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Press Release

For immediate release

HUBZONE DESIGNATION OPENS NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR AROOSTOOK BUSINESSES; FREE WORKSHOP OFFERED

AROOSTOOK COUNTY — Businesses in Aroostook County now have another tool to grow their sales. The federal government recently announced a change in the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) program, which should benefit northern Maine.

“The recently updated HUBZone Map now has all of Aroostook County in a qualified HUBZone,” said Amy Bassett, District Director of Maine SBA. “While we understand the challenges Aroostook county small businesses are facing, we want to seize on the opportunity and benefits that the HUBZone program presents and help stimulate the region's economy by getting federal contracts flowing to eligible small businesses. The HUBZone Program can help with that, and by working with SBA and Maine Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) counselors to apply, Maine small businesses will receive quicker decisions from SBA's HUBZone Program office.”

The Historically Underutilized Business Zones program was enacted into law as part of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997. The program encourages economic development in historically underutilized business zones through the establishment of preferences. Those preferences to HUBZone qualified companies include competitive and sole source contracting, 10 percent price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions, as well as subcontracting opportunities and the federal government has a goal of awarding three percent of all dollars for federal prime contracts to HUBZone-certified small businesses.

To learn more about the HUBZone designation, Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) and Maine PTAC are holding a workshop with James Pineau of the SBA Thursday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to noon at the NMDC office in Caribou.

“The HUBZone program can help drive job growth and economic investment in Aroostook County because certified HUBZone businesses must have their principal office located in a HUBZone and at least 35 percent of their employees must reside in the HUBZone,” said NMDC Executive Director Robert Clark. “NMDC will be happy to help any business that would like to become HUBZone certified.”

The workshop is free and open to any business owner or representative that wants to learn more about the program. Maine PTAC Business Counselor Dana Delano, will also present on what it takes to sell to government entities and opportunities that are available locally and outside the area.

Space is limited, and RSVP's are encouraged. To register, contact Delano at ddelano@nmdc.org or by calling (207) 521-1713.

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