



Economic Development Assistance

What makes the City of Hancock a great place to start a business?

For over 150 years, the City of Hancock has been the home of resilient descendants of immigrants who came to the region for a better life. Through the decades, people who visit are often drawn back to live here and with the ability to work remotely, some are opting out of the chaos of big cities for the beauty of the area and the quality of life. The demographics are changing and consumers have new needs and wants.

Finlandia and Michigan Technological Universities and a satellite campus of Gogebic Community College are all in the immediate area. The students graduating from these institutions offer a diverse talent pool.

The city offers a mix of consumer services, old-fashioned retail, food establishments and industry that is on the cutting edge of technology. Our downtown is traditional with amazing architecture, street-level retail and upper-level residential spaces. The opportunities for expansion of retail offerings, additional food and beverage establishments and services are growing.

We experience four distinct seasons of spectacular views and adventures. Now as a cruise destination on the Great Lakes, the opportunity for growth of the tourism industry and related services has exponentially grown.

Check out this guide to local, regional, and state assistance and resources available. The City of Hancock is a great place to live, learn, play and work and we want to help you start your business here.

City Assistance:

- **DDA Façade Grants** – The City of Hancock Downtown Development Authority offers 1:1 matching funds up to \$10,000 for approved exterior improvements to business locations and up to a maximum \$500 for architectural services. DDA meetings are scheduled at 6:00 PM, the first Monday of the month at City Hall Council Chambers.
 - <https://www.cityofhancock.com/docs/DDA%20Facade%20Grant%20Program%20Document.pdf>

- **Small Business JumpStart Program**– The City of Hancock Downtown Development Authority offers up to \$3,000 for specified expenses for new small business locating in the DDA district. DDA meetings are scheduled at 6:00 PM, the first Monday of the month at City Hall Council Chambers.
 - https://cityofhancock.com/docs/Jumpstart_Incentive_Plan_and_Application.pdf

Regional Assistance:

- **Houghton County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (HCBRA)** – Provides significant incentives to developers to facilitate the redevelopment of blighted, obsolete or tax reverted qualifying sites throughout the County and work to clean up contaminated soil and ground water.
 - Incentive: The primary incentives include the use of tax increment financing authorities (TIF) along with the management of brownfield grants and loans.
 - HCBRA Policies and Procedures: https://www.houghtoncounty.net/docs/Brownfield_Policies_Procedures.pdf
 - HCBRA Project Application Form: https://www.houghtoncounty.net/docs/Brownfield_Application.pdf
 - Elizabeth Bjorn, Administrator
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-8307
 - ❖ Email: controller@houghtoncounty.net
 - ❖ Website: <https://www.houghtoncounty.net/commissions-brownfield.php>
- **Houghton County Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)** – Provides working capital and help businesses purchase machinery and equipment for projects in Houghton County. Loans can be from \$5,000 to \$100,000 and are based on the borrower's ability to create new jobs for Keweenaw residents.
 - Jeff Ratcliffe, Executive Director
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-6817
 - ❖ Email: jeff@kedabiz.com
 - ❖ Website: <https://kedabiz.com/>

- **Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA)** – Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA) - Provides a range of assistance to startups, small businesses, and developers including referrals to appropriate regional and state resources, and project planning and financial packaging.
 - Jeff Ratcliffe, Executive Director
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-6817
 - ❖ Email: jeff@kedabiz.com
 - ❖ Website: <https://kedabiz.com/>

- **Keweenaw Chambers of Commerce** – The Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary organization of business professionals from Houghton and Keweenaw Counties, who have joined together for the purpose of promoting the economic well-being of the business community in the Keweenaw Peninsula. The Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce plays a significant role on business, income, and future growth of the area. The chambers mission is to advance the community and economic vitality of the Keweenaw Peninsula.
 - Katie Schlieff, Chamber Support Specialist
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-5240
 - ❖ Email: info@keweenaw.org
 - ❖ website: <https://www.keweenaw.org/>

- **Michigan Tech Enterprise Corporation (MTEC) SmartZone** – is a nonprofit entrepreneurial support center. MTEC SmartZone assists and facilitates tech-based work and ideas that come from inventors, innovators, and researchers. They collaboratively work with the cities of Houghton and Hancock, Michigan Technological University, and Finlandia University to provide facilities and resources to support businesses flourish.
 - David Rowe, CEO
 - ❖ Office: (906) 487-7000
 - ❖ Email: mtec@mtcesz.com
 - ❖ Website: <https://www.mtcesz.com/>

- **Upper Peninsula Michigan Works** – Michigan Works fills in the gap between technical skills and employers, providing trainings and workshops to potential employees. They have developed economic development partnerships throughout the region, bolstering their recruitment databases, business services, and training while keeping up with current events through career fairs and job listings.
 - Bill Raymond, CEO
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-6916
 - ❖ Email: wraymond@isupward.org
 - ❖ Website: <https://upmichiganworks.org/>

- **Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR)** – WUPPDR helps to facilitate access to community development funding sources such as the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) and various state agencies. WUPPDR also serves as a central point of contact for data and resources throughout the Western Upper Peninsula.
 - Jerry Wuorenmaa, Executive Director
 - ❖ Office: 906-482-7205
 - ❖ Email: info@wuppdr.org
 - ❖ Website: <https://www.wuppdr.org/>

State Assistance:

- **Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)**: MEDC offers many funding incentives geared toward gap financing for community and business development infrastructure and acquisition projects. The Hancock City Manager can assist businesses in determining whether MEDC may meet their needs, and if so, can connect businesses with the appropriate agency staff.
 - Vicki Schwab, Senior Business Development Manager
 - ❖ Cell: 906-235-9208
 - ❖ Email: schwabv@michigan.org
 - ❖ Website: <https://www.michiganbusiness.org/services/>
 - ❖ Location: 300 N. Washington Square, Lansing, MI, 48913
 - To learn more about other grants and loans opportunities that you may be eligible for, go to <https://www.miplace.org/programs/>
- **Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** – The Michigan SBDC provides business plan development, market research, workshops, financial management, strategic planning, human resources, and organizational development. Their goal is to enhance Michigan’s economic wellbeing by strengthening existing companies, creating new jobs, retaining existing jobs, and assisting companies in defining their path to success.
 - Daniel Yoder, Senior Business Consultant: Contact Information
 - ❖ Office: 906-487-2469
 - ❖ Cell: 906-231-0417
 - ❖ Email: dayoder@mtu.edu
 - ❖ Website: <https://michigansbdc.org/>
- **Northern Initiatives** – Offers loans to small businesses and entrepreneurs who might not otherwise qualify, lifting up the jobs market in various industries. Northern Initiatives also

assists new business owners with other services such as business coaching, marketing materials, and technical assistance.

- Coleen Duflo, Senior Commercial Lender
 - ❖ Office: 906-420-0907
 - ❖ Email: cduflo@northerninitiatives.org
 - ❖ Website: <https://northerninitiatives.org/>

- **Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTc)** – Connects Michigan’s job seekers and employers, and serves as a central hub linking all public and private stakeholders who support Michigan’s workforce.

- ❖ Customer Contact Center: 1-888-522-0103
- ❖ website: <https://www.mitalent.org/>