- Objective 2.3** Implement/pursue renewable energy/energy efficiency initiatives
- Objective 2.4** Government sets example through energy efficiency policies for infrastructure and building projects.

GOAL 3: Enhance community vitality to sustain existing business, attract new business and create economic opportunities for today and tomorrow's citizens

- Objective 3.1** Seek youth retention
- Objective 3.2** Support local business clusters
- Objective 3.3** Market community's Quality of Life as place to start/locate business (goes beyond tourism)
- Objective 3.4** Second to none business retention
- Objective 3.5** Explore and market local credit opportunities

GOAL 4: Create a sustainable/healthy community

- Objective 4.1** Pursue "elder friendly" community enhancements.
- Objective 4.2** Enhance usage/development of recreational assets
- Objective 4.3** Review regulations to protect natural resources
- Objective 4.4** Redevelop existing properties

GOAL 5: Ensure that our workforce meets the needs of industry – today and tomorrow

- Objective 5.1** Conversations with youth
- Objective 5.2** Foster/nurture relationships with educational institutions
- Objective 5.3** Identify industry trends/needs
- Objective 5.4** Identify employee profile/gaps

Priority Action Items

1. Create a coordinated branding message that emphasizes a sense of place.
2. Create a thorough natural asset inventory and create appropriate sustainable economic development opportunities utilizing those natural assets.
3. Support local industry clusters such as small agricultural production, wood products, health services, tourism, construction, and manufacturing.
4. Explore local financing opportunities through micro-loans, local angel investors, and locally financed venture capital funds.
5. Promote and encourage development of recreational assets.
6. Review and revise as needed ordinances controlling renewable energy installations.
7. Promote economic development at all levels of community planning including Master Planning process, land use planning, business groups, service organizations' mission statements and township/city/village strategic planning.
8. Build the local workforce's skills in the following industries: renewable energy installation and related manufacturing trades, manufacturing of medical devices and other high value manufacturing trades, eco-tourism operations, agricultural production, niche food production, micro-loan funding, and high value construction trades such as energy efficiency installations.
9. Promote energy efficiency in government programs and capital improvement programs.
10. Support expansion of entrepreneurial support services.
11. Identify key research and development organizations that are associated with the Great Lakes, inland lakes, and/or rivers and streams to locate in the county.
12. Promote and expand the use of the county's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
13. Stop the youth brain drain from our rural area. Create a young professionals network.
14. Promote appropriate workforce training.

APPENDIX A

Goals, Objectives, Action Items

Complete List

In this appendix is an exhaustive list of goals, objectives and action items that are supported by the EDC. This list is provided to show all efforts including those that the EDC will be directly involved with and efforts that would be supported by the EDC but understood to be a primary responsibility of an economic development partner organization.

GOAL 1: Become a distinctive tourism destination

Objective 1.1 Coordinate county-wide/regional tourism strategies

- Create a coordinated branding message that emphasizes a sense of place.
- There are many unique communities within the county which, under a coordinated branding effort and marketing campaign, can best communicate those qualities to potential visitors and future residents. This effort is not meant to create a brand for Cheboygan County per se but a brand that emphasizes the many unique communities in our county.
- Coordinate local brand efforts with the State of Michigan's tourism promotional efforts.

Objective 1.2 Enhance natural assets

- Create a thorough natural asset inventory and partner with the public and private stewards of those natural assets to create appropriate sustainable economic development opportunities.
- Work closely with the DNR to improve promotional opportunities for our underutilized state recreational areas.
- Partner with the University of Michigan Biological Station to pursue appropriate spin-off research and development businesses.
- Encourage eco-tourism and agri-tourism businesses in the area.

Objective 1.3 Promote proper conservation

- Continue to promote proper natural resource protection in partnership with regional agencies.

Objective 1.4 Improve appearance of commercial areas

- Enhance the "sense of place" in each of the county's communities.
- Assist county's commercial centers in their efforts to enhance their downtowns and to appropriately promote their unique historical assets.
- Assist in communities' pursuit of streetscape improvements through grant assistance, local land use planning improvements, and façade improvement programs.
- Assist local artisans to promote their work and expand the potential niche markets.
- Provide assistance to create walkable communities and enhance trailside community assets.
- Encourage communities to become elder-friendly in order to enable elderly residents to stay in the area.

GOAL 2: Be recognized as a community that achieves energy independence and energy efficiency

Objective 2.1 Ensure appropriate land use controls to allow for and properly regulate renewable energy systems

- Review ordinances and other regulations as they relate to renewable energy, ensure they are appropriate for current technology and land use goals.

Objective 2.2 Enhance community education relative to a systems approach to energy production and energy conservation

- Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy implementation in government programs, capital improvement programs, and to business owners and residents.
- Promote energy efficiency programs to all homeowners through the Cheboygan County Housing Commission and other government assistance programs.
- Host educational series on energy efficiency and renewable energy to raise awareness of the long term land use impacts and economic development opportunities.
- Actively pursue renewable energy installations that are appropriate for our area and stop the millions of dollars lost from the county economy to pay for energy costs.
- Research local energy sources and enhance energy independence.
- Pursue policy for LEED designation in county infrastructure improvements, thereby leading by example.
- Pursue public/private partnership to implement renewable energy initiative within the county that serves as an example project.
- Create strong partnerships with local energy providers to ensure good communications and create sustainable energy for our county.
- Pursue waste-to-energy systems that use locally created solid waste streams for fuel in district heating and/or power generation.

Objective 2.3 Implement/pursue renewable energy/energy efficiency initiatives

- Build the local workforce's skills in the green industries.
- Partner with local educational institutions to create educational opportunities in the growth sector of renewable energy manufacturing and energy efficient building construction.
- Create "Green Learning Green Jobs" working group with local businesses, educational institutions, and local workforce training and government to ensure properly educated work force AND future homeowners.

Objective 2.4 Government sets example through energy efficiency policies for infrastructure and building projects.

- Adopt county policy that requires all building infrastructure improvements to meet a high standard of efficiency to, in turn, guarantee long-term cost savings for the county taxpayers.
- Pursue LEED designation in all government building improvements to ensure appropriate long-term stewardship of taxpayer investment in government resources.
- Update county master plan to include guidelines for capital improvements that ensure efficient buildings and other infrastructure.

GOAL 3: Enhance community vitality to sustain existing business, attract new business and create economic opportunities for today and tomorrow's citizens

Objective 3.1 Seek youth retention

- Host youth forums on economic development.

- Incorporate youth advisory council in county government.
- Support youth entrepreneurship training.
- Improve youth employment opportunities through apprenticeships, job shadowing programs.

Objective 3.2 Support local business clusters

- Pursue opportunities for local agricultural business clusters to create cooperatives.
- Pursue a cooperative lumber certification system for local lumber mills and potential for cooperative business arrangements of syrup producers.
- Create opportunities for artisans to collectively market their work.
- Pursue large scale wood chip gasification plant to expand local demand for local timber products and enhance energy independence.
- Support local/organic food system and market regional foods to associated national niche markets. Encourage participation in existing local food promotional programs such as Land Policy Institute's and in partnership with Northern Lakes Economic Alliance's existing food and agriculture programs.
- Create opportunities for local manufacturing industry clusters to expand into renewable energy, metal and plastic parts manufacturing, and medical instrument manufacturing.
- Continue to improve local infrastructure that will help to attract new and support existing business and industry.
- Encourage local units of government in seeking grants and low-interest loans to assist in improving and maintaining local infrastructure to support local business clusters.
- Encourage cooperative ventures among local governmental units in the improvement of infrastructure that crosses governmental boundaries (i.e. Broadband, highways, etc.).
- Support local tool-and-die and metal manufacturing industry cluster which create medical and scientific devices and renewable energy components.

Objective 3.3 Make Entrepreneurial resources readily available

- Actively pursue expansion of the broadband availability throughout the county.
- Create a young professionals club to encourage growth of the 24-35 year old age group.
- Encourage early retirees in their pursuit of entrepreneurial activities.
- Enhance collaboration with local economic development organizations and create an asset map which navigates through the many support services offered.
- Create a strong web presence for the County EDC with links to business resources.
- Support business resource centers
- Create EDC website that provides extensive, well-organized links to business resources.
- Create a communications strategy and marketing campaign to let people know of the community's assets in the field of entrepreneurial support.
- Work with local builders, developers, residents, and other area permitting agencies to streamline the development process.

Objective 3.4 Identify and pursue signature businesses that leverage existing community assets, both natural and human resources.

- Encourage new film industry recruiting efforts
 - Create local database of local assets for possible film locations. Link with State of Michigan's efforts to recruit and provide film tax credits.

- Create film industry ambassador program to host location scouts.
- Identify key research and development organizations that are associated with the Great Lakes, inland lakes, and/or rivers and streams to locate in the county. Partner with institutions of higher education to identify these potential organizations.
- Create employment opportunities in businesses that support the larger population of older adults.

Objective 3.5 Market community's Quality of Life as a place to start/locate business that goes beyond tourism and markets to our visitors.

- Create unique and attractive branding to market the region's quality of life.
- Enhance visitors' understanding of the value of the county's quality of life and potential for business relocation.
- Include local stakeholders as a target in a quality of life marketing campaign, recognizing that the local stakeholders must believe in the community's potential before others will believe in its potential for business development.

Objective 3.6 Second to none business retention

- Collaborate with other regional organizations on business retention visits and keep up to date on business and employee needs.
- Assist in succession planning seminars to encourage local entrepreneurs to buy into established local businesses.

Objective 3.7 Explore and market local financing opportunities

- Encourage development of a local venture or angel capital fund.
- Create County EDC-managed revolving loan fund to provide gap financing for those businesses that meet the county's economic development goals.
- Create a communications strategy and marketing campaign to let people know of the community's assets in the field of entrepreneurial support.

GOAL 4: Create a sustainable/healthy community

Objective 4.1 Pursue "elder friendly" community enhancements.

- Encourage community infrastructure improvements that accommodate the active adult while also accommodating universal accessibility.
- Encourage recreational facilities in more communities throughout the county.

Objective 4.2 Enhance usage/development of recreational assets

- Assist local communities along recreational trails to enhance the trail-related services they provide and to create a sense of place.
- Promote safe route to schools and other similar programs.
- Assist local tourist associations in promoting the inland waterway and other Great Lakes "blueways".

Objective 4.3 Review regulations to protect natural resources

- Educate public, builders and developers on natural resources protection best practices.

- Create economically viable opportunities to preserve farmland and enhance local agricultural opportunities (Community Supported Agriculture or CSA).

Objective 4.4 Redevelop existing properties

- Promote the potential for Brownfield redevelopment of existing properties.
- Create a commercial property database or promote existing commercial property databases to link potential buyers with appropriate Cheboygan County land.

GOAL 5: Ensure that our workforce meets the needs of industry – today and tomorrow

Objective 5.1 Stop the youth brain drain from our area.

- Enhance communications with the youth of our county.
- Host periodic meetings with youth leaders to tap their knowledge and insight into the community needs and to increase their involvement in their own community.
- Create opportunities for youth involvement in local government.
- Encourage youth entrepreneurship programs in the schools.
- Support programs that link youth to local career opportunities, such as job shadowing, apprenticeships, mentoring, etc.

Objective 5.2 Foster/nurture relationships with educational institutions

- Facilitate regular meetings of workforce training roundtables with NCMC, IBIT, local primary schools.
- Continue to educate local businesses on the availability of workforce training programs for their existing employees.

Objective 5.3 Identify industry trends/needs & identify employee profile/gaps

- Produce and distribute quarterly report on economic and employment data with summary for Cheboygan County – national/regional/local trends, employment trends, permit data, etc.

APPENDIX B

Other Economic Development Agencies

Serving Cheboygan County

Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA)

Mission Statement: The Northern Lakes Economic Alliance is a non-profit economic development partnership providing resources to create and retain quality jobs in Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan and Emmet Counties.

About Us: The Northern Lakes Economic Alliance is a public/private non-profit organization serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan and Emmet Counties in Michigan. Established in 1984, the NLEA mission is to serve as a resource to local communities and businesses to retain and create jobs. Building on the strong history and our “corporate culture” of regional cooperation, Cheboygan County joined the NLEA in January 2007, thus expanding our service area to four counties.

The NLEA works directly with local units of government on infrastructure projects, which facilitates local company growth and expansion and assists many local companies on a wide range of issues that helps retain existing jobs and create new jobs.

We pro-actively approach economic development as a “team sport” and work hard to strengthen partner relationships, network public and private sectors, and work collaboratively to address economic development challenges and opportunities in our area.

Some examples of this include implementing a joint manufacturing/major employer retention call program along with the MEDC and Michigan Works!, a community retention program with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority; transforming our golf outing into a “non-golf” relationship-building event, and we collaborate with the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments on projects ranging from area transportation planning to sustainable business forums.

Working with area chambers of commerce, the NLEA conducted a regional economic perspective survey. Business counseling and advanced technical support was provided to start-up companies as well as existing companies wishing to grow, through resources from the Small Business Technology and Development Center and the MSU Product Center.

Services Provided: By definition, economic development is typically measured in terms of jobs and income. However, economic development is multi-dimensional, and its success is determined by the combination of community and business development activities that affect and improve the community as a whole. To that end, the NLEA nurtures partnerships and collaborations with a variety of organizations and provides assistance with the following:

- Grant administration
- Strategic planning
- Industrial park development
- Infrastructure development
- Community marketing
- Business attraction activities
- Downtown revitalization
- Economic assessment/analysis
- Historic preservation
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Liaison to government agencies
- Grant writing
- Community retention visits

- Business retention visits
- Business plan development
- Market analysis
- Agriculture business support
- Financial projections
- Business licensing assistance
- Entrepreneurial resources
- Business incubator program

Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)

Mission Statement: NEMCOG is committed to facilitating the development of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination within the eight county region on Northeast Michigan. The agency is also committed to providing for a controlled growth policy; to preserve and improve the environment, to pursue greater efficiency and responsiveness of local units of governments, and to improve the ecological, social, and economic well-being of citizens within 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.

Services Provided: NEMCOG offers a variety of services to Northeast Michigan. Primarily it offers Technical Assistance to communities for:

- ◆ Community Planning
- ◆ Grant Writing Assistance
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Data Distribution
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Regional Planning

Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (MiSBTDC), (Cheboygan County office)

Mission Statement: The Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center™ (MI-SBTDC™) enhances Michigan's economic well-being by providing counseling, training, research and advocacy for new ventures, existing small businesses and innovative technology companies. With offices statewide, the MI-SBTDC positively impacts the economy by strengthening existing companies, creating new jobs, retaining existing jobs, and assisting companies in defining their path to success. The State Headquarters, located at Grand Valley State University, supports 12 regional offices and over 30 satellite offices, each providing counseling and training to small business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the 83 counties in Michigan through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

History: The Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC), a statewide network providing services for emerging and growing small businesses, has grown tremendously since its affiliation with Grand Valley State University began nearly ten years ago.

The MI-SBTDC is part of a national network of Small Business Development Centers committed to the launch of new ventures and growth of existing small companies. The MI-SBTDC is a partner program of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), providing technical assistance, market research and one-on-one counseling to small companies.

Michigan Works! Cheboygan County

Mission Statement: The mission of the Michigan Works! Association is to provide leadership and services, and promote quality and excellence for the advancement of Michigan's Workforce Development System and its customers and professionals.

About Us: Michigan Works! Association was established in 1987 to foster high-quality employment and training programs serving employers and workers by providing support activities and a forum for information exchange for Michigan's Workforce Development System. The Association's members are the workforce development board chairs, local-elected officials, and Michigan Works! Agencies that cover twenty-five workforce areas.

Michigan Works! Association also offers associate membership to organizations with a vested interest in workforce development. Through the Association's three pronged approach to organizational development, members are able to:

- access professional development opportunities to ensure high-quality programs and service delivery to all customers;
- receive logistical support as a way to network and share best practices;
- partake in education and promotion of the Michigan Works! System, through special events and;
- keep legislators and others informed on workforce development issues.

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA)

Mission Statement: Our mission at Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc., (NEMCSA), is to provide quality planning, programs, and services to individuals, families, and communities through the best use of human and financial resources.

About Us: Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc. (NEMCSA) is a private, non-profit Community Action Agency - part of a state and national network of Community Action Agencies. The basic service area of the agency is eleven northeast Michigan counties covering 6,300 square miles. The counties are Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, and Presque Isle. Other counties are included in several program areas. The agency is governed by a 33 member Board of Directors. This Board, in compliance with P.A. 230, brings together equal representation of the public and private sectors and the clients who receive services. In this manner, policy and fiscal matters as well as program and service issues are reviewed by those who have the insights to provide meaningful guidance to NEMCSA.

NEMCSA brings together federal and state grant funds as well as dollars from local private and public sources. These resources are then directed into programs which aid the poor and otherwise disadvantaged throughout the age spectrum, from pre-schoolers to the elderly of northeast Michigan. The funds include targeted dollars aimed at very specific problems as well as dollars which are more flexible in nature.

In addition, the agency provides assistance to local governments and other non-profit agencies in securing funding for a range of projects which benefit communities and individuals within the NEMCSA service area.

Service Programs:

- Area Agency on Aging
- Client Services
- Care Management/Community Based Care
- Community Development
- Head Start / Early Head Start
- Michigan Works!
- School Success
- Volunteers

Northern Initiatives

Mission Statement: Northern Initiatives is a private, non-profit community development corporation that provides tailored business solutions to advance and connect rural communities and their economies.

Programs:

- Business Loans
- Business Consulting Services
- Trees and Tourism
- Entrepreneurial Education

History: Established in 1985 to find innovative ways to enhance the regional economy, Northern Initiatives first functioned as an academic department at Northern Michigan University (NMU). In 1992, NMU entered into a unique partnership with ShoreBank Corporation, a community development bank headquartered in Chicago, to reform Northern Economic Initiatives Corporation as a not-for-profit community development corporation. Its purpose would be and continues to be that of serving the Upper Peninsula of Michigan by working to improve its economic conditions and develop its communities.

Today the corporation has assets of over \$11.6 Million and a staff of sixteen. It receives its governance from a 16-member board of directors comprised of representatives of NMU, ShoreBank Corporation and leading members of the business and manufacturing community. Our service area has grown to encompass the 15 counties of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, 29 counties in the northern Lower Peninsula and the 5 Wisconsin counties that border the U.P.

Northern Initiatives provides business development services to over 200 companies annually and has issued \$20 Million in loan funds to customers since 1994. In addition to the technical assistance services that complement our lending services, NI provides a wide range of business consulting services. We are affiliated with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership program in Michigan.

Present research and development efforts include work with secondary wood manufacturers to identify new and expanded or alternative markets for residual materials and as a cooperative partner supporting efforts to promote nature tourism in the region.

Northern Shores Loan Fund

Mission Statement: Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc., a nonprofit corporation assists entrepreneurs of Northern Michigan with training, business incubation, and access to capital that fosters economic development for the Northern Michigan community.

Statement of Purpose: The Corporation was formed for charitable and educational purposes to promote economic and social development for the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians (LTBB). This will include training, technical assistance, business incubation and a loan fund for potential and existing entrepreneurs who may or may not be tribal citizens of LTBB.

Services:

Meeting small business loan needs in N. Michigan

Do you have a successful small business that is growing and struggling to obtain the financial assistance to take it to the next level? Have you always wanted to start a business but didn't know where to begin? Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc. is here to help!

Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc. is a new nonprofit corporation established to assist entrepreneurs of Northern Michigan with education, training, business incubation and access to capital that fosters economic development for the Northern Michigan community. We offer a variety of loan products including micro-loans and larger small business loans.

Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc. is an emerging Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) providing loans to those businesses that have found it difficult to meet conventional lending institution requirements. CDFI's bridge the gap between the economic mainstream and economically disadvantaged people and communities.

Assistance for New & Existing Businesses

Whether you have an idea for a new business and are unsure of where to begin, or you are an established business and feel you are missing the tools to take it to the next level, Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc. has the resources available to help entrepreneurs succeed through lending and technical assistance.

Technical Support Areas:

- Web-based Marketing
- Business Plan Development
- Credit Counseling
- Accounting Principles
- Business Structuring
- Business Tax Preparation
- Business Software Education

Target Alpena Revolving Loan Fund

History: Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation is the title chosen to identify Alpena County's most aggressive effort to move our area ahead for growth in the 21st century.

Established in 1987, formerly the Greater Alpena Industrial Development Corporation, now called Target Alpena Economic Development Corporation has been a driving force to stabilize the economy in Alpena County. The initial surge of Target Alpena can be contributed to economic development study completed by the Midwest Research Institute (MRI). The study was able to identify ten constraints to economic growth in the region. Using strategies from the MRI Study over the last decade, Target has initiated programs and provided assistance to the region with the hope of overcoming the identified constraints. Through Target's initiatives, the economy is steadily growing in Northeast Lower Michigan.

Through continued support from the State of Michigan's Economic Development Corporation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Economic Development Administration, and local municipalities. Target has maintained a Revolving Loan Program and a Micro Revolving Loan Program, which have helped to grow small businesses. These programs have resulted in the direct job creation and retention of 300 plus jobs in the Alpena area. The loan programs have also financed 1.75 million in loans to high risk area businesses.

In 2006, Target underwent a restructuring and partnered with the Alpena Area Chamber of Commerce in order to further economic development in the region. The board of Target consists of representation from the public sector, private sector, city, townships, county, and other regional economic development organizations. Included in this restructuring is the formation of the Future Leaders Committee, which develops young leaders by providing informative dialogues, presentation opportunities, and assisting in projects that help Target achieve its goals. In addition to the Future Leaders, Target Alpena also operates a Loan, Real-estate, Executive and Marketing committees with several more committees being developed. With support from the City of Alpena, Alpena Township, Alpena County, and from the private sector, Target Alpena Development Corporation is able to help all area businesses reach their full potential.

Currently, Target is redeveloping their strategic plan for the future, with special emphasis placed on business retention, business recruitment, entrepreneurial growth, infrastructure, and internal operations. This strategic plan will be highly flexible and will allow Target to assist even more businesses in the growing region. Through continued collaboration with all entities at the federal, state, local and private level, Target is looking forward to a positive economic future and a better life for all residents of Northeast Lower Michigan.

Structure

Target operates as a 501c3 organization comprised of a 32 person board of directors, which represent a full spectrum of Alpena. Representatives from the city, county, industrial employers, small business, health, education, and more all work together at Target to enhance the well-being of Alpena and its citizens. Members from the Target Board of Directors are selected to serve on the Target Alpena Executive Committee (TEC). The goal of the TEC is to take some of the strain of the day to day management of Target off of the full Board of Directors.

Services

Target Alpena maintains several services that are available to the residents of Alpena County, as well as to Northeast Lower Michigan.

- **Loan Programs**

The Revolving Loan Fund and the Micro Revolving Loan Fund are the principal reason for Target's creation. Both of these programs are based on job creation and retention.

- **Revolving Loan Program**

The Revolving Loan Program covers \$30,000 - \$50,000. This program is only available to businesses in

Alpena County. The funds must be used to create or retain at least one job for every \$10,000 borrowed, and the borrower must be able to acquire at least two-thirds of their total financing from other sources. If you would like to apply, please download this [application form](#).

- **Micro Revolving Loan Program**

The Micro Revolving Loan Program covers loans from \$10,000 - \$30,000. The availability of this program is limited to Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, and Otsego counties. If you would like to this application, it is available for download here.

([Section 1](#), [Section 2](#), [Section 3](#))

- **Business Recruitment**

Are you looking to relocate your business to Alpena or the surrounding area? Target can help! Lee Shirey, our Chief Economic Development Officer, is always on hand to assist with business relocation. Contact him at the Target office at (989) 364-2666.

- **Grant Applications**

Target also assists local organizations with grant applications for events, fundraiser's, etc.

- **Renaissance Zones**

There are four Renaissance Zones in Alpena County: Commerce Industrial Park (which Target owns), The Armory Building in Downtown Alpena, Alpena Regional Airport, and Oxbow Development. These locations are available for businesses to relocate, and are virtually tax-free for any business. The taxes that residents of these Renaissance zones are free from include:

- Single Business Tax
- State personal income tax
- 6-mill state education tax
- Local personal property tax
- Local real property tax
- Local income tax
- Utility users tax