

TOWN OF GORHAM

Economic Development Strategic Plan

June 2025

PREPARED FOR:

Town of Gorham, ME
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This strategy report was developed with input from Town of Gorham staff, the Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC), members of the local and regional business community, economic developers, and real estate professionals during one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and public meetings. This strategy report and the recommendations that come from it reflect the feedback received.



Gorham is perfectly located for businesses to thrive in Southern Maine. A thriving community of 18,000+ people located a few miles from Portland and just minutes from the Maine Turnpike (I-95), we pride ourselves on supporting businesses across all industries. Gorham is a community bursting with talent: a well-educated workforce, high-quality schools, and a network of business leaders. For more information, visit: <https://gorhammaine.org/about/the-gorham-advantage/>



Camoin Associates has provided economic development consulting services to municipalities, economic development agencies, and private businesses since 1999. To learn more about their experience and projects across all their service lines, please visit www.camoinassociates.com

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Executive Summary | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

Gorham, Maine, is at a pivotal moment, balancing its strong foundation of past accomplishments with the need to adapt and reprioritize in the face of growth pressures and economic shifts. As the Town evolves, proactively addressing these challenges will unlock new economic development opportunities while preserving the character and values that define the community. A successful approach will rely on close collaboration and communication between Town departments and the Town Council, with consistent, transparent engagement with residents and businesses.

Maintaining Gorham's unique identity is a central tenet of this strategy. This strategy reflects the priorities and needs identified through direct engagement with the business community, ensuring that economic development efforts are both responsive and forward-thinking. Through these efforts, Gorham is positioning itself to evolve as an economically vibrant community where businesses seek to start, expand, or relocate.

During the implementation of this plan, Gorham will face shifting market forces and potentially transformational projects, namely the proposed Gorham Connector. While it is important to acknowledge the potential of this project, its actual development remains uncertain. In the meantime, Gorham must acknowledge and focus on other projects that are already in the pipeline and proactively plan for economic growth throughout the Town. In the long term, alternative approaches to transportation systems in the area may also be worthy of further exploration.

Therefore, this strategy propels Gorham's economic development forward by building on ongoing projects, leveraging dynamic leadership, and aligning with the Town's vision for growth. It strengthens conditions for investment while redefining how Gorham and its partners drive economic progress. Rooted in a Town-wide approach, this plan positions the Economic Development Division (EDD), the Town's Economic Development Subcommittee, and Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC) as catalysts for action while fostering strong collaboration with local and regional partners. By capitalizing on both industrial opportunities and the locally focused industries that enhance Gorham's quality of life, this strategy aims to support a resilient economy. Building on the momentum of early 2025 initiatives, it delivers a proactive framework for sustainable economic success.

Execution of the strategy will rely on a concentrated effort not just by Town staff but by partners at the local and regional levels. Documentation of the Town's role, along with established partners, is discussed on pages 28-30.

Considerations for Successful Economic Development

The success of economic development projects is built on numerous factors that must be measured and acknowledged by the EDD. As Gorham advances the strategy and specific initiatives, **market feasibility**, **financial feasibility**, and **community feasibility** must be considered with the understanding that one factor may outweigh another, depending on the situation. The planning process for the strategy primarily took into account market feasibility and community feasibility. Additional documentation and analysis will be needed on a project-by-project basis for financial feasibility.



GORHAM ASSETS DRIVING THE STRATEGY

Growing Population and Young Workforce:

Gorham's expanding population fuels local spending, supports new business formation, and potentially supplies a suitable workforce critical for growing industries, strengthening both the economy and the tax base.

Strong Existing Business Community:

Supporting existing businesses retains local talent and celebrates the mix of sectors within Gorham with minimal new investment.

Industrial Site Opportunities:

Capturing industrial demand generates substantial tax revenue while providing high-wage jobs that boost the community's overall prosperity.

Tight Retail Market and Expansion Potential:

While retail is a challenging sector to thrive in, retail and professional services show unmet demand in the Gorham region. New retailers will stimulate local spending, increase property values, and enhance the concentration of overall activity for businesses.

Walkable Village Areas:

Encouraging density in walkable village areas through mixed-use development will help efficiently use existing infrastructure and concentrate business activity while simultaneously conserving Gorham's coveted agricultural businesses and lands. Integrating trail systems and recreation into the walkable village areas is a highly valued asset for residents and for businesses to capitalize on this traffic.

Proximity to Portland + Maine Turnpike:

Easy access to regional transportation corridors enhances Gorham's appeal to businesses, stimulating investment in Gorham's industrial target industries. These uses include: select types of food and beverage manufacturing, processing, storage (i.e., cold storage), construction-related activities, specialized appliance manufacturing, and high-value/high-tech manufacturing. These industries show high levels of competitiveness and will benefit from an existing skilled workforce base. Warehouse and distribution to support existing businesses or a new location could also be a fit with regional needs, depending on the size and scale of the facility.

Available Land for Growth:

Strategic development of underutilized or vacant land offers Gorham opportunities to diversify its economy and attract or promote the expansion of its target industries:

GORHAM'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY GOALS

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character
2. Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure
3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

STRATEGIC STARTING POINTS

Actions that will jumpstart Gorham's economic development strategy. More details can be found on page 50.

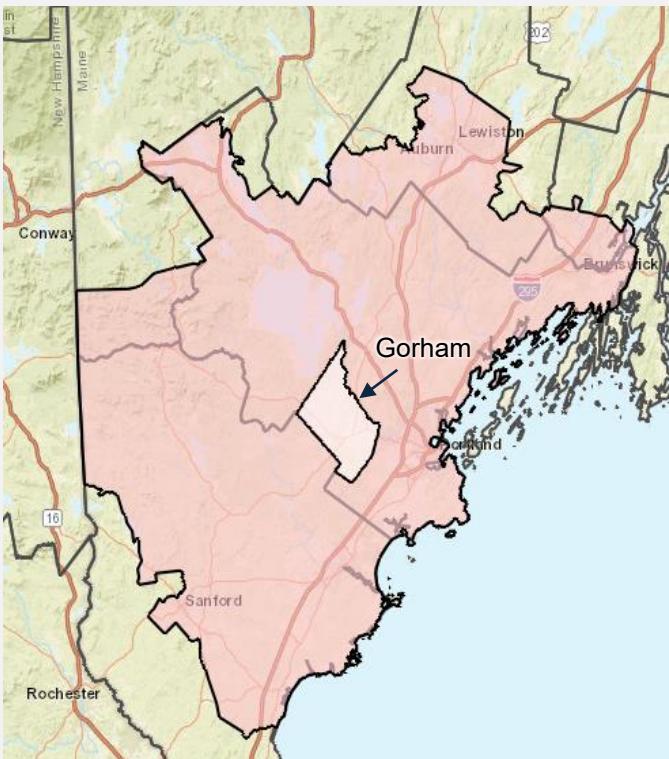


- Strengthen business relationships.
- Update zoning in target area.
- Advance housing diversification.
- Advance long-term infrastructure planning to sustain economic growth.

Introduction | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

The strategy's geographic focus is centered on the Town of Gorham. While assessing the area, we evaluated a set of comparison geographies to gain an in-depth understanding of the surrounding area's economic and industry base. Data was collected and analyzed for the following study areas: the Town of Gorham and the regional study area defined by the 45-minute drive time and labor shed.

Map of Study Areas



Towns and cities included in the Regional Study Area:

- Alfred
- Arundel
- Auburn
- Baldwin
- Biddeford
- Bridgton
- Brunswick
- Buxton
- Cape Elizabeth
- Casco
- Cornish
- Cumberland
- Dayton
- Durham
- Falmouth
- Freeport
- Gorham
- Gray
- Hiram
- Hollis
- Kennebunk
- Kennebunkport
- Lewiston
- Limerick
- Limington
- Lyman
- Naples
- New Gloucester
- Newfield
- North Yarmouth
- Old Orchard Beach
- Parsonfield
- Poland
- Porter
- Portland
- Pownal
- Raymond
- Saco
- Sanford
- Scarborough
- Sebago
- Shapleigh
- South Portland
- Standish
- Topsham
- Waterboro
- Wells
- Westbrook
- Windham
- Yarmouth

Community Conditions

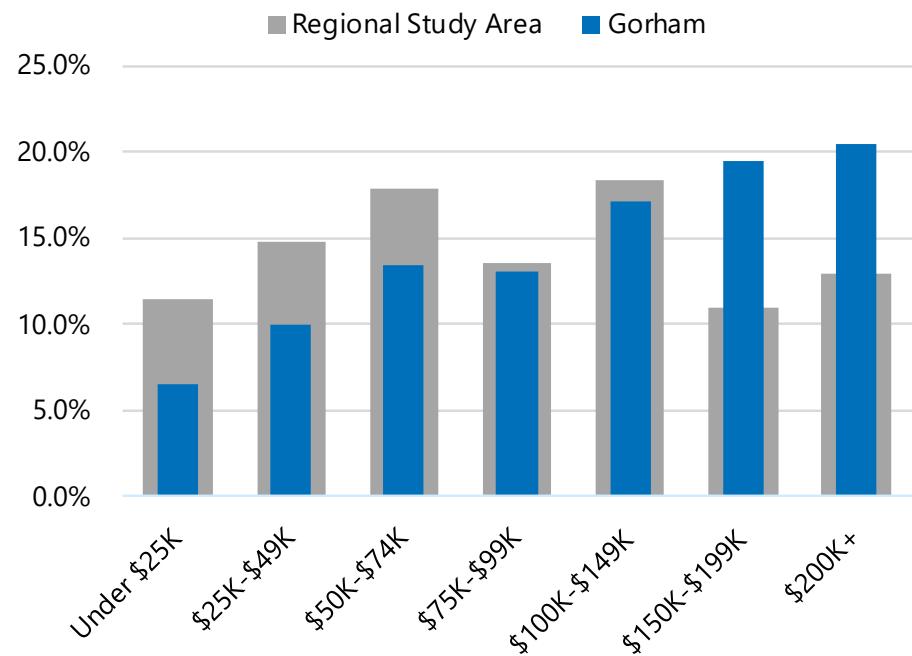
Additional local and regional context can be found in Appendix I.

- Gorham's population is growing fast and has been outpacing the Regional Study Area, the state, and the nation's growth rates since 2010.
- Gorham has a young median age and a notable population of working-aged adults and families with children.
- Gorham is a relatively high-income community, with a high share of households that have annual incomes of over \$150,000.
- Four out of five people who work in Gorham live in other towns and cities.
- Gorham faces a home affordability gap, meaning that a household earning a median income cannot afford the median house for sale.
- Gorham's housing stock is largely made up of owner-occupied single-family homes.



The median single-family home in Gorham sold for \$560,000 in 2023. In the first half of 2024, the median sale price was down slightly, at \$540,000.

Household Income Distribution, 2024

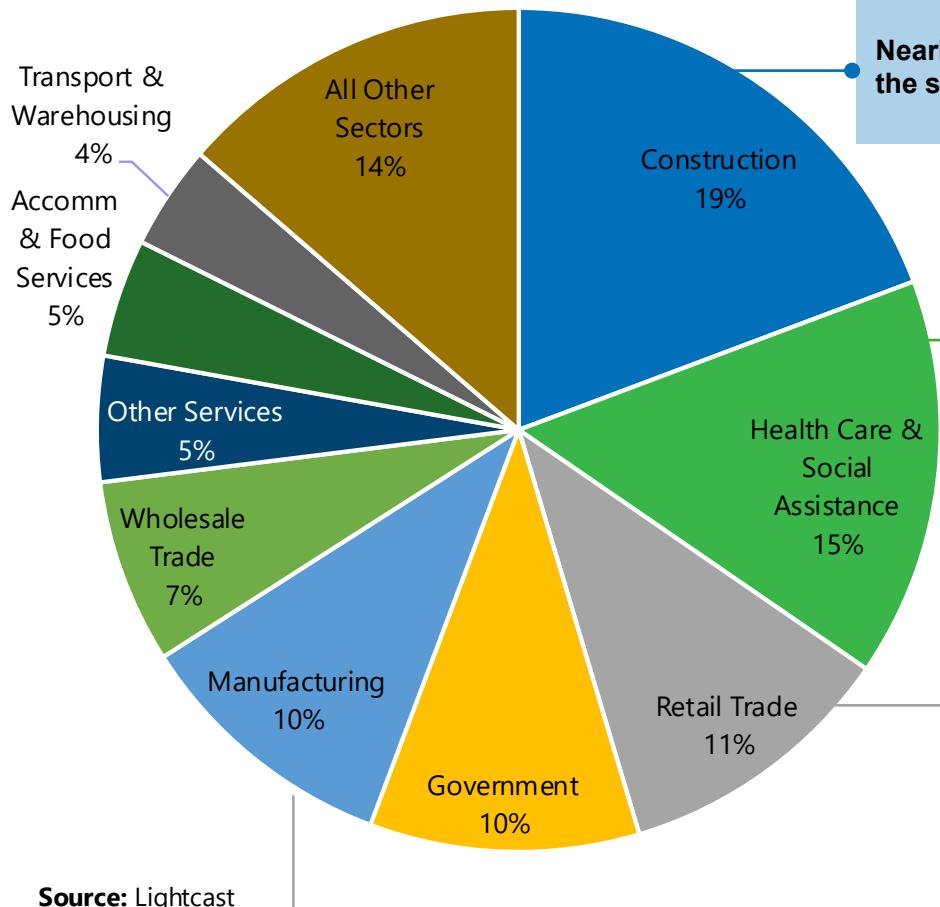


Source: Esri

Economic Landscape | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

Distribution of Employment by Sector in Gorham, 2023

This graphic shows jobs located within the ZIP Codes representing the Town of Gorham, regardless of where the employee lives. See Appendix I for more details on the geographies studied in the Economic Base Analysis.



Nearly one in five jobs in Gorham is in the Construction sector, which was the second-fastest growing sector in the Town between 2018 and 2023.

Occupations in Health Care and Construction experienced the greatest proportion of growth over the last five years.

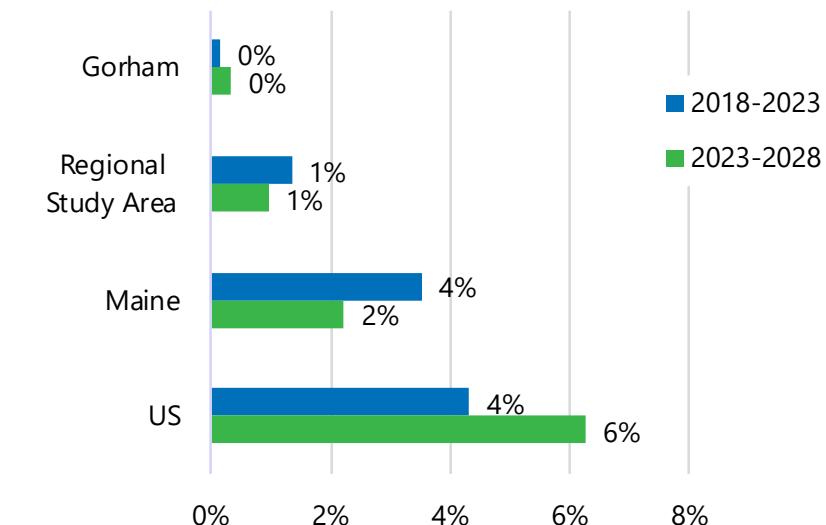
Given Gorham's extremely tight retail market and relatively low vacancy throughout the surrounding area, there is room for Gorham's retail real estate and concentration to grow.

Source: Lightcast

While Manufacturing jobs declined by 21% between 2018 and 2023, there is regional activity driving demand that the Town is poised to capture based on its locational advantages and existing manufacturing mix.

Economic Landscape | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

Pct. Change in Jobs by Geography, Historic & Projected

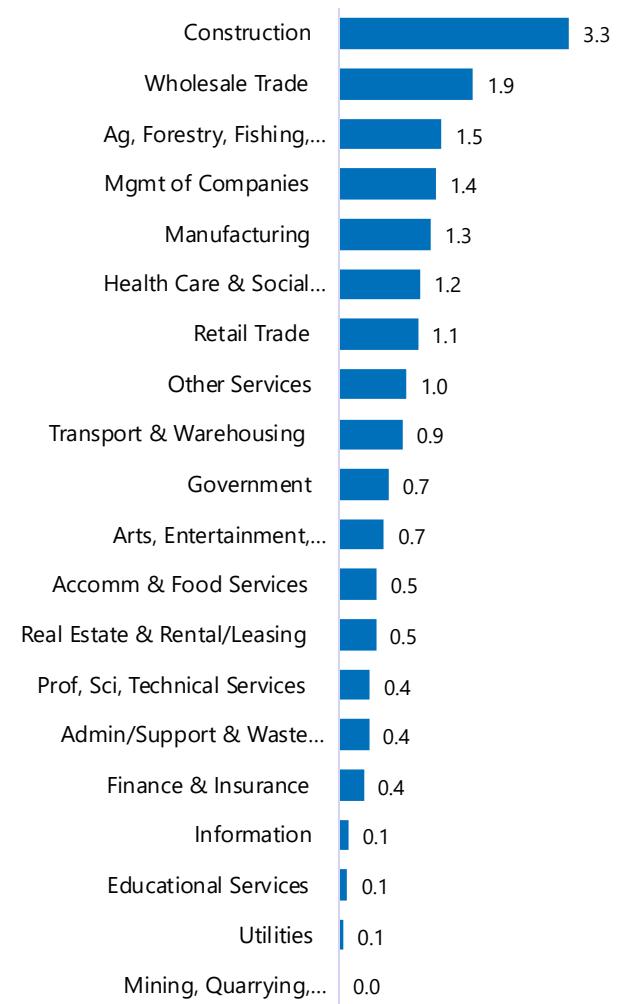


Source: Lightcast

The Town's employment base has been stable over the last five years, while the Regional Study Area and Maine experienced growth at higher rates (1% and 4%, respectively).

Gorham's economy is construction-heavy, with notable strength in Wholesale Trade, Agriculture, and Manufacturing.

Location Quotients by Sector, 2023, Gorham



Source: Lightcast

Land Use Snapshot

Additional details on land use can be found in Appendix II.

- Gorham has 20 zoning districts, which were organized into four zoning categories based on Gorham's Land Use and Development Code.
- Residential zoning includes: Urban Residential, Suburban Residential, Rural, and Urban Residential Expansion.
- The largest zone by land area is the Rural district, which comprises 35% of Gorham's land area (The Rural district falls under the Residential column in the table to the right).
- Almost 88% of Gorham's land is in a residential zone.
- About 6% of land is in a mixed-use zone, which allows both residential and commercial uses and includes Gorham's villages: Gorham Village and Little Falls.
- About 5% of Gorham is zoned industrial, and only a very small portion, 0.46%, is zoned primarily for commercial use.
- About 20% of Gorham's land area is vacant: 11.77% undeveloped land, 6.95% is backland (vacant land without road frontage), and 0.39% wasteland (unbuildable land).

Gorham has the least commercially zoned land of any community in the analysis and the second-lowest amount of mixed-use zoned land (only Gray is lower). It also has the second-highest amount of residentially zoned land, second only to Gray.

Comparative Land Area by Zoning Category

Town	Commercial	Industrial	Mixed Use	Residential
Gorham	0.4%	5.2%	6.4%	88.0%
Gray	2.5%	2.4%	3.0%	92.1%
Saco	0.8%	4.5%	10.3%	84.4%
Scarborough	3.5%	4.8%	9.2%	82.5%
Westbrook	4.1%	16.0%	7.7%	72.2%
Windham	5.7%	1.5%	11.2%	81.6%
AVERAGE	2.8%	5.7%	8.0%	83.5%

Categories based on primary uses described in the purpose statement and permitted uses for each zone in Gorham's Land Use and Development Code, Chapter 1, along with parcel data on existing land uses from the Gorham tax assessor.

Commercial: Urban Commercial, Roadside Commercial, Mosher Corner Mixed Use, Narragansett Mixed-Use (these mixed-used districts allow both commercial and industrial.)

Industrial: Industrial, Olde Canal Industrial District, Agricultural/Industrial

Mixed Use: Little Falls Village, Gorham Village, Office-Residential, South Gorham Commercial Corridor, White Rock Mixed-Use, South Gorham Crossroads

Residential: Urban Residential, Suburban Residential, Rural, Urban Residential Expansion

Real Estate Snapshot

Additional details on Real Estate can be found in Appendix II.

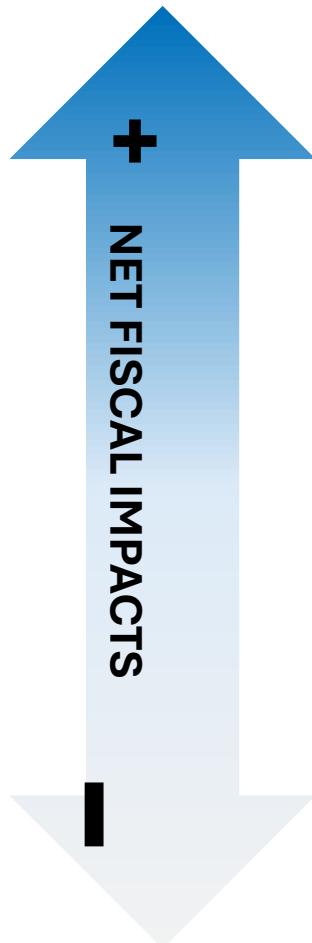
- The designated Rural Area in Gorham consists of 43% of Gorham's total land area, with existing land uses being primarily single-family homes or agriculture/woodlot uses.
- Gorham has a tight retail market, with a low 0.3% vacancy rate for retail space in the Town, compared to 2.0% throughout the Regional Study Area.
- There has been little development in the office market in Gorham in the last decade. Since shifts to work from home became more prevalent after the pandemic, the office market has remained weak, with limited demand. Therefore, any new development will need to focus on high-quality, unique spaces that are distinct from Gorham's current inventory of spaces.
- Over the next five years, the Regional market can support around 740,000 SF of new industrial space. Alongside the current development pipeline, Gorham is due to account for an outsized share of the new development and new absorption in the Region and is competitively positioned to capture even more demand.

Space Type	Market Potential	Supportable Development Types	Market Context
Residential	High	For-sale units Rental units	High housing costs Limited availability Need for infrastructure
Retail/Commercial	Moderate to High	Unique food and beverage Browsable shops with walkable environment Recreational/leisure activities Destinations with programming/places to gather	Competition from retail hubs/e-commerce Requires unique offerings Opportunities beyond Gorham Village
Industrial	Moderate to High	Build-to-suit, specialized industrial	Getting sites market-ready Alignment with industrial trends
Office/Medical Office	Limited	Small-scale consumer-facing professional offices Potentially a co-working space Signature office space in highly amenitized location	Reduced demand due to remote work Need for flexible, modern solutions

As the Town pursues various types of development, the fiscal impacts – whether the revenue generated by a use type is greater or less than the cost of operating the development – will be an important consideration for the stability and health of the Town’s budget. The colored bubbles next to the use types correspond to the market demand on page 11.

Based on the current market conditions, the Town Council, the Town’s Economic Development Subcommittee, and the Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC) must use these complex factors to guide decision-making as new development proposals emerge.

Residential uses are typically not a net positive development type for municipalities. While this does not mean that no residential uses should be built, housing is a vital part of a successful economic development strategy; it puts into perspective the corresponding development needed to generate revenue and offset costs. Industrial development, which has a moderate to high market demand, will typically have the highest net fiscal impact on the Town’s budget. Note that a full fiscal impact analysis by project will be needed to determine the precise impacts on the Town’s budget.



Industrial ●

- Specialized industrial
- Build to suit – warehousing, general industrial

Office ●

- Small-scale consumer-facing professional office
- Signature office space

Retail/Commercial ●

- Specialty food and beverage
- Walkable, village-style shops
- Recreational/leisure activities
- Mixed-use destination style development

Owner-occupied and rental housing ●

- Senior housing
- Market-rate housing, including single-family, townhouses, and small-scale multifamily

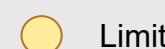
Indicates Market Potential in Gorham:



High



Moderate to High



Limited

Implications of Data Findings | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

The economic data presented for the Town of Gorham reveals key insights that have significant implications for future growth and development. The findings are based on data in Appendices I & II.

1. Population and commuter data for Gorham indicate that the community can support additional business development through its population base and by capturing some of the commuters who currently travel out of town for employment.

2. Housing affordability and diversity will constrain future business and job growth if not addressed. A substantial housing pipeline (1,300+ as of January 2025) in Gorham will address portions of housing demand, but overall regional pressures will still impact market prices. Aiming to diversify housing types (away from just single-family) can also help to attract workers who fit within a range of income brackets, which is critical for businesses across the Town.

3. Gorham experienced its largest job losses in Wholesale Trade, Manufacturing, and Transportation and Warehousing over the last five years. Despite these losses, industrial-related uses remain an important part of the local economy and tax base. Notable job gains were in Health Care, Construction, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, and Professional and Scientific industries. Fostering these emerging industries is beneficial to diversifying the economy and opening up new opportunities for Gorham businesses.

4. Gorham's land use patterns are heavily skewed residential, and targeted changes that align with desired uses, particularly in the Target Opportunity Areas, will be necessary to achieve the desired business activity.

5. There is growing pent-up demand for industrial space in the region due to a lack of sites in the Greater Portland area. Gorham could capture more of the region's industrial demand if it advances infrastructure availability and strategically markets the sites.



Community Engagement | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan



OPEN HOUSE

Charting a Path for Gorham's Future

- Provide your input on the Town's new Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Drop in between 5:30-7:30 to participate in this open-house style conversation
- Be part of the process to shape the future of Gorham
- Topics to include: Local business climate; commercial land use; development opportunities; and community assets

TUESDAY OCT 15 5:30-7:30 PM

Place: Burleigh H. Loveitt Council Chambers,
Municipal Center, 75 South Street

Hosted By:  



If you are unable to make the open house, scan the QR code above to share your input

In addition to market data, the following engagement tactics helped to guide the planning process. Full results and charts related to public engagement findings can be found in Appendix III.

Public Open House | Camoin Associates facilitated an open house for the community to provide input into the current economic development strategy work. Community members were asked to provide their vision for the Town, indicate development priorities, and offer insights into the Town's condition. The direct feedback gave an honest glimpse into the challenges that the Town of Gorham faces while offering hopes for the future and areas of success that can be built on.

Focus Groups | Camoin Associates facilitated seven in-person focus groups. These focus groups were divided into professional and industry types to gather further insights into Gorham's specific opportunities and challenges that impact each industry. Approximately 35 individuals participated across seven focus groups, including members of the Gorham Economic Development Corporation.

Digital Community Survey | A digital survey was conducted to gather input from the community and inform the Town's Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Stakeholder Interviews | Additional interviews were conducted in small groups or one-on-one interviews. These interviews spanned a range of sectors and provided more detailed insight into market opportunities, Gorham's competitive factors, workforce challenges, and how local and regional programs are used (or not used) by local businesses.

Steering Committee Guidance | The Steering Committee was made up of a cross-section of business leaders, economic development representatives, and Town leaders. The group met periodically to discuss key findings of the research phase and the implications for the direction moving forward. Their valuable perspectives helped to determine the priorities of the strategy in conjunction with conversations with the Economic Development Division.

Town of Gorham Leadership | Town of Gorham Leadership weighed in on key milestones throughout the process, navigating priorities and resource needs for the Town. This guidance helped to ensure that the strategy was developed around existing capacity and where additional support may be needed in the future.

Engagement by the Numbers

- Open House Attendees: 25
- Focus Group Attendees: 35
- Digital Interviews: 12
- Responses to Survey: 74

Vision for the Future

At the open house, participants shared their vision for a diverse and accessible Gorham. A focus on community-oriented, locally owned businesses is an important part of the Town's vision.

Business and Culture

At the open house, participants agreed they were excited to showcase Gorham's businesses and culture. But cultural, recreational, and entertainment options need to support a vibrant business environment.

Valuing Gorham's Character

At the open house, participants generally agreed that wayfinding signage, bike lanes, mixed-use buildings, enhanced streetscapes, off-street and multi-use paths, and sidewalk cafes would be well-suited to Gorham.

Support for Business Expansion

In the community survey, there was support for more: small/local retail businesses (82%), restaurants, cafes, and bars (92%) were highly desired (92%), entertainment and recreation options were also popular, with 82% in favor. Industrial uses received less support, but still over half of respondents indicate they would support light industrial development (60%) and warehousing (52%).

Community Challenges

From the community survey, the most significant economic issues identified in the Town were increasing taxes (49%), cost of living (47%), and limited affordable housing (37%). Transportation infrastructure was also noted as a concern (22%).

Business Seeking Support and Clarity

1-1 and group interactions with businesses revealed that there was a lack of cohesiveness around the overall vision and guidance around economic development objectives.

Economic Development Goals | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

The Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Gorham is organized into the three goal areas below. Each plays a distinct role in the elements that will support the Town's economy.



1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

This goal demonstrates Gorham's commitment to supporting its existing businesses, recognizing their vital role in the community's economic health and identity. By fostering connections, reducing barriers, and addressing the unique needs of local businesses and agricultural operators, the Town creates a strong foundation for sustained growth. Gorham can also promote its value proposition to new businesses.



2. Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

This goal area identifies where specific economic activities are best suited within Gorham's four target opportunity areas and what investments or resources are needed to fully realize economic and community potential.



3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

This goal area highlights the mechanics of what role the Town and its partners play in different strategies. It is important to acknowledge that roles may shift over time as resources or leadership change.

Economic Development Goals | Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

The following pages provide context for and examples of the objectives and strategies. The Action Plan Matrix on page 49 details the timeline, partners, and resource levels needed by the strategy.

GOAL 1

Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

- A. Retaining Existing Businesses Through Intentional Outreach and Support
- B. Positioning Gorham for Business Attraction and Emerging Sectors
- C. Meeting the Needs of Industrial Businesses
- D. Retaining, Attracting, and Upskilling the Workforce
- E. Adapting to Market Changes in the Agricultural Sector

GOAL 2

Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

- A. Advancing Initiatives in the Target Opportunity Areas
- B. Monitoring Emerging Areas for Economic Growth
- C. Utilizing Financing Tools for Development

GOAL 3

Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

- A. Marketing the Economic Development Vision and Public Communication
- B. Roles Within the Economic Development Ecosystem

Strategy Organizational Guide

GOALS

Big ideas, what we hope to achieve.

A. Objectives

What we'll do to achieve our goals.

i. Strategies

Projects designed to achieve our goals.

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1A. Retaining Existing Businesses Through Intentional Outreach and Support

i. Formalize the components of a business retention and expansion (BRE) program.

A BRE program will inform several elements of how this strategy develops or may need to shift over time. BRE is a foundational aspect of economic development and can be customized to Gorham's business community. The primary actions needed to fulfill a BRE program that will maximize the information collected include strategic site visits to businesses, proactive outreach to businesses in key industries, and integrating the advisement and dedicated time of the Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC). As information is collected, ensuring that data is stored in a reliable database where members of the economic development team can refer to the latest findings is critical to the effectiveness of BRE.

ii. Encourage, vet, and support ideas from the business community that seek to hold events, collaborate with other businesses, or attract visitors.

Individual businesses will have their own unique ideas about how to grow their clientele, celebrate their business, or collaborate with neighboring businesses for events. The cooperation of the Town is likely needed for either permitting, parking, or other land use regulations. While each decision will be on a case-by-case basis, working towards a solution and workshopping the business's idea will demonstrate a good-faith effort to support the business community.

iii. Expand participation in regional or statewide industry group meetings, events, and committees to build relationships with key players and advocate for Gorham's business markets.

Having a presence at regional or statewide meetings with industry groups is important to advocate for Gorham's businesses' needs and allocations of shared resources. These types of connections are particularly important for Gorham's target industries, including Transportation Logistics and Warehousing, Health Care, and Medical Offices.

TOOLS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Customer Relation Management (CRM) system

One aspect of expanding the capacity of a BRE system is a CRM. There are many different features and applications across CRMs. The right CRM for Gorham is one that encourages frequent updates and that can be shared internally among users. CRM becomes an inventory of valuable business intelligence that will be referred to frequently by staff. Examples of CRM platforms for economic development include:

- [Airtable](#)
- [Executive Pulse](#)
- [HubSpot](#)
- [Monday CRM](#)
- [Salesforce](#)

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1B. Positioning Gorham for Business Attraction and Emerging Sectors

GROWTH INDUSTRIES IN GORHAM

Gorham's economic landscape is conducive to a range of business types. The following list is based on economic market data and existing Town assets. These industries are well-suited to grow through expansion or attraction. The growth of these industries will help fuel other sectors of the economy. Additional details on market factors and Gorham's competitiveness can be found in Appendix II.

- General industrial: Manufacturing, light industrial, transportation, warehousing, and logistics (TWL)
- Professional services
- Healthcare-related services: Medical office buildings, specialties
- Agriculture/agribusiness
- Specialty retail stores

- i. Complete the infrastructure investments in the industrial park expansion and reposition the marketing message based on market context. Publicize upcoming projects, infrastructure improvements, or new policies that make Gorham attractive to businesses, such as site readiness or enhanced broadband connectivity.
- ii. Continue to present Gorham's value proposition for new businesses by updating case studies or testimonials from successful Gorham businesses to highlight the Town's business-friendly environment. The Town's economic development website currently showcases "featured business video profiles." Continuing this video series with businesses across Gorham's target sectors will showcase the range of opportunities and provide insight into the business climate. These videos can be used in numerous ways, including on the Town's website, in newsletters, and during recruitment pitches.
- iii. Create detailed profiles for each target industry, highlighting Gorham's unique strengths (e.g., proximity to major highways for logistics, existing healthcare demand, or available workforce). Partner with USM, vocational schools, and workforce development programs to highlight Gorham's skilled labor pool for these sectors.

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1B. Positioning Gorham for Business Attraction and Emerging Sectors

iv. Incorporate a stronger marketing message around recreational assets and agribusiness locations to regional tourism partners. Without any full-scale accommodation, Gorham will remain a regional day-trip destination. The Town is noted as a potential day trip from Portland on the Visit Portland website. While restaurants and shops are noted as a draw, there is limited description of the accessible trails and agribusinesses that dot Gorham's landscape. For example, the recently updated Gorham economic development website includes call-outs for Southern Maine's first Pump Track for all ages and abilities, which is something to note on the Visit Portland website. Additional information that the Town of Gorham can provide includes the businesses along the trail and other related stops someone using the trail might make in their journey. Specific recommendations around trail connections (like linking the Sebago to the Sea Trail to Little Falls Village) will be generated from the ongoing Open Space and Trails Master Plan. These potential connections could be economic drivers and connect to the existing business community along the trail.

v. Maintain Gorham's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and adapt resources as different needs arise from the business community. Conversations with businesses reflected that the RLF had been successful in jumpstarting various needs. This is a competitive factor for Gorham. As the team has conversations with businesses or market factors change, adaptations or modifications may need to be made. Promotion around the usage and value of the RLF should be incorporated into the Town's regular communication with new and existing businesses, along with sharing success stories from businesses that have used the funds in the past.

vi. Continue updating the Town's inventory of available properties (including zoning details, infrastructure, and pricing) and ensure this list is updated regularly and shared with relevant state offices. Understanding the existing property landscape is critical to locating an expanding business or attracting one from outside the area. Collaborating with the State of Maine DECD to list Gorham sites on state websites will elevate the profile of locations and allow the state to inquire about opportunities they may have that are not widely publicized.

RETAIL IN GORHAM

Retail is in a state of evolution, leading to periods of transition and challenges in the market. Retail and services provide an essential function for residents, as well as for visitors to the area. Over time, the physical size and scale of retail businesses have decreased, while a digital presence is essential to 1) market to customers and 2) sell goods digitally. As Gorham evaluates economic development conditions, supporting retail businesses through policy, land use, and technical assistance will help support this foundational sector. The types of retail that are well-suited to thrive in Gorham include:

- Full-service/sit-down restaurants
- Quick-service food and beverage
- Small retail shops and boutiques
- Personal care services (e.g., hairdresser, barber, massage, wellness spa)
- Medical office space (e.g., urgent care, doctor's offices, outpatient clinics)
- Indoor health/fitness (e.g., fitness center, rock-climbing, pickleball, tennis, etc.)
- Indoor recreation (e.g., bowling, amusement arcade, virtual golf, trampoline park, etc.)
- Class A/"trophy" office space
- Mixed use, combining an appropriate scale of residential and commercial

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1C. Meeting the Needs of Industrial Businesses

i. **Meet regularly with industrial users to troubleshoot topics like workforce, expansion, land use, and market opportunities.** Industrial users have distinct needs from other businesses, and periodic check-ins with these employers as a group could help to address shared challenges and opportunities on the horizon or otherwise develop strong bonds between industrial user networks. Quarterly onsite visits with GEDC members could also support this effort, with a joint report out to the full GEDC to address the business intelligence that was gathered.

BUSINESS STATS TO TRACK

- Business Name
- Business Description
- Industry Classification (NAICS)
- Number of Employees
- Apprenticeships
- Operational Challenges
- Customer Base

1D. Retaining, Attracting, and Upskilling Workforce

i. **Keep the business community well-informed of workforce recruitment strategies that are ongoing with partners such as the school district, University of Southern Maine (USM), and others.** Examples of promotion could include creating an email list of businesses interested in hearing about these efforts that is promoted in a forum with high business traffic. This promotion should also be easy for partners to contribute to quarterly (or more frequently) and simple for businesses to connect with.

ii. **Continue to facilitate connections between the private sector and educational institutions to increase the number of Gorham businesses that offer mentorships, apprenticeships, and other on-the-job training opportunities through the school district, USM, and more.** The Gorham School Business Roundtable and Aspire Gorham have built a strong foundation for collaborative discussion across education, business, and economic development. Continuing and expanding this effort to include businesses across a range of industries will support business needs and expose students to local job opportunities they might not otherwise be aware of.

iii. **Provide recognition or small grants to businesses that actively participate in mentorships, internships, or training programs.** While these types of programs are not going to be a fit for every business, showcasing the success stories or experiences of employers across a range of sectors will elevate how other businesses might utilize certain resources or learn from their peers.

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1E. Adapting to Market Changes in the Agricultural Sector

i. **Engage with agricultural operators at roundtables, public forums, or in other accessible ways to understand their unique needs and leverage Gorham's agritourism ordinance.** These meetings will yield valuable information from the operators and help activate the Town's 2022 agritourism ordinance. Working collaboratively with businesses to support agritourism events will showcase these unique operators and build on one of Gorham's largest assets.

ii. **Work with local agribusinesses to determine if any state programs increasing local food procurement at educational institutions could be economically beneficial to operators.** Maine's Farm to Institution program aims to increase the proportion of local food served in healthcare and educational facilities. With changing markets and ongoing challenges facing producers, a steady and reliable end-user could help support some Gorham agriculture producers.

iii. **Examine local regulations for agricultural operators in Gorham, such as permits for CSAs, setting up farmstands, tasting rooms, and recreation activities, etc., and simplify these regulations to make it easier for operators to start and operate their businesses.** While there are statewide regulations that would monitor some of these uses, the Town should seek to encourage the diversity of agricultural uses through the examination of local codes. Any support or technical assistance navigating regulations is also a key role for the Economic Development Division.

iv. **Explore the Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program to provide tax advantages to productive working lands.** Per state legislation, towns in Maine can create their own local agricultural conservation easement program. This is one tactic to reduce tax burdens on agricultural land. Maine Farmland Trust has a guidebook on pursuing these programs.

TOOLS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Voluntary Municipal Farm Support

- From the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

"Any town in Maine may develop and codify a Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program to enter into 'farm support arrangements' with eligible farmland owners. Those farmland owners, who are formally accepted by a town's legislative body, may then grant a 20-year agricultural conservation easement to the town in exchange for full or partial reimbursement of property taxes on their farmland and farm buildings during that 20-year period."

1. Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

1E. Adapting to Market Changes in the Agricultural Sector

Various organizations, along with state agencies, are actively addressing agricultural sustainability and succession planning in their statewide strategies. Gorham's proactive engagement with such programs is crucial to future success and long-term viability.

Maine Farmland Trust: Farming for the Long Haul

The Farming for the Long Haul program by Maine Farmland Trust is a two-year initiative designed to support experienced farmers in Maine. The program focuses on long-term business growth and sustainability through individualized technical assistance, peer learning, and financial and succession planning. Participants receive up to \$2,750 per year for tailored technical assistance, attend workshops, and have the opportunity to compete for an Implementation Grant of up to \$55,000. The program aims to help farmers set long-term financial goals, create business plans, and plan for succession.



GrowSmart Maine: Planning for Ag Toolbox

GrowSmart Maine has various agriculture-focused programs, including the Planning for Ag Toolbox. This toolbox is intended to help communities make farm viability and farmland protection an integral part of land use planning. Other programs include Building Community Strength, a three-year program through GrowSmart Maine that provides technical and financial assistance to rural communities throughout Maine.



Maine Farm to Institution (MEFTI)

Maine's Farm to Institution is a multi-sector network of people from institutions, nonprofits, farms, government agencies, and other entities involved in the food system, and is a member of Farm to Institution New England (FINE).



2. Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

2A. Advancing Initiatives in the Target Opportunity Areas

In addition to the “Find a Property” listings on the Gorham economic development website, a Town-wide map identifying the Target Opportunity Areas will showcase the diversity of businesses that could grow, locate, or expand in Gorham. Each of these areas was studied within the context of local and regional economic activity.

Each area has distinct target businesses and corresponding next steps to encourage appropriate scale growth. *See page 31 for further details.*

- i. South Gorham
- ii. Mosher Corner
- iii. Gorham Village
- iv. Little Falls

2B. Monitoring Emerging Areas for Economic Growth

While the Town pursues initiatives in the Target Opportunity Areas, there are additional areas that should be monitored for potential opportunities in the future or land use updates, pending regional developments like the Gorham Connector and/or regional demand for industrial space. *See page 48 for further details.*

- i. Main Street from Mosher Road to Westbrook
- ii. Additional portions of South Gorham
- iii. Narragansett Street Area

2C. Utilizing Financing Tools for Development

i. Continue to use development financing tools like tax increment financing (TIF) and seek ways to diversify how TIF is implemented. Gorham has historically used TIF to help commercial clients relocate or expand in Town. Examples include Nappi Distributors, Harvey Performance Company, Moody’s Collision Center, and more. Continuing to draw on financing tools like TIF will be critical to remain competitive in the Southern Maine region. The Town should still thoroughly vet projects to ensure they align and fit the goals in the Economic Development Strategic Plan and other guiding documents.

Looking ahead, there are ways to explore how the Town enacts TIF with development partners to address infrastructure investments. Additionally, Affordable Housing TIFs can also be used to incentivize workforce-level housing development. TIF is a very useful tool in housing development as it can help move projects towards being financially feasible. The projects can include either owner-occupied or rentals. There are additional regulations and nuances to explore as development is proposed.

2. Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

2C. Utilizing Financing Tools for Development: Case Study

South Portland Housing Development Corporation

Tax Increment Financing for affordable housing has been successful throughout southern Maine. The South Portland Housing Development Corporation has done multiple projects in South Portland and Scarborough through tax increment financing. These projects include the St. John Church redevelopment, the Betsey Ross House, and the Landry Woods expansion in South Portland. These projects have addressed a mix of needs for the communities, including affordable housing, workforce housing, and senior housing.

- The Betsey Ross House is a 123-unit complex for senior living with a mix of affordable and market-rate housing. The South Portland Development Corporation created a 1.35-acre Affordable Housing TIF district to support the expansion of the Betsy Ross house, adding 52 affordable residential apartments for seniors. The project was approved in 2022, and the expansion has significantly increased the availability of affordable senior housing in the area.
- The St. John Church redevelopment transformed a vacant church into a mixed-use development featuring 42 affordable apartments and commercial space. A TIF district was approved for the project to cover development costs and ensure deeper affordability for units than standard financing would allow.



3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

3A. Marketing the Economic Development Vision and Public Communication

i. Draft a concise, visually appealing document that outlines the priorities, goals, and ongoing projects that align with the Economic Development Strategy. With the completion of this strategy, the Economic Development Division (EDD) will have renewed objectives and priorities to share with the business community and the larger public. Promoting these objectives through digital and written communication at events and local meetings will help disseminate the message and offer an opportunity for individuals to get involved in the areas that might pertain to them. To support the distribution and communication of the message in multiple aspects of the community, the EDD can identify community leaders and business owners to act as ambassadors of certain pieces of the plan.

ii. Organize bi-annual forums or business recognition events to present updates on economic development initiatives and gather community feedback. Economic development is an ever-evolving field where priorities can change based on market shifts or new businesses in the community. Holding twice-annual forums or meetings that are focused on communicating the accomplishments and goals of the economic development system will be an opportunity to present to the community and also be a chance for updates and feedback from the public and businesses. These could be coordinated with the Gorham Village Alliance or even regional economic development or planning groups.

iii. Put out press releases for new businesses in Gorham. These spotlights should occur in both digital and traditional news sources and on social media. Pictures, stories, or coupons can accompany these as the businesses choose.

Public Communication and Awareness

- Priorities
- Goals
- Ongoing Projects
- Projects in the Pipeline
- Economic Development Initiatives
- Bi-annual Forums or Business Recognition

3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

3B. Roles Within the Economic Development Ecosystem: Internal

The Economic Development Division (EDD), Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC), and other internal Town bodies will play a leading role in implementing the strategies documented above. However, there are areas of expertise and subjects where the EDD is instead best suited to support, partner, or help convene partners. Therefore, the successful implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan is incumbent on the participation and collaboration of local, regional, and state partners. The bullets below outline the role that Town of Gorham entities will play in the implementation.

i. Town of Gorham – Economic Development Division’s Role

- Act as the primary point of contact for new businesses and help them navigate the regulations required to open in Gorham.
- Continue connecting existing business resources at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.
- Provide relevant technical assistance and connect additional resources for other TA where possible.
- Track progress on the Economic Development Strategic Plan and report out to the GEDC and the Town Council.
- Collect and document recurring themes from conversations with businesses to source ideas for potential workshops, technical assistance, or the need for an outside expert. *For example:* succession planning, hiring an intern, partnering with a training organization, supply chain disruption, marketing, and branding.
- As economic activity increases, additional staff time may be needed to support the work of the strategy.

ii. Town of Gorham – Economic Development Corporation’s Role

- Expand the membership of the GEDC to include greater representation of Gorham’s institutions and industries.
- Provide expertise and feedback on target industries and their activity in the region.
- Support the Director and the economic development team as new business prospects emerge.
- Support the Director at Town Council meetings, reporting updates or new activity.
- Champion the economic development strategic plan and its initiatives and be a part of the launch and communication of the plan.
- Advise on elements of the BRE program and participate in conversations with business visits or conversations as appropriate.

iii. Capital Improvement / Economic Development Subcommittee (CIPs / ED Subcommittee)

- Advise and implement transportation and connectivity initiatives related to the Husky Line.
- Advise and implement projects related to village safety and walkability improvements.
- Advance improvements in the permitting process to streamline the business startup.
- Advancing on trail development initiatives and coordinating economic potential with the EDD.
- Collaborate with the GEDC and the Director of the EDD to implement the strategy.
- Support diversifying Revolving Loan Fund program enhancements to encourage targeted/strategic investment in specific areas of town.

3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

3B. Roles Within the Economic Development Ecosystem: External

The bullets below outline how the Town will work with external partners to leverage resources, local expertise, and regional support.

Gorham School District

- Continue to support the Business Roundtable and determine which elements of the strategy have shared objectives with the Roundtable.
- Coordinate with the goals of the superintendent and school system.
- Continue to support vocational school paths for students.
- Increase the knowledge of partnerships with Southern Maine Community College and the University of Southern Maine for dual enrollment and college credits.
- Support the school system (the broader educational system) in identifying funding for a maker space or business incubator space, potentially in conjunction with USM, that allows students to graduate with a business plan (modeled after the University of Maine Foster Center for Innovation).
- Increase knowledge of adult education programs offered, including language and workforce courses for New Mainers and apprenticeship programs for CNAs and educators.
- Explore the demand for a new high school as a necessary investment in the future of Gorham that is needed to support a developing and successful town.

University of Southern Maine – Gorham Campus

- Work with USM leadership to document the needs for student placements within the community.
- Identify the sectors that need private sector partners – potentially partnering with the business roundtable above.
- Support USM's Career Exploration Fair.
- Partner with USM to support their growth or add activity to the Gorham community. This may include uses that could be shared between students and businesses.
- Stay informed of housing pressures or needs from the USM campus to understand how that may impact local housing demand.
- Explore a summer job fair for students that would pair a student with a local business.
- Support opportunities to further strengthen the connection between the USM community and village activities, such as the Husky Perks program and other collaboration efforts.

3. Leading the Economic Development Vision Through Collaborative Implementation

3B. Roles Within the Economic Development Ecosystem: External

The bullets below outline how the Town will work with external partners on elements of implementation.

Gorham Village Alliance

- Collaborate to provide spaces for businesses to gather via networking events or business forums.
- Advocate for the needs of Village businesses.
- Partner with the Director of the Economic Development Division to implement strategies in the Village.
- Seek additional funding sources to take on additional place-based strategies.

Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)

- Remain involved with GPCOG to tap into long-term planning support for land use and transportation, as well as up-to-date economic data.
- Work with GPCOG to identify and help secure federal, state, and private funding sources to support economic development initiatives.
- Utilize GPCOG as a resource for regional economic data and market trends to inform strategic priorities.
- Rely on GPCOG to foster collaboration between Gorham and neighboring communities for shared economic opportunities.

State of Maine

- Continue to list and update Gorham's available sites and relevant information with Maine's site selection tool, www.selectmainesites.com
- Keep in touch and participate with state agencies that match Gorham's targets:
 - Bioscience Association of Maine (BIOME)
 - Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)
 - Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAME)
 - Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA)
- Be aware of economic development legislation that could impact the strategy and/or business operations.
- Stay current on state resources related to Gorham's target markets. These could include grants, loans, mentorship, conferences, marketing, etc..

TARGET OPPORTUNITY AREAS

1. South Gorham
2. Mosher Corner & Gorham Industrial Park
3. Gorham Village
4. Little Falls

As part of the Town's broader economic development strategy, Target Opportunity Areas represent present opportunities for future private and/or public investment. Each Target Opportunity Area (TOA) profile provides an overview of the area's development assets, allowable uses under current zoning and land use policies, and recommendations for maximizing its economic potential.

Each TOA is evaluated based on three key considerations:

- Why it represents a strong development opportunity,
- What economic opportunities exist within the area, and
- What investments or policy changes are needed to capitalize on the opportunity.

This structured approach ensures that recommendations align with market potential while addressing any zoning restrictions that may limit development. Additionally, these TOA profiles serve as reference points for ongoing planning efforts, such as the Comprehensive Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the South Gorham Sewer Study and Design, ensuring coordinated decision-making to drive sustainable growth and investment.

It is important to focus on each of these areas because they provide different economic opportunities and value to Gorham. The Village areas offer valuable community assets where small businesses can thrive, fostering local entrepreneurship and vibrant town centers. Meanwhile, South Gorham and Mosher Corner present opportunities for tradable sectors to produce goods, generate property tax revenue, and create jobs. The Town must adopt an approach of "not either/or but both/and," proactively managing opportunities as they arise to balance growth, economic diversity, and community development.

 **IMPLEMENTATION NOTE:** Parcel-level land use changes will occur in conjunction with various planning efforts, including the Comprehensive Plan, the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, and the upcoming South Gorham Sewer Study & Design. The TOA profiles should be used as a reference, as other planning efforts are underway to ensure that the right changes are made to maximize the economic potential. Parcel-level changes are not included as part of this effort.

Target Opportunity Areas | South Gorham

Why is this a target opportunity area?

South Gorham lies in a strategic location along major transportation corridors, Routes 25 and 114, and borders Scarborough, a key economic hub. Locally, the area is known as “the overlap” because of the convergence of these busy state routes, which are subject to rush hour traffic. This area is optimally located for commuting to larger employment centers like Portland, with connections to I-95. The area’s inclusion in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update and recent zoning changes to promote commercial and mixed-use development highlight its potential for growth. Zoning changes that came out of planning work associated with the Comprehensive Plan (2016) and the Comprehensive Plan Update (2021) were all based on community-wide and area-focused public outreach and input.

Ongoing discussions about the Gorham Connector highway extension could significantly impact traffic patterns, reducing congestion and opening opportunities for a more pedestrian-friendly, higher-density village-style development. Despite current infrastructure constraints, the availability of vacant and underutilized land makes this an attractive area for investment.

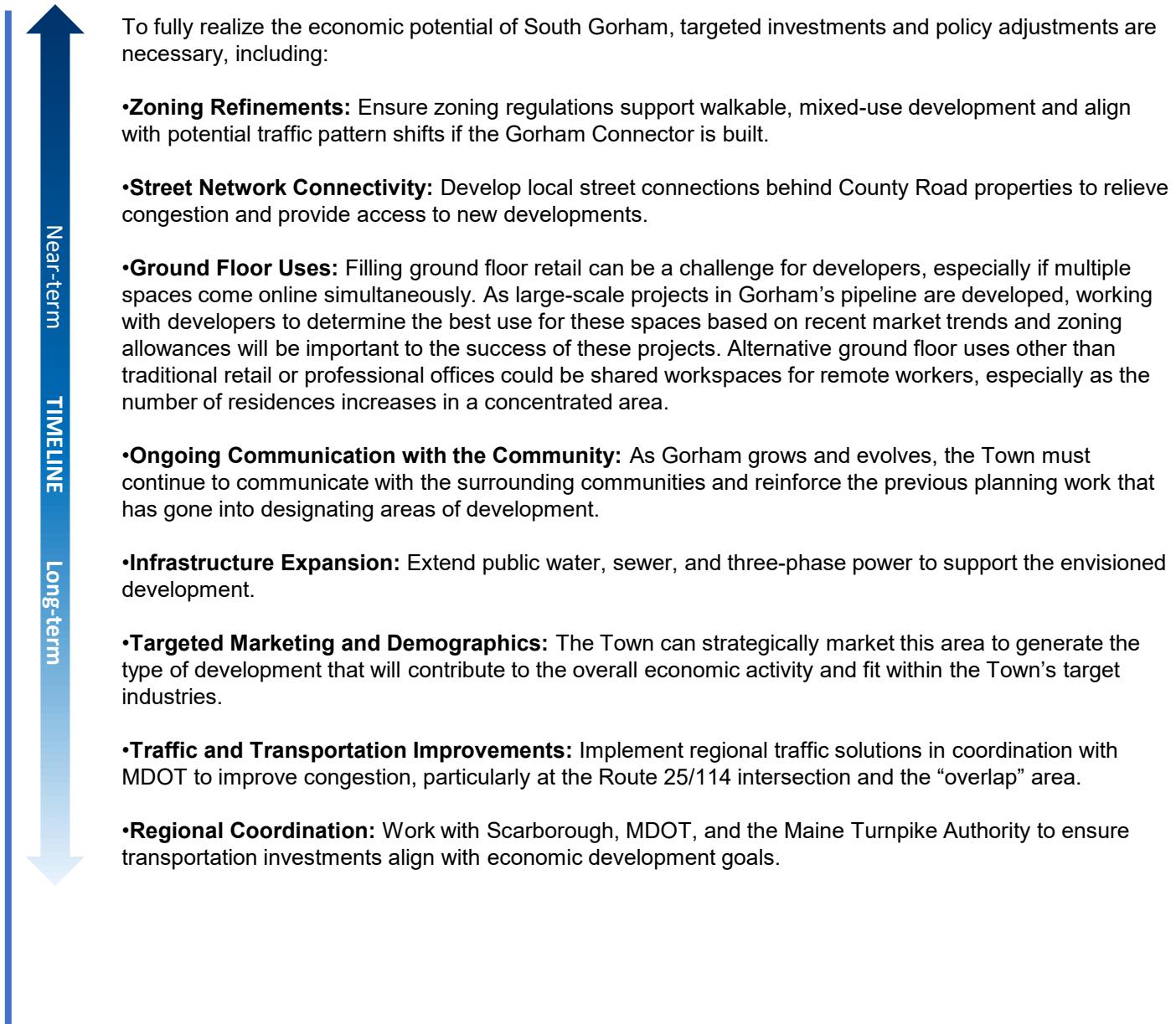
What economic opportunities exist in this target opportunity area?

Key opportunities include:

- **Mixed-Use Development:** The South Gorham Crossroads and South Gorham Commercial Corridor zoning encourage a blend of retail, office, and residential uses, creating a vibrant economic center. This type of development will help diversify Gorham’s overall housing stock.
- **Higher-Density Housing:** Based on its geographical location, this area is optimized for diversifying Gorham’s housing stock by creating a new center of mixed-use, multi-tenant housing options to attract young professionals.
- **Commercial and Retail Growth:** There is potential for new businesses, shopping centers, and service-oriented retail that cater to both residents and commuters.
- **Transportation-Oriented Development:** If the Gorham Connector is built, there will be opportunities for logistics, transportation services, and commuter-focused businesses near highway access points.
- **Golf Course Redevelopment in the Pipeline:** Plans for mixed-use and residential projects on the golf course will attract new residents and businesses to the area.
- **Infill Development:** Underutilized parcels along County Road and other key corridors provide opportunities for commercial expansion and higher-density residential projects.

Target Opportunity Areas | South Gorham

What investments or policy changes need to be made to capitalize on this opportunity?



Target Opportunity Areas | South Gorham

South Gorham

Place-Based Opportunity



Higher-density residential with a mix of supporting commercial development is envisioned in the area north of the Stroudwater, while commercial forward mixed-use development is envisioned along County Road.



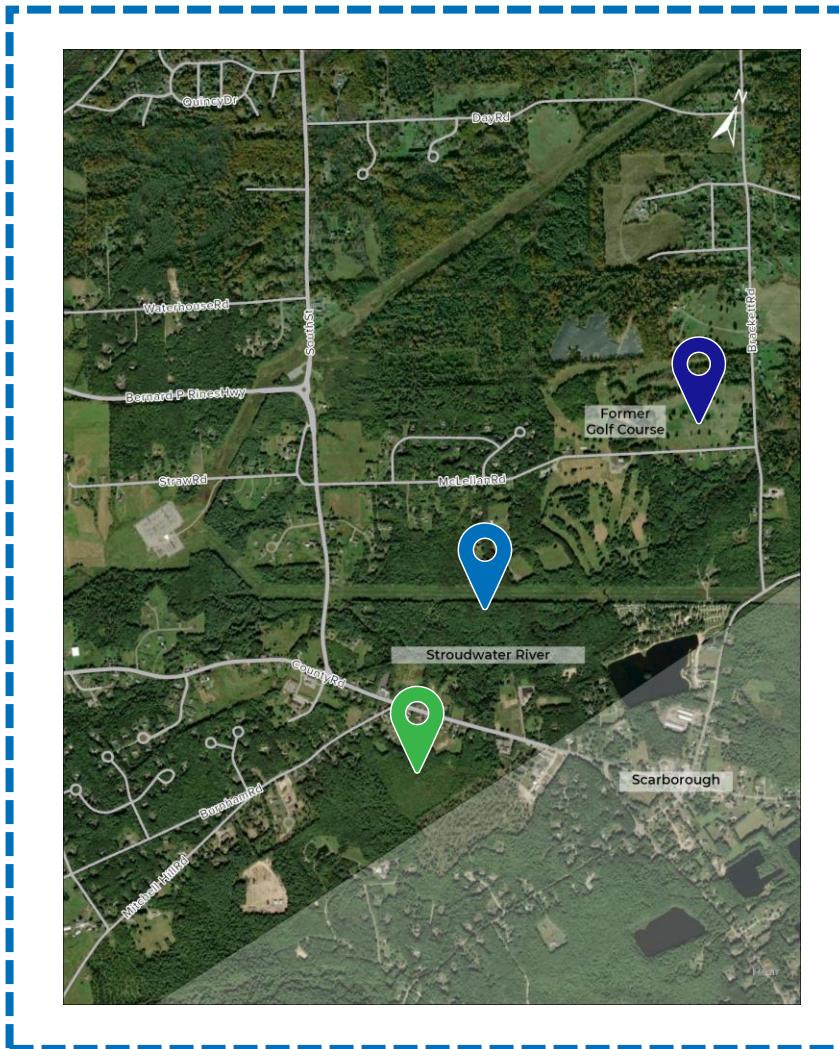
Development along County Road should focus on infill along the street frontage and accessing backland, particularly in the area bound by Burnam and County Roads and the Town line with Scarborough.



There are plans to develop the former golf course as a mixed-use and residential development. A contract zone has been approved to extend water and sewer from Libby Avenue across New Portland Road and run along Brackett Road to McLellan Road. As the development is built, this will unlock business potential in the surrounding area over the course of 10–15 years.

Keys to Success

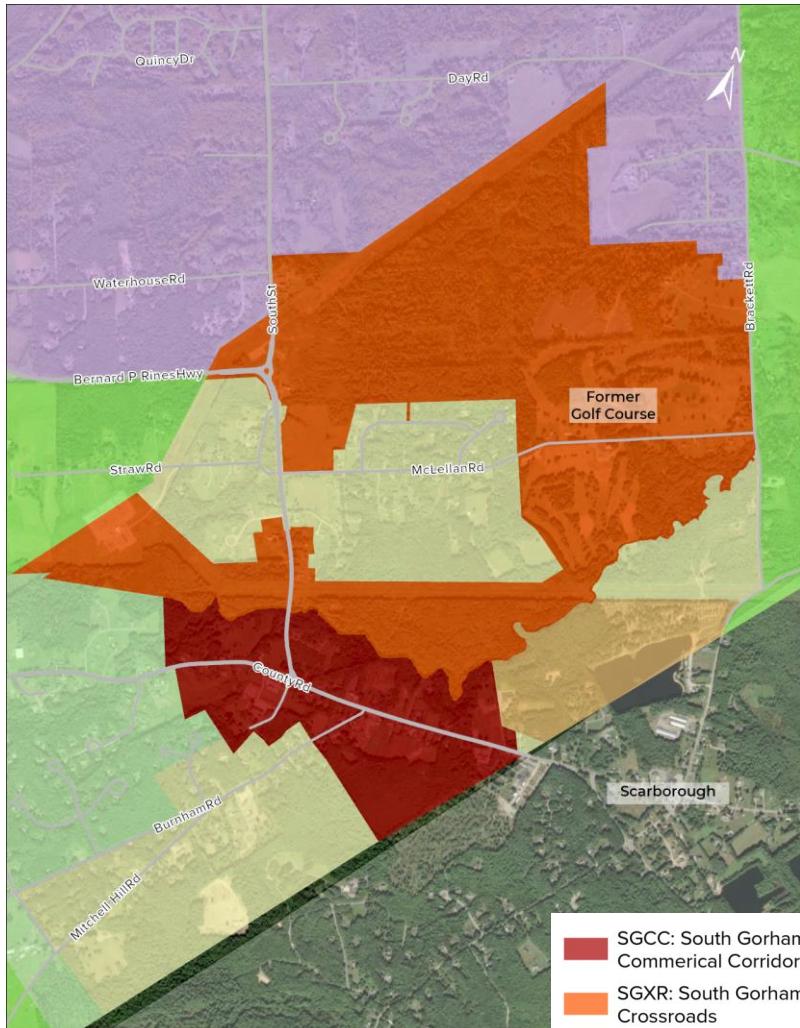
- Utility expansion is required for the development envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and permitted through zoning.
- The “overlap” area where Route 22 and Route 114 come together – between the Town line with Scarborough and the South Road/County Road intersection – is a notorious local traffic bottleneck during commuting periods. Regional transportation improvements need to be made in addition to local street improvements and local street network connections, which can help with congestion, as well as potentially provide access to new development opportunities behind properties on the south side of County Road.



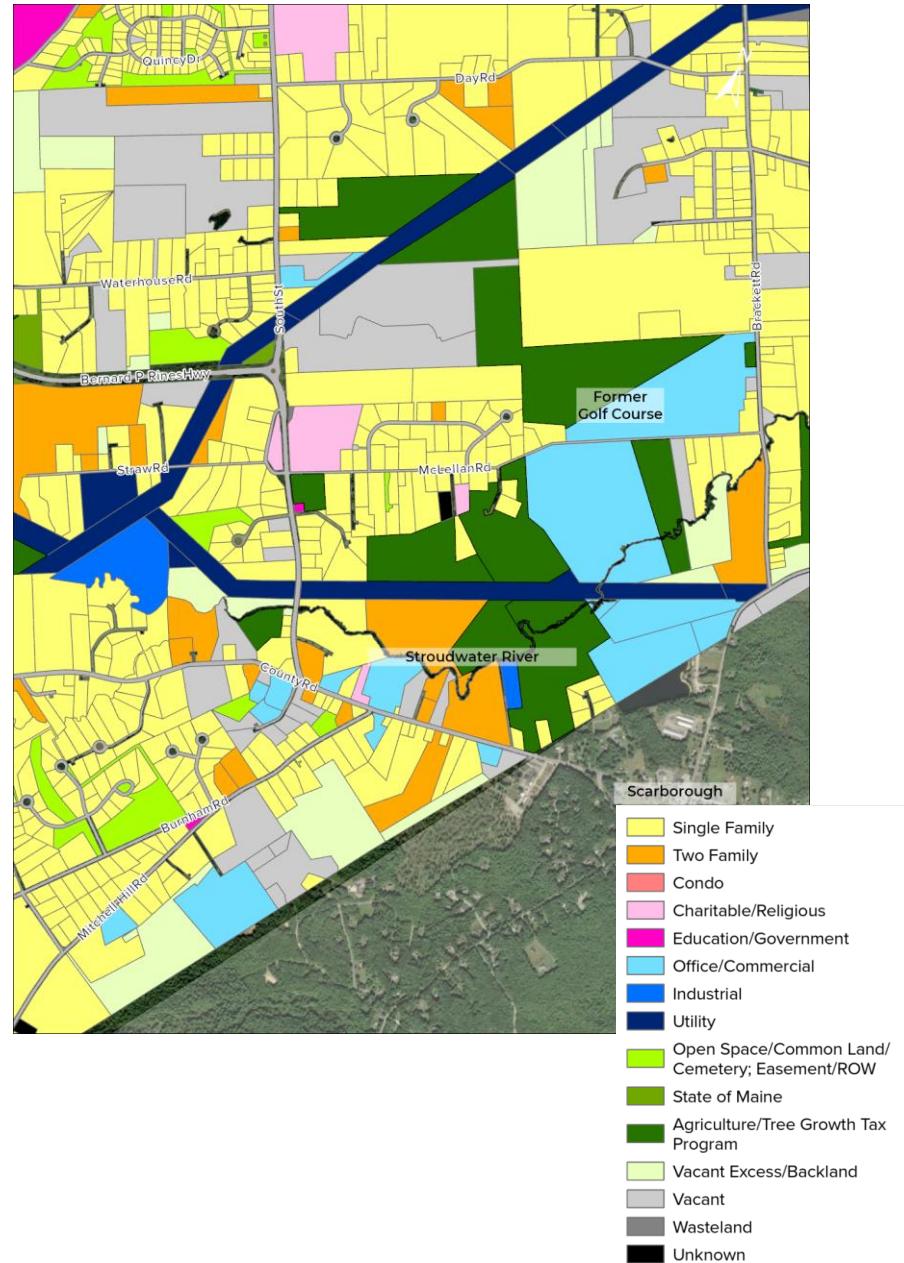
Target Opportunity Areas | South Gorham

Supporting Maps

South Gorham Zoning



South Gorham Existing Land Use



Target Opportunity Areas | Mosher Corner & Gorham Industrial Park

Why is this a target opportunity area?

Mosher Corner – from Main Street down to New Portland Road – is strategically located along Route 25 near Westbrook and is the site of Gorham’s largest industrial park, with underutilized and vacant industrial parcels that provide room for business growth. Additionally, there are about 140 acres of town-owned land adjacent to the industrial park that presents a significant opportunity for planned industrial or commercial development. The presence of public utilities, though not fully extended, major road access, and a transit route further supports its potential for economic expansion. The industry analysis for Gorham (Appendix II) demonstrates that there is pent-up demand for a range of industrial uses based on the shrinking availability of viable land in the Greater Portland area. These uses include: select types of food and beverage manufacturing, processing, or storage (i.e., cold storage), construction-related activities, specialized appliance manufacturing, and high-value/high-tech manufacturing. These industries show high levels of competitiveness and will benefit from an existing skilled workforce base. Warehouse and distribution to support existing businesses or a new location could also be a fit with regional needs, depending on the size and scale of the facility.

What economic opportunities exist in this target opportunity area?

Key opportunities include:

- **Infrastructure-Driven Investment:** Expansion of utilities and road networks can spur further private sector investment in both industrial and commercial development.
- **Industrial Expansion:** As infrastructure upgrades advanced, the area can accommodate new manufacturing, warehousing, or distribution businesses.
- **Commercial Growth:** The Main Street corridor is suited for roadside commercial businesses, such as retail, services, or dining, to serve both industrial workers and commuters.
- **Strategic Development of Town-Owned Land:** The 140 acres could be used for industrial expansion, business parks, or flex space for light manufacturing and technology-based industries.
- **Transit-Oriented Employment Hub:** The existing Husky Line bus route could be leveraged to attract businesses seeking transit-accessible locations, particularly if a stop is added.

Target Opportunity Areas | Mosher Corner & Gorham Industrial Park

What investments or policy changes need to be made to capitalize on this opportunity?



Target Opportunity Areas | Mosher Corner & Gorham Industrial Park

Mosher Corner

Place-Based Opportunity



Gorham must consider how to use the 140 acres of town-owned land and whether industrial expansion is appropriate on this land.



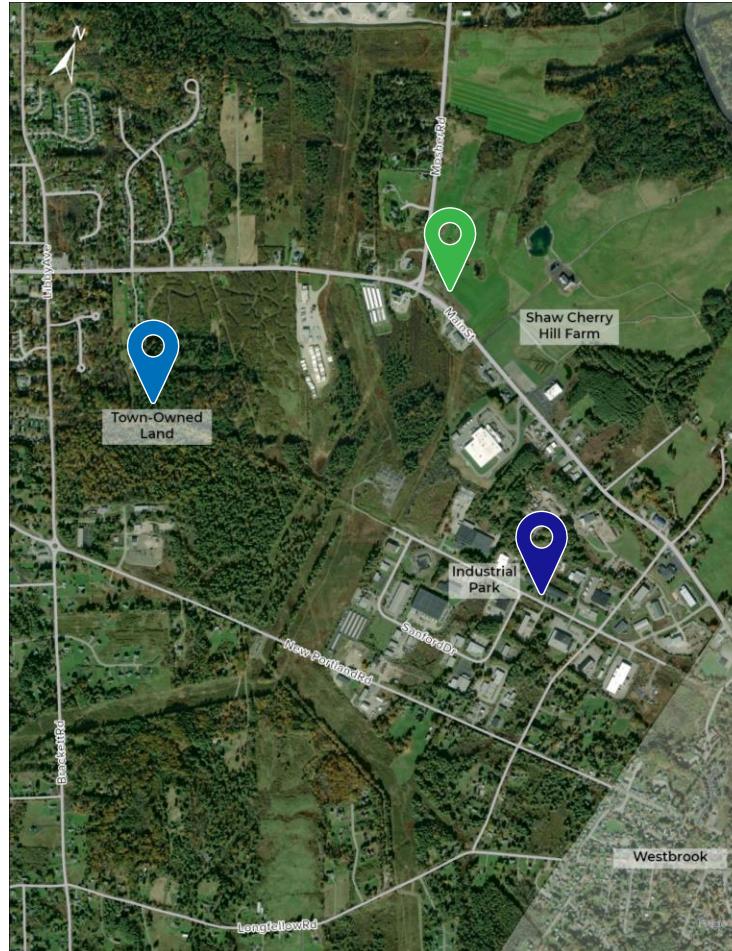
Along Main Street, an expansion of roadside commercial businesses is appropriate.



The METRO Husky Line passes through this area but does not stop. If business activity increases enough, a stop could be added here to serve employees in the industrial park.

Keys to Success

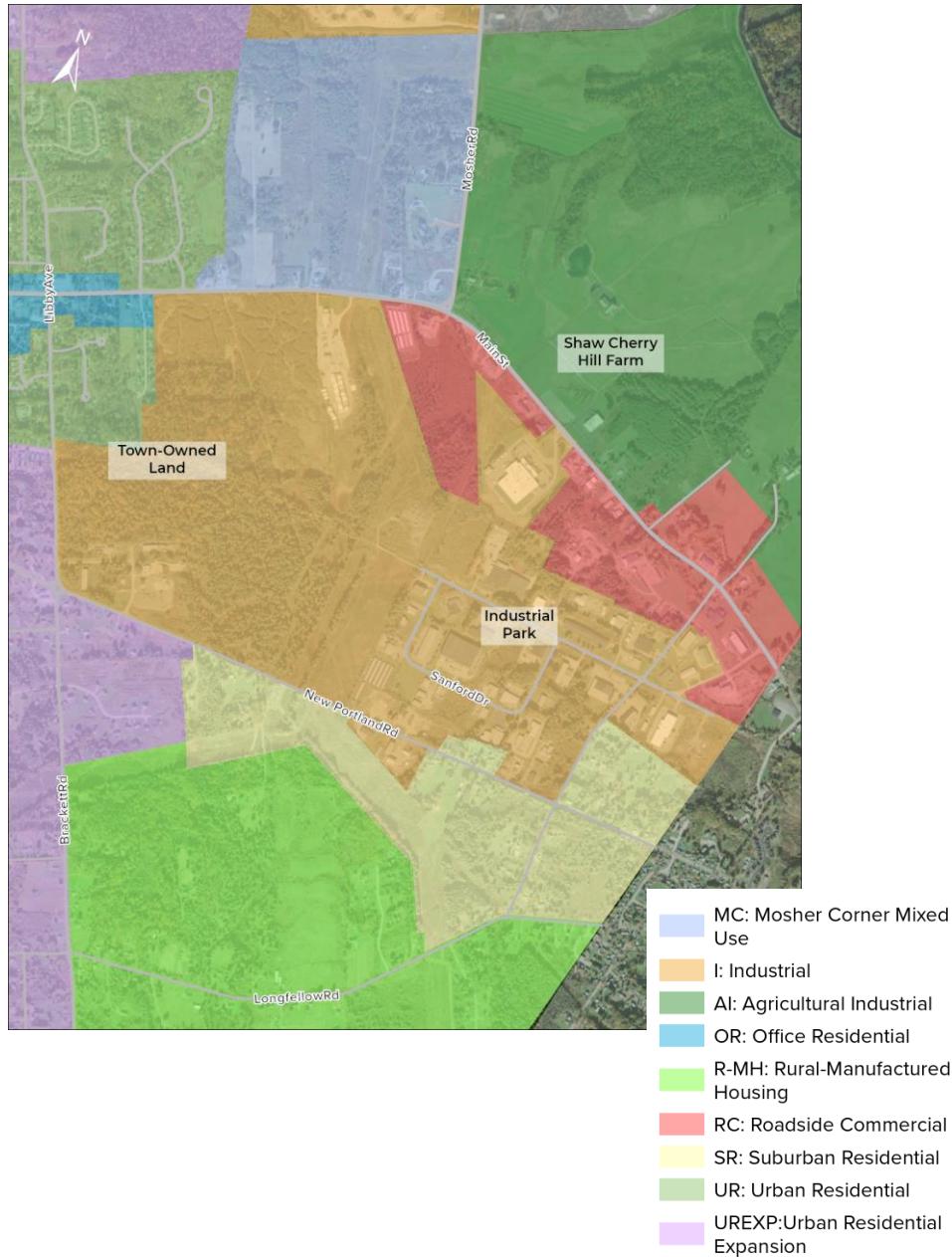
- Utility expansion will support continued growth in this area. The Town of Gorham must decide if those costs will be covered by the Town, developers, or shared.
- Vacant and underused parcels in the industrial park provide opportunities to expand the industrial base in Gorham.



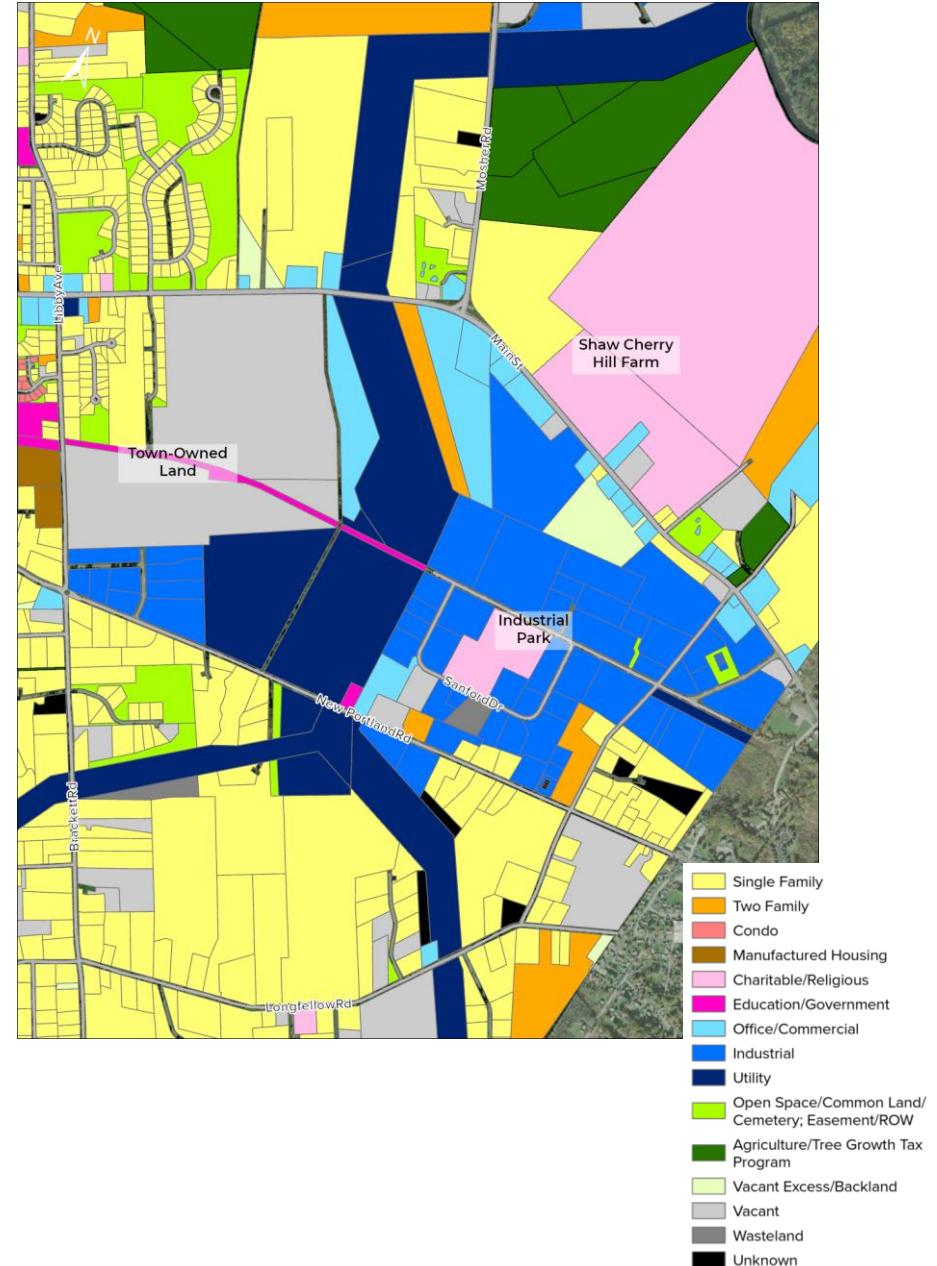
Target Opportunity Areas | Mosher Corner & Gorham Industrial Park

Supporting Maps

Mosher Corner Zoning



Mosher Corner Existing Land Use



Target Opportunity Areas | Gorham Village

Why is this a target opportunity area?

What economic opportunities exist in this target opportunity area?

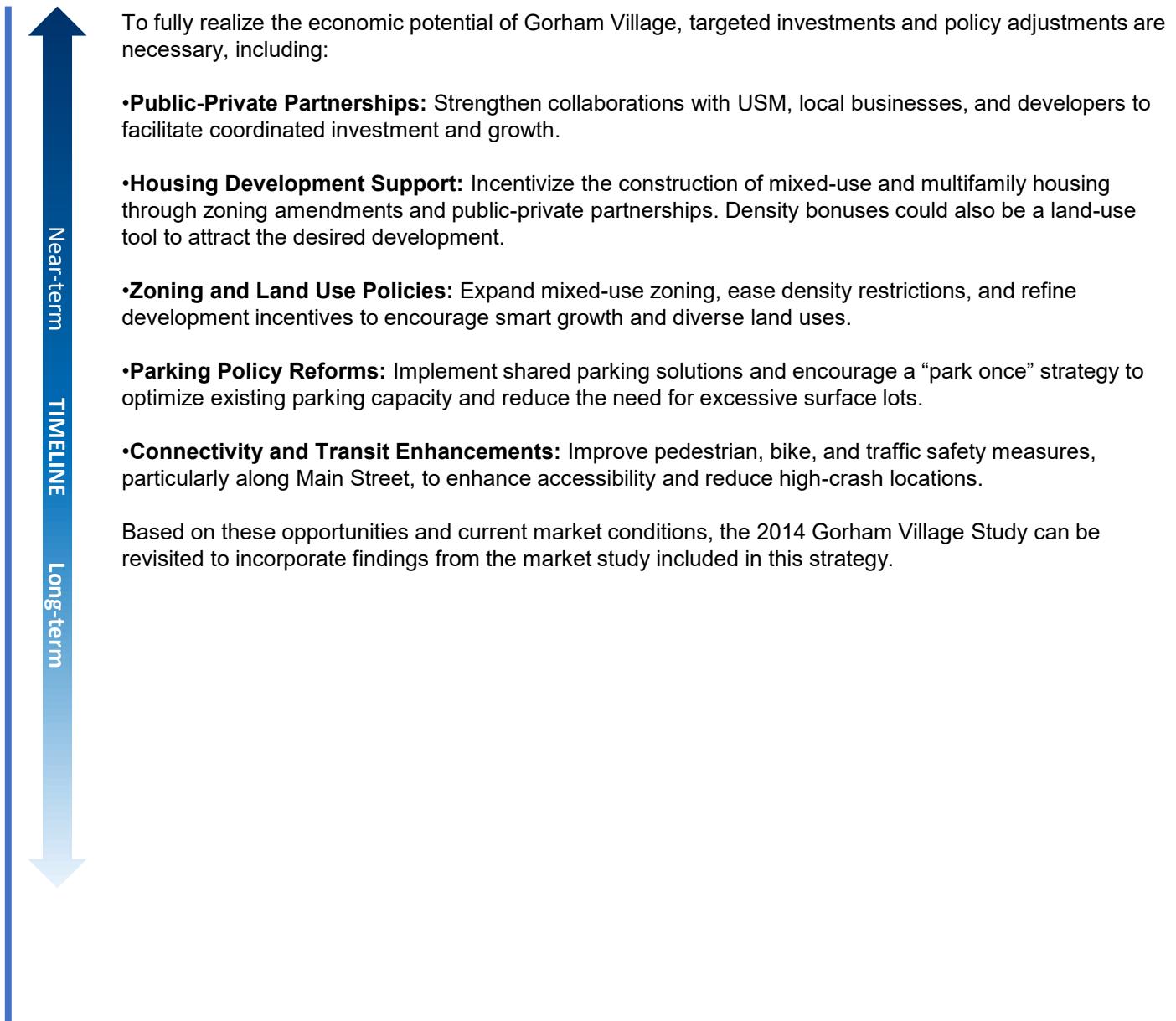
Gorham Village serves as the historic and commercial core of Gorham, offering a blend of residential, institutional, and commercial uses. Anchored by the University of Southern Maine (USM) campus, this area benefits from a high concentration of students, businesses, and municipal buildings. Over the years, Gorham Village has been the focus of multiple planning initiatives, including the 2015 Main Street Master Plan, the 2017 Bike & Pedestrian Plan for Gorham Village, and the 2014 Gorham Village Parking Study. The area's extensive infrastructure, including sewer and water coverage, supports further development while minimizing environmental constraints. Gorham Village also stands out as the only part of the Town with access to public transit through Greater Portland METRO's Husky Line, making it a prime location for investment.

Key opportunities include:

- **Expansion of commercial activity:** This area is a hub of activity, primed for additional concentration of business. Working towards growing and attracting complementary businesses will help further define Gorham Village's character and mutually support clientele across businesses.
- **Parking Strategy Enhancements:** Continue to allow and promote opportunities for shared parking models among lot owners to reduce parking constraints at peak times. Maximize on-street parking and prioritize private parking agreements between businesses and their workforce. This will optimize existing parking assets and reduce the need for new surface parking lots.
- **Existing Building Improvements:** For aging properties within the Village, consider utilizing RLF program to further encourage façade improvements to physical appearances. Town, GEDC, and Village Alliance representatives can collaborate to disseminate information about how the loan program functions and how it can add value to existing businesses.
- **Zoning Enhancements:** Broadening mixed-use zoning standards, reducing density restrictions, and strengthening density bonuses through the Development Transfer Overlay program can support a more vibrant and diverse Village center.
- **Infill Development:** Oversized parking lots and underutilized parcels along Main Street provide prime locations for restaurants, cafes, entertainment venues, and specialty retail aimed at both regional customers and local residents.
- **Housing Expansion:** Increased mixed-use and multifamily housing development will help address the local housing shortage while expanding the customer base for businesses.
- **Partnerships with USM:** Strengthening collaboration with the University of Southern Maine to increase connectivity between the campus and Gorham Village can foster economic activity and enhance the area's vibrancy.
- **Mobility Improvements:** Enhancing the built environment that makes up pedestrian and bike infrastructure, particularly addressing high-traffic and high-crash locations, will improve safety and accessibility. Additionally, improved connectivity to regional trails and mountain bike parks can attract more visitors to the Village.

Target Opportunity Areas | Gorham Village

What investments or policy changes need to be made to capitalize on this opportunity?



Target Opportunity Areas | Gorham Village

Gorham Village

Place-Based Opportunity



Infill opportunities on oversized parking lots along Main Street, include the Hannaford and Village Mall parking areas.



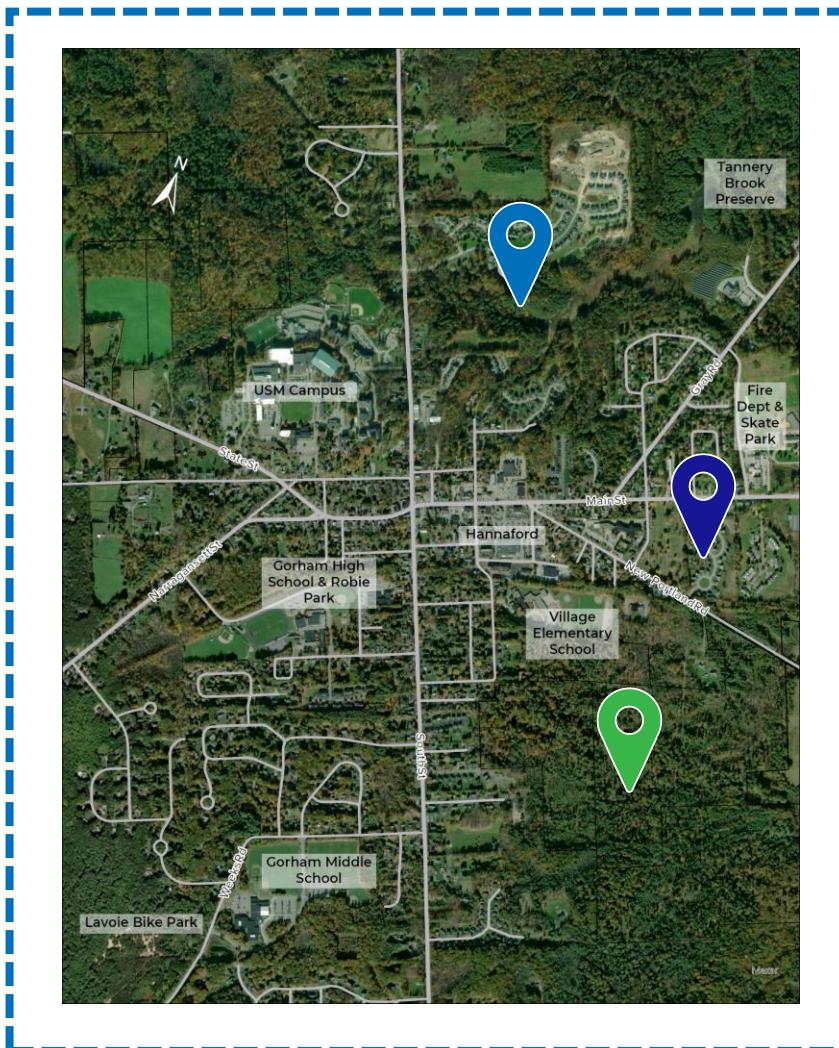
Infill potential on excess land (undeveloped land behind structures and away from the street networks) and upzoning single family homes to multifamily.



Bike/ped/traffic safety on Main Street and implementing the 2017 Plan recommendations (*participating in an MDOT planning partnership program may provide additional opportunities for improvements here.*)

Keys to Success

- Enhancing connections to nearby trails and mountain bike parks to encourage regional visitors to spend time in the Village.
- Implementing broader, more liberal mixed-use zoning standards throughout the Village area, with smaller lots, more flexibility, and a wider range of permitted uses. This could also include reductions in density limits or strengthening density bonuses available through the Development Transfer Overlay program to allow for the provision of more residential development.
- Amending ordinances to allow more flexible parking opportunities in line with the strategies in the 2014 Parking Study.
- Promoting a parking strategy that would enable shared parking and a “park once” model.



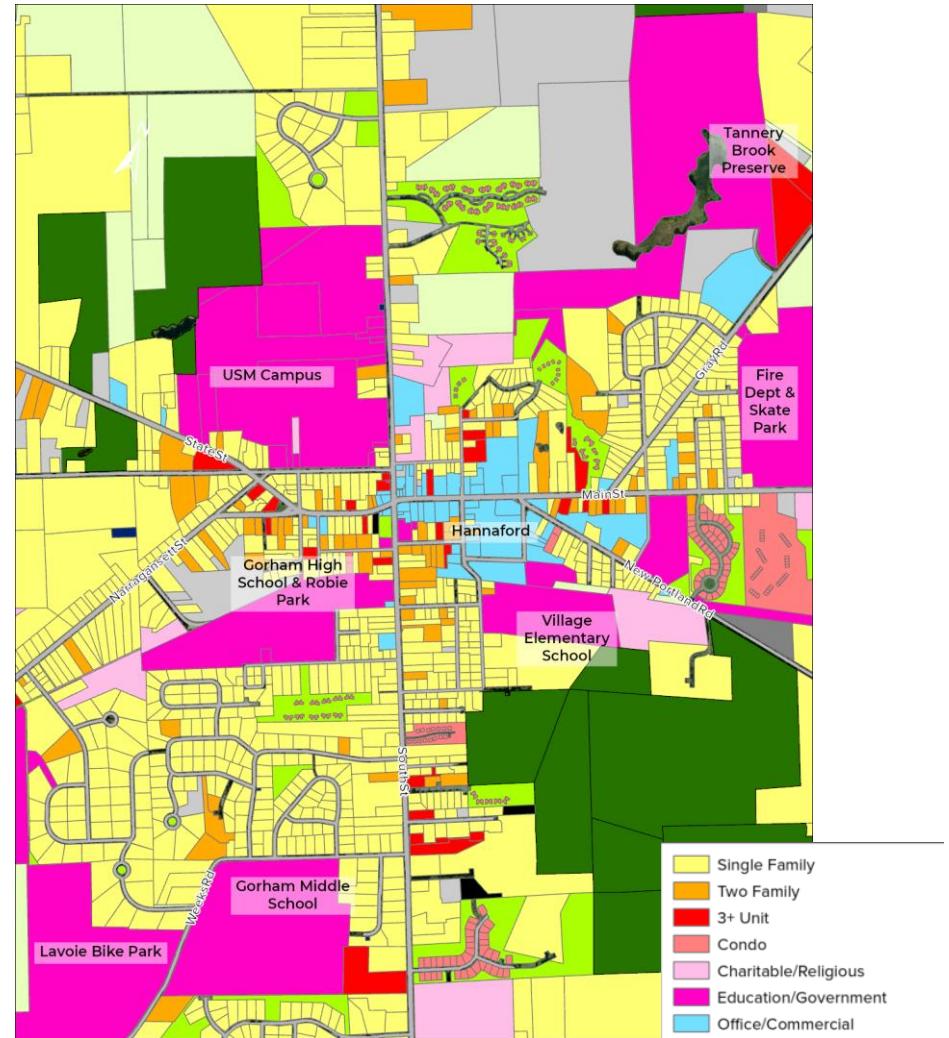
Target Opportunity Areas | Gorham Village

Supporting Maps

Gorham Village Zoning



Gorham Village Existing Land Use



Target Opportunity Areas | Little Falls

Why is this a target opportunity area?

Little Falls is one of Gorham's historic villages, which was historically a thriving center for industry and commerce in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The area has a strategic location along Route 202, connecting Gorham and Windham, providing access to local and regional markets. Its riverfront setting, proximity to recreation amenities, and foundational assets, including public utilities and trail and river access, give Little Falls the potential for new growth and revitalization to meet contemporary market needs, including multifamily housing and small businesses in a walkable neighborhood. While certain aspects of the area need to be addressed, such as transportation, bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, and zoning concerns, there are growth opportunities in the Little Falls area in the redevelopment of vacant buildings and underdeveloped parcels. This area underwent significant planning work in 2023 with the support of South Windham. The resulting Villages Master Plan is a relevant guiding document for this area that should frequently be referred to and drive the development of Little Falls.

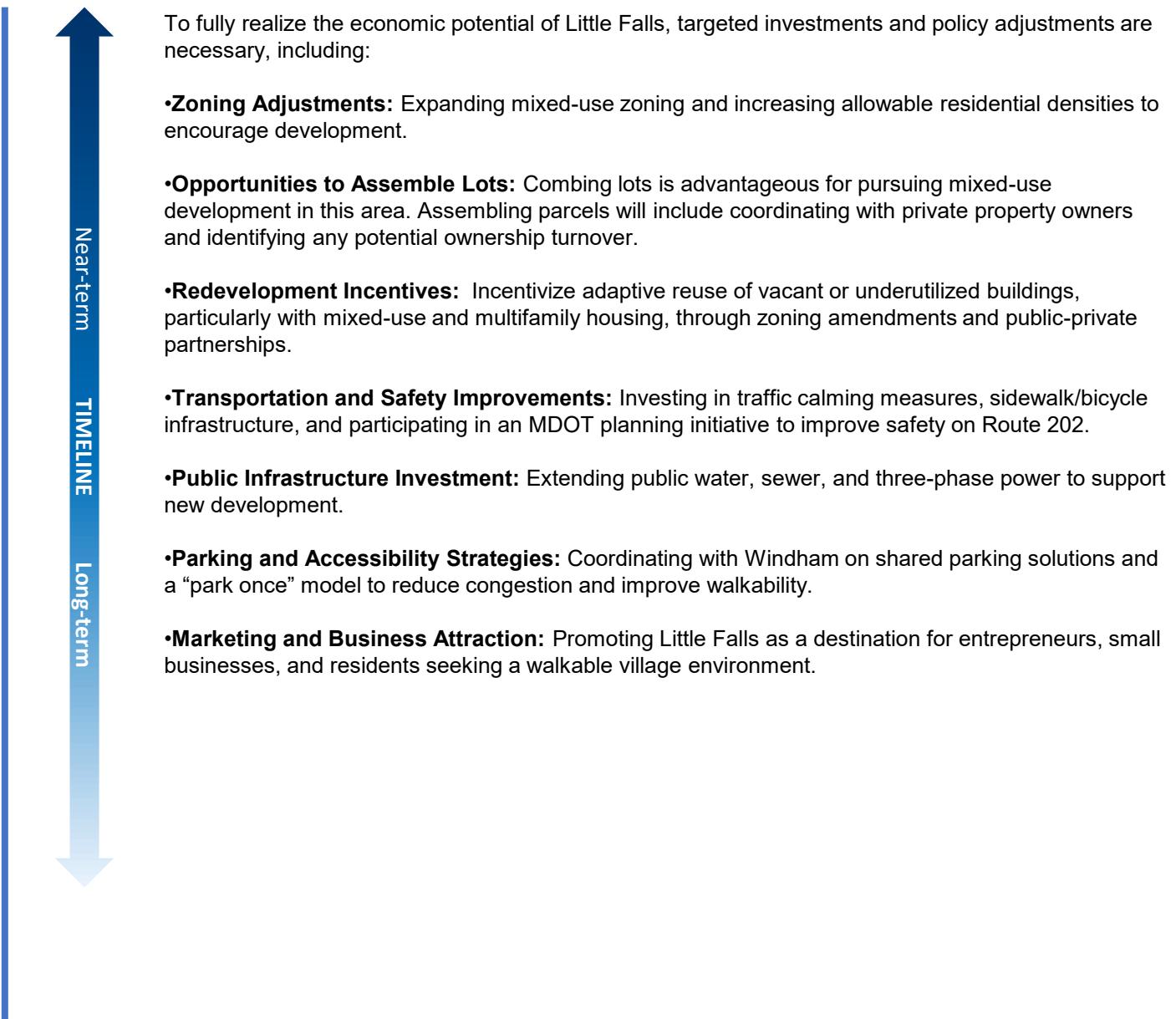
What economic opportunities exist in this target opportunity area?

Key opportunities include:

- **Mixed-Use Expansion:** Adjusting zoning for additional mixed-use development can bring more retail, office space, and residential units into the Village core.
- **Housing Development:** Demand for housing, particularly multifamily units, can be met through infill development and redevelopment of underutilized properties.
- **Commercial Revitalization:** The area can support small businesses such as restaurants, cafes, and local retail, catering to residents and visitors.
- **Tourism & Recreation-Linked Business:** Enhancing connections to the Presumpscot River, trails, and parks can drive business opportunities in outdoor recreation, hospitality, and visitor services.
- **Infrastructure & Transportation Improvements:** Enhancing the pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety infrastructure can make the area more accessible, attracting more businesses and residents.

Target Opportunity Areas | Little Falls

What investments or policy changes need to be made to capitalize on this opportunity?



Target Opportunity Areas | Little Falls

Place-Based Opportunity



While there are no large vacant or underdeveloped properties in the Village core, there are many opportunities for infill residential and commercial redevelopment in the core, and larger underdeveloped parcels just off Gray Road. Redevelopment and reactivation of the commercial/mixed-use properties at the old Sawyer Store property and surrounding properties should be a Village priority.



Support economic development by improving bike/pedestrian/traffic safety on Rt 202/Rt 237 (participating in an MDOT planning study – like a Village Planning Initiative – may provide additional opportunities for improvements here).



Mixed-use zoning should be expanded beyond the current Village Center. The Villages Masterplan zoning changes should be implemented in partnership with Windham.

Little Falls



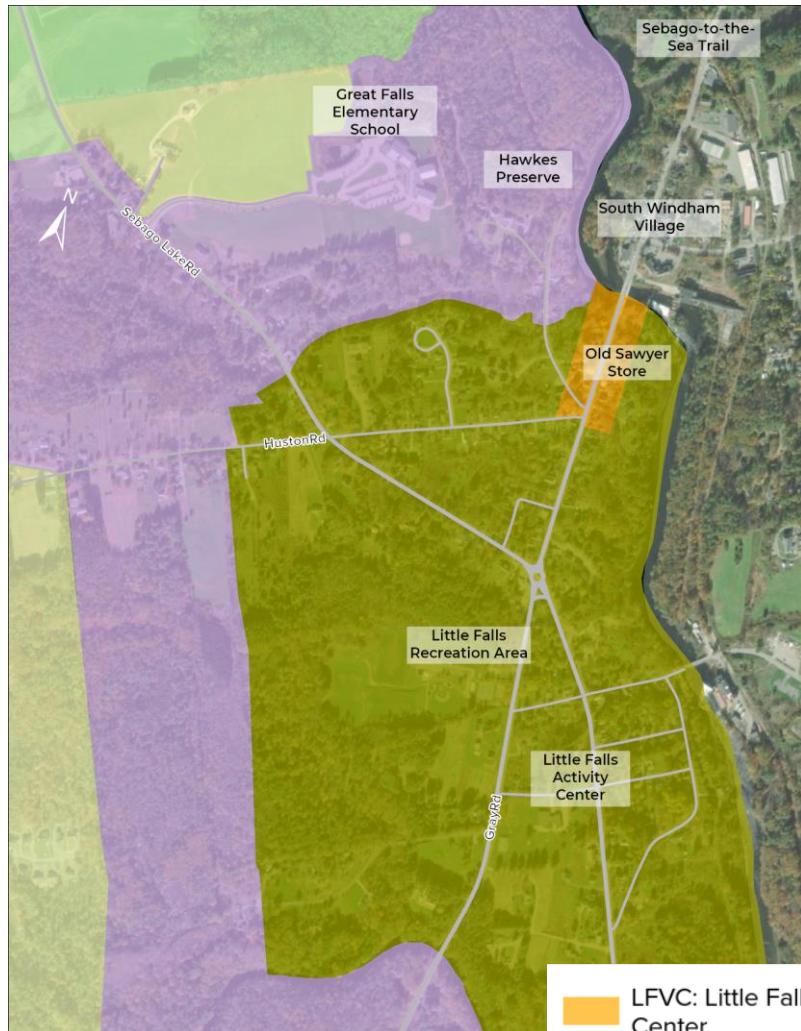
Keys to Success

- New development should include multifamily housing, restaurants, cafes, entertainment, and retail that provide local services for residents and support passing traffic and people visiting the area for recreation.
- Implement the key recommendations from the Villages Masterplan, particularly zoning work, and continue to partner with Windham on infrastructure and transportation improvements.
- Enhance connections to nearby trails, parks, and public recreation areas to encourage regional visitors to spend time in the Village.
- Mixed-use zoning should be expanded beyond the current Village Center. The Villages Masterplan zoning changes should be implemented in partnership with Windham.
- Work with Windham on parking strategies for shared parking and a “park once” model.

Target Opportunity Areas | Little Falls

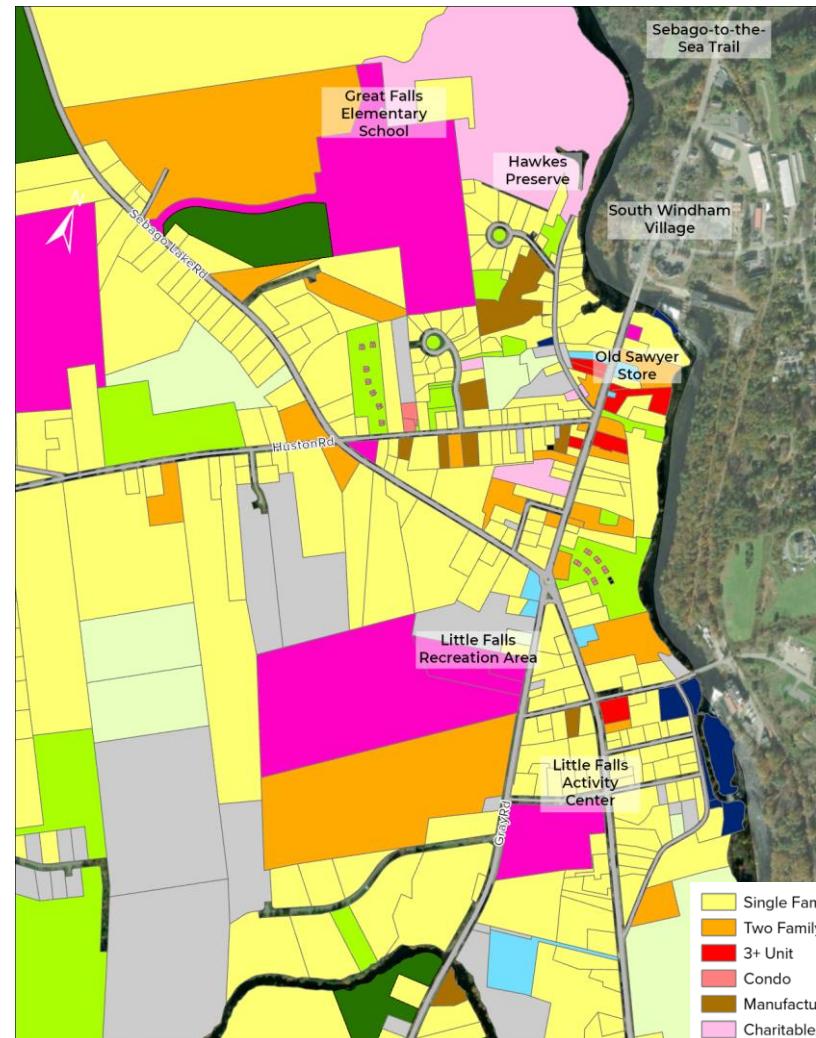
Supporting Maps

Little Falls Zoning



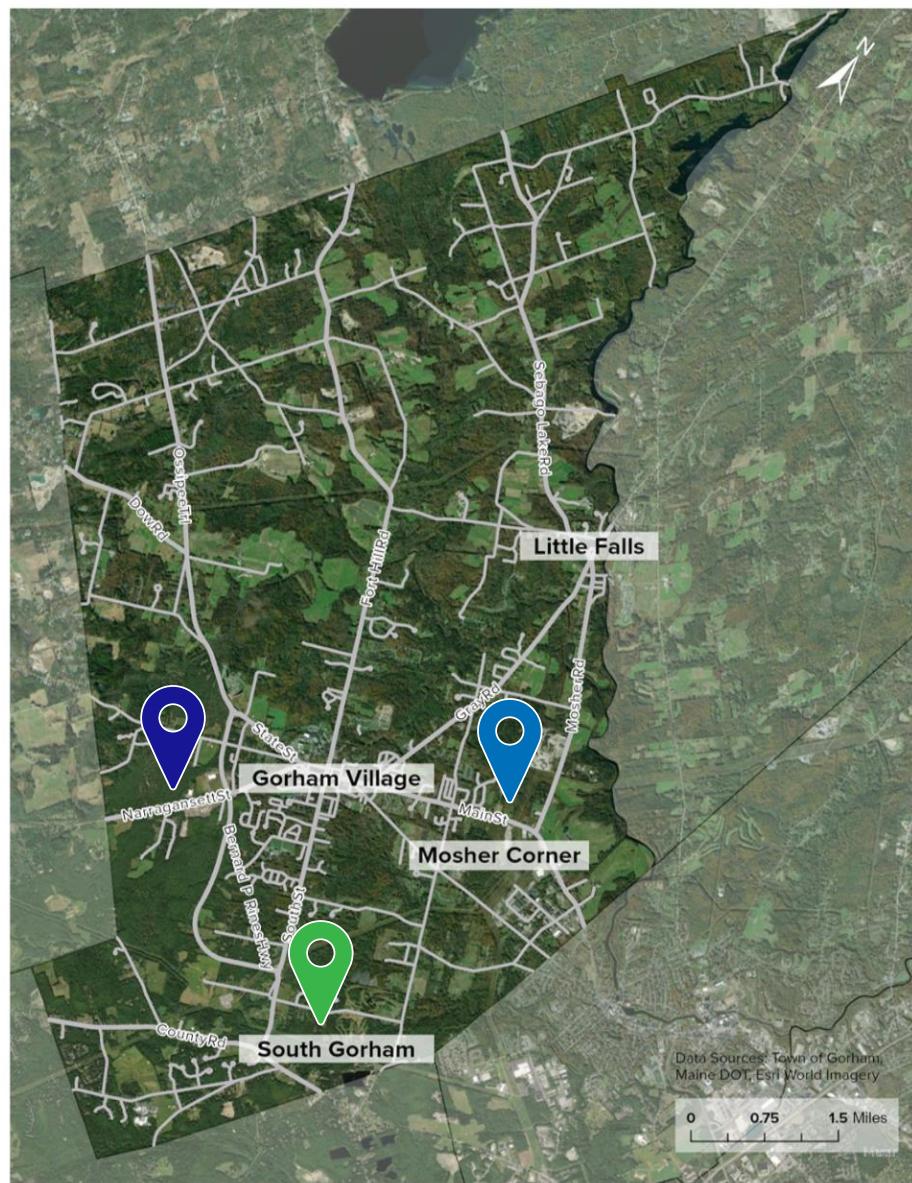
- LFVC: Little Falls Village Center
- R: Rural
- SR: Suburban Residential
- UR-MH: Urban Residential-Manufactured Housing
- UREXP: Urban Residential Expansion

Little Falls Existing Land Use



- Single Family
- Two Family
- 3+ Unit
- Condo
- Manufactured Housing
- Charitable/Religious
- Education/Government
- Office/Commercial
- Utility
- Open Space/Common Land
- Cemetery; Easement/ROW
- Agriculture/Tree Growth Tax Program
- Vacant Excess/Backland
- Vacant
- Unknown

Other Opportunity Areas & Future Zoning Considerations



While the real estate analysis determined that upcoming demand can be satisfied by existing or underutilized industrial space in Gorham, this analysis also noted that Gorham does not have as much industrial or commercial-zoned land as its peer communities.

As part of upcoming planning work, Gorham planners and policymakers should consider additional areas of town that could accommodate industrial development, as regional demand is projected to continue growing. Identifying strategic locations that meet suitable development criteria will also ensure that larger, undeveloped areas can be maintained as valued open space.

The following areas are recommended for consideration in the long term.



Main Street from Mosher Road to the Town line with Westbrook: A portion of this area is within the Mosher Corner Opportunity Area and zoned as Roadside Commercial zoning. This section of road is characterized by commercial uses with large parking areas and single-family homes. Based on an assessment of the need for Roadside Commercial uses, these areas could be upzoned to industrial to encourage the types of uses found on the adjacent Industrial Park land. Some mixed-use development, tying into uses in adjacent Westbrook, is also an opportunity.



Additional South Gorham area: Commercial/industrial land uses would be constrained north of the Stroudwater River, but the properties along the south side of County Road are relatively deep and around undeveloped land. The town is targeting public water and sewer extensions for County Road, which would provide the opportunity to upzone the current mixed-use and residential areas to higher-intensity commercial/industrial uses in proximity to the Maine Turnpike.



The Narragansett Street area: This area is located around Narragansett Street (Route 202) and the Gorham Bypass. It is zoned for more intensive commercial uses and is currently home to Moody's Collision. The current zoning, the amount of undeveloped land, and the proximity to the Bypass could make this area a good target for infrastructure improvements to support more commercial/industrial development in the future.

Action Plan Matrix

The following Action Plan Matrix is the tool that will direct the Town of Gorham's Economic Development Strategic Plan for the next five years. It serves as a roadmap, guiding resources and efforts towards areas where they can yield the most significant returns. The Matrix is intended to evolve as resources change or market opportunities shift.

Resource Level

This section includes a resource scale to indicate the relative investment level needed among strategies.

\$ Strategy requires minimal new resources but could involve allocating staff time or developing additional external partnerships.

\$\$ Strategy requires some new investment by the Town for Gorham and/or the additional partners. Additional staff support would help advance the strategy.

\$\$\$ This strategy requires a substantial allocation of new investment to be successful. Funding will likely come from the public and private sectors.

Priority

The description below indicates how to interpret the priority column.



These strategies are critical to successful economic development in Gorham.



These strategies are less critical but will require attention over the mid-term after other strategies have been addressed.



These strategies are best positioned to succeed after other initiatives are completed.

Initiation

The description below indicates when the strategy will be undertaken within the five-year timeframe of the strategy.

Immediate

This strategy will begin in 0–6 months. The full execution of the strategy may require several years or ongoing resources. i.e., infrastructure improvement. There are six strategies in this category.

Short-term

This strategy will be initiated within the timeframe of **six months to two years**. There are 11 strategies in this category.

Mid-term

This strategy will be initiated within the **two-to-four-year time frame**. There are four strategies in this category.

Long-term

This strategy will be initiated in **year four or five of the strategy**. It is a longer-term consideration for economic development success. There are five strategies in this category.

Action Plan Matrix

The Lead/Partners section includes the entities leading or partnering to advance a strategy. The entity expected to lead the strategy is bolded in this column. While a list of partners is included in the Action Plan Matrix, the list is anticipated to evolve and grow as the strategy proceeds. Those not currently listed should be added as periodic updates are made to the strategy over five years.

Lead/Partners

- **Agricultural businesses**
- **CIPs / ED Subcommittee:** Capital Improvement / Economic Development Subcommittee
- **Economic Development Division**
- **GEDC:** Gorham Economic Development Corporation
- **Gorham Business-Schools Roundtable**
- **Gorham School District**
- **Gorham Village Alliance**
- **Gorham Parks & Recreation**
- **Gorham Conservation Commission**
- **GPCG:** Greater Portland Council of Governments
- **Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry**
- **Maine Farm to Institution**
- **Maine Farmland Trust**
- **Planning Division**
- **Revolving Loan Fund Committee**
- **USM:** University of Southern Maine

Strategic Starting Points for Gorham

While the Action Plan Matrix that begins on the next page establishes the priority level of each strategy, this page documents where there is initial momentum to build on in the near term for the Gorham Economic Development Division. Coordinating the actions below will position the Town and its partners to continue building on incremental wins and build up to some of the more intensive strategies in the Action Plan Matrix.

1 | Foster relationships with the existing business community and bring together the community to share ideas.

The Town staff, GEDC, local institutions, and the Village Alliance must continue to build stronger relationships with existing and new businesses to unlock low-cost opportunities and improve the perception of the business climate. This includes formalizing a series of business roundtables, onsite meetings with businesses, and building on the outreach the GEDC is executing. Stronger local relationships will generate early momentum, build trust, and lay the foundation for tackling more complex projects later in the strategy, such as business attraction and redevelopment efforts.

Related Objectives in Action Plan: 1.A, 1.C, 1.D

Target Opportunity Areas: Gorham Village, Little Falls Village, Mosher Corner, and South Gorham, in addition to townwide.

2 | Initiate adaptations to permitted uses in target opportunity areas to gain quick wins with business development.

For commercial growth and mixed-use opportunities, prioritize strategies and zoning reform that target Gorham Village and Little Falls, where infrastructure (e.g., utilities, roads, walkability, partnerships) is the strongest. These wins will demonstrate visible signs of progress and encourage overall investment potential throughout the Town. Beginning with zoning updates in these areas leverages existing assets and provides the fastest pathway to new private investment. These visible changes will signal to the development community that Gorham is ready for business, increase property values, and accelerate broader revitalization efforts. Early success here can help attract interest in more challenging or emerging parts of Gorham.

Related Objectives in Action Plan: 2A, 2B

Target Opportunity Areas: Gorham Village and Little Falls Village

3 | Integrate action that encourages housing diversification as a critical portion of economic development priorities.

Housing contributes to the overall sense of place and community and is critical for employers who need to attract and retain workers in the area. With a pipeline of housing activity, ensuring that long-term land use plans align with the needs presented in this report is critical. Focusing on housing diversity now addresses a critical constraint for workforce and business growth. Ensuring a supply of attainable housing options will enhance Gorham's competitiveness in attracting employers and talent, support local spending in businesses, and strengthen the community fabric needed to sustain broader economic development initiatives. Without action on housing, many other economic growth strategies will face limitations.

Related Objectives in Action Plan: 2A

Target Opportunity Areas: Gorham Village, Little Falls Village, South Gorham

4 | Advance long-term infrastructure planning to sustain economic growth.

Water and sewer capacity will limit how and where development is able to be successful. Collaborating with the private sector, using financing tools, and leveraging federal funding will be critical to building out infrastructure capacity that will ensure quality for Gorham's residents in the long term.

Related Objectives in Action Plan: 1B, 2C

Target Opportunity Areas: South Gorham

STRATEGY	LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
1A. Retaining Existing Businesses Through Intentional Outreach and Support				
1.A.i	Formalize the components of a business retention and expansion (BRE) program.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$\$	Immediate
1.A.ii	Encourage, vet, and support ideas from the business community that seek to hold events, collaborate with other businesses, or attract visitors.	Economic Development Division GEDC Gorham Village Alliance	\$	Short term
1.A.iii	Expand participation in regional or statewide industry group meetings, events, and committees to build relationships with key players and advocate for Gorham's business markets.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$	Short term
1B. Positioning Gorham for Business Attraction and Emerging Sectors				
1.B.i	Complete the infrastructure investments in the industrial park expansion and reposition the marketing message based on market context.	Economic Development Division GEDC Economic Development Committee	\$\$\$	Immediate
1.B.ii	Continue to present Gorham's value proposition for new businesses by updating case studies or testimonials from successful Gorham businesses to highlight the Town's business-friendly environment.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$\$	Short term

Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

STRATEGY		LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
1B. Positioning Gorham for Business Attraction and Emerging Sectors					
1.B.iii	Create detailed profiles for each target industry, highlighting Gorham's unique strengths (e.g., proximity to major highways for logistics, existing healthcare demand, or available workforce).	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$\$		Mid term
1.B.iv	Incorporate a stronger marketing message around recreational assets and agribusiness locations to regional tourism partners.	Economic Development Division GEDC Gorham Parks & Recreation	\$\$		Mid term
1.B.v	Maintain Gorham's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and adapt resources as different needs arise from the business community.	Economic Development Committee Economic Development Division Revolving Loan Fund Committee	\$\$		Short term
1.B.vi	Continue updating the Town's inventory of available properties (including zoning details, infrastructure, and pricing) and ensure this list is updated regularly and shared with relevant state offices.	Economic Development Division Planning Division GEDC	\$		Immediate

Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

STRATEGY		LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
1C. Meeting the Needs of Industrial Businesses					
1.C.i	Meet regularly with industrial users to troubleshoot topics like workforce, expansion, land use, and market opportunities.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$		Immediate
1D. Retaining, Attracting, and Upskilling Workforce					
1.D.i	Keep the business community well-informed of workforce recruitment strategies, ongoing with partners such as the school district, the University of Southern Maine (USM), and others.	Economic Development Division Gorham School District USM	\$		Short term
1.D.ii	Continue to facilitate connections between the private sector and educational institutions to increase the number of Gorham businesses that offer mentorships, apprenticeships, and other job training opportunities through the school district, USM, and more.	Economic Development Division Gorham Business-Schools Roundtable USM	\$		Short term
1.D.iii	Provide recognition or small grants to businesses that actively participate in mentorships, internships, or training programs.	Economic Development Division Gorham School District	\$\$		Long term

STRATEGY	LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
1E. Adapting to Market Changes in the Agricultural Sector				
1.E.i	Engage with agricultural operators at roundtables, public forums, or in other accessible ways to understand their unique needs and leverage Gorham's agritourism ordinance.	Economic Development Division GEDC Agricultural businesses	\$	Mid term
1.E.ii	Work with local agribusinesses to determine if any state programs increasing local food procurement at educational institutions could be economically beneficial to operators.	Economic Development Division Maine Farmland Trust Agricultural businesses	\$	Immediate
1.E.iii	Examine local regulations for agricultural operators in Gorham, such as permits for CSAs, setting up farmstands, tasting rooms, and recreation activities, etc., and simplify these regulations to make it easier for operators to start and operate their businesses.	Economic Development Division Planning Division Agricultural businesses Maine Farm to Institution Gorham Parks & Recreation Gorham Conservation Commission	\$	Short term
1.E.iv	Explore the Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program to provide tax advantages to productive working lands.	Economic Development Division GEDC Agricultural businesses Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry	\$	Long term

Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

STRATEGY	LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
2A. Advancing Initiatives in the Target Opportunity Areas				
2.A.i	Target Opportunity Area - Gorham Village	\$		Ongoing
2.A.ii	Target Opportunity Area - Little Falls	\$\$		Ongoing
2.A.iii	Target Opportunity Area - South Gorham	\$\$\$		Ongoing
2.A.iv	Target Opportunity Area - Mosher Corner	\$\$\$		Ongoing
2B. Monitoring Emerging Areas for Economic Growth				
2.B.i	Main Street from Mosher Road to Westbrook	\$		Long term
2.B.ii	Additional portions of South Gorham	\$\$		Long term
2.B.iii	Narragansett Street Area	\$\$		Long term

Connecting Economic Opportunities to Place and Infrastructure

STRATEGY	LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
2C. Utilizing Financing Tools for Development				
2.C.i	<p>Continue to use development financing tools like tax increment financing (TIF) and seek ways to diversify how TIF is implemented.</p>	CIPs / ED Subcommittee Economic Development Division	\$\$	Mid term

Driving Business Growth to Support Gorham's Character

STRATEGY	LEAD/PARTNER	RESOURCE LEVEL	PRIORITY	INITIATION
3A. Marketing the economic development vision and public communication				
3.A.i	Draft a concise, visually appealing document that outlines the priorities, goals, and ongoing projects that align with the Economic Development Strategy.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$	Immediate
3.A.ii	Organize bi-annual forums or business recognition events to present updates on economic development initiatives and gather community feedback.	Economic Development Division GEDC Gorham Village Alliance	\$\$	Short term
3.A.iii	Put out press releases for new businesses in Gorham.	Economic Development Division GEDC	\$	Short term
3B. Roles within the Economic Development Ecosystem				

These roles are described in the narrative on page 59. A graphic summarizes how the Town will work with its external public sector partners. The graphic is not an exhaustive list but rather documents the key players in the local economic development ecosystem. Private sector, non-profit, and philanthropic partners are also valuable to recognize and add to the list over the course of the plan.

Partnerships for Economic Development Success in Gorham

Roles of Town of Gorham Partners

Economic Development Division (EDD)

The Town of Gorham convenes the Economic Development Strategy Plan. Along with related Town of Gorham entities, it will coordinate planning, funding, and decision-making related to the strategy over the next five years.

Capital Improvement / Economic Development Subcommittee (CIPs / ED (Town Council))

The CIPs / ED (Town Council) will advise and implement solutions regarding transportation, walkability, trail development, permitting process reform, and keeping the Revolving Loan Fund updated.

Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC)

The GEDC is an advisory body that will support business retention and expansion efforts, provide expertise on target industries, support the marketing and attraction of businesses, and communicate the Town's economic development vision.

Planning Division + Code Division

The Planning and Code Divisions will support the adaptations of land use regulations that will encourage the development outlined in this strategy. They will provide their guidance and expertise as to the process.

Roles of Community Partners

Gorham School District

Support business roundtable, collaborate on community development efforts, increase knowledge of vocational paths and adult education programs.

Gorham Village Alliance

Networking events, business forums, and advocating for the needs of Village businesses.

Greater Portland Council of Governments

Supporting long-term planning, supporting infrastructure initiatives, and fostering collaboration.

University of Southern Maine

Communicating the needs for student placements, supporting career fairs, planning for transportation needs, and integrating parking and infrastructure planning with the Town.

State of Maine

Hosting commercial and industrial real estate inventory, supporting role in growing target industries



Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

APPENDIX I: ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS

A collage of images on the left side of the slide. It includes a person's hands working on a map of a town with icons like a wrench, gear, graduation cap, and tree. A laptop screen shows a dashboard with charts and data. A hand is typing on a laptop keyboard. A small potted plant is visible. A sign points to 'To St Pier (450 m)'. Another sign points to 'To National Park (500 m)'.

Economic & Market Analysis

TOWN OF GORHAM

September 2024

PREPARED FOR:
Town of Gorham, ME
75 South Street
Suite 1
Gorham, ME 04038



www.camoinassociates.com

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ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS

As part of the research for the Town of Gorham's Economic Development Strategic Plan, Camoin Associates gathered and analyzed demographic, economic, and industry data to assess the existing conditions in the region. This information will inform subsequent steps of the planning and strategy process. The image below is a guide to the information contained in the Economic and Market Analysis.



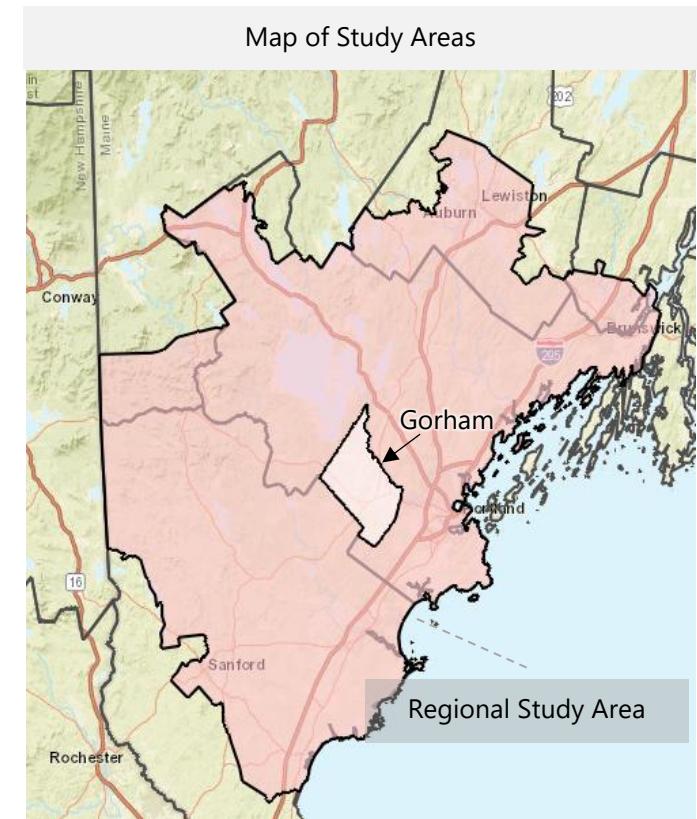
Study Area

For this Economic and Market Analysis, Camoin Associates conducted data analysis to identify economic conditions and trends within Gorham and the larger economic region. To do so, we compared variables for the Town of Gorham, the Regional Study Area, the State of Maine, and the US. The map to the right depicts the Regional Study Area.

The Regional Study Area may be more easily understood as the 45-minute labor shed, which includes all the municipalities located within a 45-minute drive from Gorham. The list below includes all the towns that comprise the Regional Study Area.

Towns and cities included in the Regional Study Area:

- Alfred
- Arundel
- Auburn
- Baldwin
- Biddeford
- Bridgton
- Brunswick
- Buxton
- Cape Elizabeth
- Casco
- Cornish
- Cumberland
- Dayton
- Durham
- Falmouth
- Freeport
- Gorham
- Gray
- Hiram
- Hollis
- Kennebunk
- Kennebunkport
- Lewiston
- Limerick
- Limington
- Lyman
- Naples
- New Gloucester
- Newfield
- North Yarmouth
- Old Orchard Beach
- Parsonfield
- Poland
- Porter
- Portland
- Pownal
- Raymond
- Saco
- Sanford
- Scarborough
- Sebago
- Shapleigh
- South Portland
- Standish
- Topsham
- Waterboro
- Wells
- Westbrook
- Windham
- Yarmouth



Summary: Economic and Market Analysis Key Findings

The following findings provide an overview of the key points from the Economic and Market Analysis, separated into three sections: Demographic, Housing, and Employment. These key findings are followed by economic development implications, which provide an idea of how the data impact the Town's economic development.

Key Demographic Findings

Gorham's population is growing fast and has been outpacing the Regional Study Area, the state, and the nation's growth rates since 2010.

From 2000 to 2024, Gorham's population grew 31% cumulatively, adding over 4,400 people. This outpaced the Regional Study Area (16%), Maine (9%), and the US (20%).

Gorham has a young median age, likely influenced by the population of students.

Gorham's median age is 39.4 years in 2024, which is significantly younger than the state (45.3). About 50% of Gorham's population comprises individuals aged 20-59, supported by the presence of the University of Southern Maine, housing a high population of individuals under 24 and a slightly lower share of the population aged 25-29. Therefore, despite the fact that a quarter of Gorham residents are children and adolescents (ages 0-19) in 2024, these are not predominantly single working professionals but children and students.

Gorham is a relatively high-income community, with a high share of households who have annual income of over \$150,000.

In 2024, about 40% of Gorham's households had income at or above \$150,000, compared to 24% in the Regional Study Area, 18% in Maine, and 22% in the US.

4 out of 5 people who work in Gorham live in other towns and cities. Meanwhile, 15% of Gorham's residents work from home.

Gorham is a net exporter of workers, meaning that more people commute from Gorham to their jobs versus traveling into Gorham for work. Of the residents who work outside of Gorham, other commute locations in Cumberland County are the most common, while York County also captures some of those workers. Meanwhile, in 2022 15% of Gorham's adult working population worked from home, up from just 4% 10 years prior.

Economic development implications for the Town of Gorham: Population and commuter data for Gorham indicate that the community can support additional business development through its population base and by capturing some commuters traveling out of Town for employment.

Key Housing Findings

Gorham faces a home affordability gap, meaning that a household earning a median income in Gorham cannot afford the median house sold.

A household with a median income of \$116,094 could not afford a home at the median sale price of \$540,000 in 2024.

Gorham's housing stock is largely made up of owner-occupied single-family homes.

81% of Gorham's housing units are owner-occupied, compared to around 60% in the Regional Study Area, Maine, and the US. 13% of Gorham's housing units are in multifamily buildings, compared to 28% in the Regional Study Area, 19% in Maine, and 27% in the US.

Economic development implications for the Town of Gorham: Housing affordability and diversity can constrain future business and job growth if not addressed.

Key Employment Findings

Gorham's employment (employment at establishments in Gorham) has remained steady in the last five years and is projected to remain constant through 2028.

Gorham's total employment has grown nominally in the last five years. This is the lowest employment growth of the comparison geographies, where the Regional Study Area's employment base grew by 1%, and Maine and the US both grew by 4%.

Gorham's largest sectors include Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing.

Nearly one in five of Gorham's jobs is in the Construction sector, which was the second-fastest growing sector in the town over the last five years. Other notable growing sectors include Health Care and Social Assistance, Arts and Entertainment, Recreation, and Professional Scientific and Technical Services. The composition of jobs looks similar in the Regional Study Area, with Health Care and Social Assistance making up 18% of jobs (15% in Gorham), Retail Trade making up 12% (11% in Gorham), and Manufacturing making up 7% (10% in Gorham). The composition differs when it comes to Construction, which makes up 19% of jobs in Gorham and only 6% in the Regional Study Area.

Gorham's most specialized sectors are Construction and Wholesale Trade.

The specialization of an industry, measured by its location quotient, can indicate where there are unique strengths and assets to leverage for economic growth. Construction's share of employment in Gorham is 3.3 times stronger than in the US overall.

Occupations in Health Care and Construction experienced the greatest proportion of growth over the last five years.

Home Health Aides, Childcare Workers, and General Managers are the occupations that grew the most in Gorham from 2018 to 2023.

Note that while net employment growth was steady between 2018-2023, there were gains and losses in the occupations that are found within each of those sectors

Economic development implications for the Town of Gorham: Gorham is experiencing declines in its strongest industries, meaning investing in its growing industries may be more advantageous than in its maturing industries.

Next Steps in the Research Process

This Economic and Market analysis represents the initial phase of data analysis, which will also include a Real Estate Market Analysis, Local Competitive Analysis, and a study of land use, all of which are explained further below. One-on-one and small group engagement, as well as an open house for the public, will also be used to both inform this work and offer opportunities for citizens to contribute their opinions and feedback to the strategy. The approximate timeline for each phase is noted below as well.

Data

Real Estate Market Analysis (Fall 2024) – The Real Estate Market Opportunity Analysis will assess the current real estate market for various development categories and identify local and regional trends that might impact development opportunities. We will analyze all data for the Town of Gorham and, where appropriate, identify specific trade areas or areas from which Gorham could capture demand.

Local Competitive Analysis (Fall/Winter 2025) – Using a set of core indicators of local economic competitiveness, Camoin Associates will compare Gorham to up to five other communities within the region to understand Gorham's strengths and challenges.

Land Use (Fall/Winter 2025) – North Star Planning will quantify the land available for possible development, along with the respective zoning designations and infrastructure availability. Our team will provide insights into potential areas for improvement based on the opportunities identified in the market analysis. Through strategy development, we will recommend specific areas for rezoning to accommodate desired commercial/industrial growth.

Opportunity Industries (Winter 2025) – Based on the other data and information gathering tactics, our team will shed light on which sectors offer the greatest opportunities for economic growth. These findings will be reflected in the strategy development.

Engagement

Interviews (October 2024) – One-on-one digital interviews with steering committee members and other key stakeholders will help to confirm data findings and allow Camoin Associates to explore key industries or economic trends at a deeper level.

Small Groups (October 2024) Small group meetings, which will be held in Gorham in October, are organized by the industry sector and will allow for businesses to discuss their experiences in the town and elaborate on opportunities and challenges facing them in their sector.

Open House (October 2024) – A public open house in October will gather feedback from residents and businesses of Gorham in a series of interactive stations.

Comparison Geographies:

- Gray
- Saco
- Scarborough
- Westbrook
- Windham



Strategy Development

Strategy (Winter 2025) Following the steps above, Camoin Associates and North Star Planning will develop an action plan matrix for the Town of Gorham to use as an implementation tool. Each action in the matrix will be accompanied by related partners, timeframe, resources, and outcome metrics to track over time.

At the end of the project, the team will package all work products into final deliverables, which will include the action plan matrix, an executive summary of findings, and appendices of data and analyses with corresponding narratives. Once the deliverables are complete, Camoin will present the results at an appointed meeting/venue. We will work with Town Staff to determine the ideal participants and meeting format so that this is not just a perfunctory presentation but a session that launches Gorham into implementation while promoting broader buy-in and join-in from additional stakeholders.



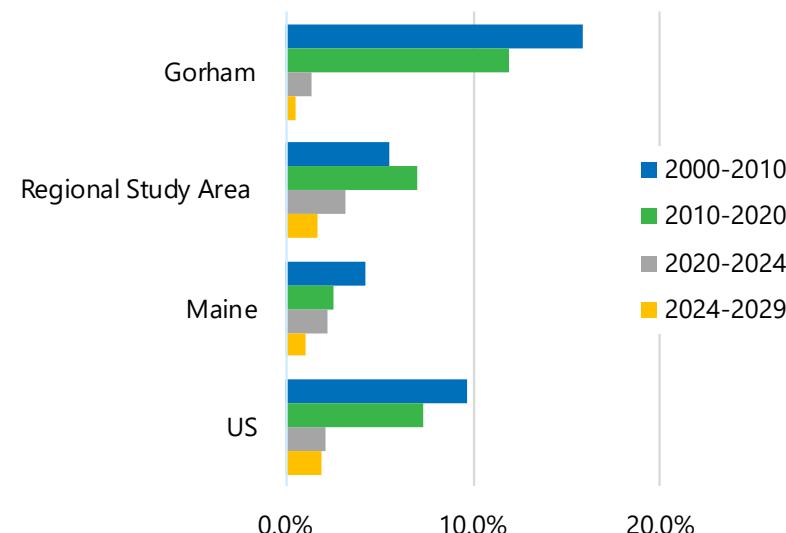
Demographic and Housing Indicators

Population Growth

Gorham's population is growing fast and outpacing the Regional Study Area, the state, and the nation's growth rates since 2010.

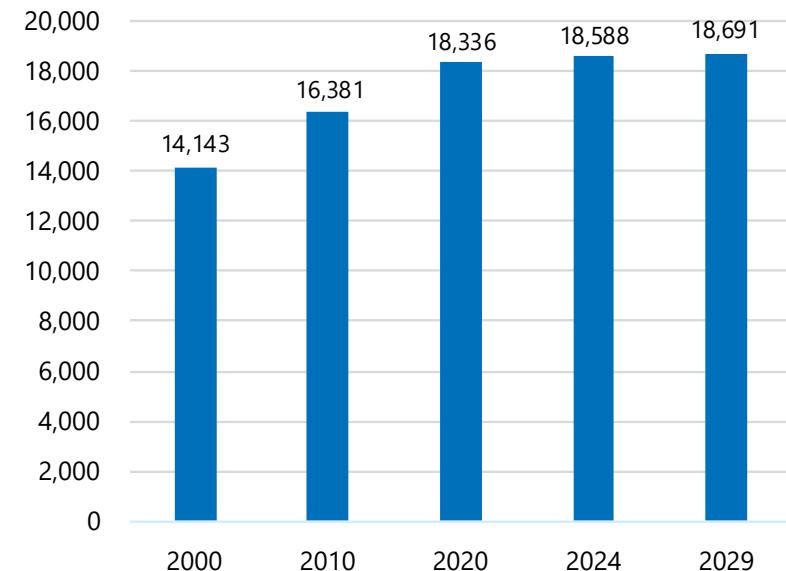
- From 2000-2024, Gorham's population grew 31% cumulatively, adding over 4,400 people to its population. This outpaces the Regional Study Area (16%), Maine (9%), and the US (20%).
- Most of Gorham's population growth occurred in the decade from 2000-2010, though growth rates also exceeded the comparison regions in 2010-2020. More recently, growth has been steady but slower than the Regional Study Area, state, and US.
- From 2024-2029, Gorham's population is expected to grow by 0.6% over the five-year period, growing slower than the Regional Study Area, Maine, and the US.

Percent Change in Population, 2000-2029



Source: Decennial Census; Esri

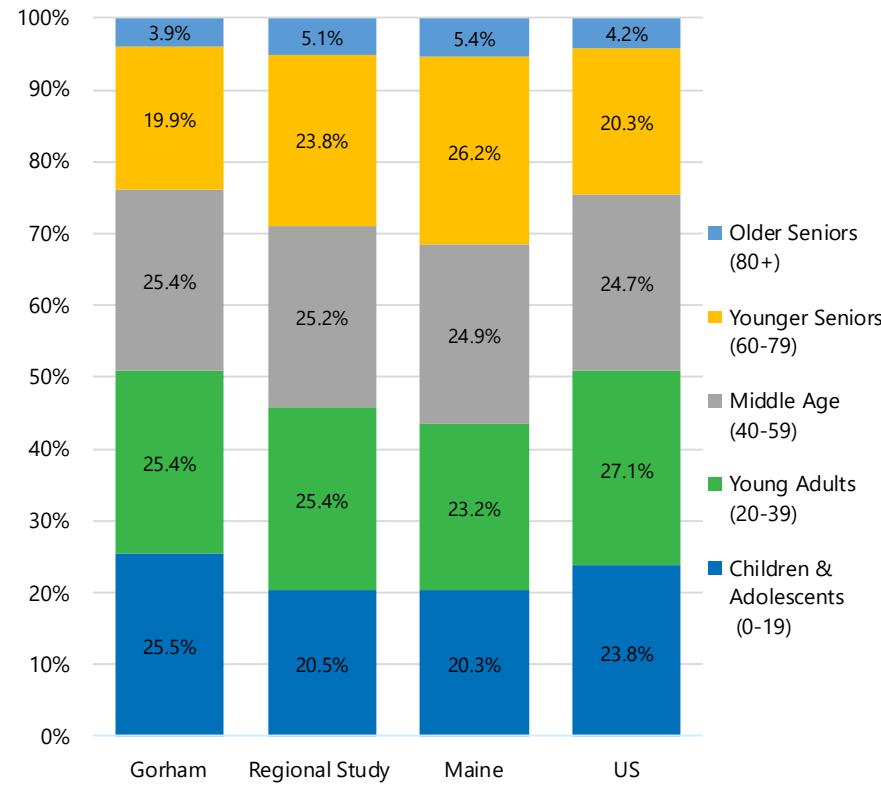
Gorham's Total Population, 2000 to 2029



Source: Decennial Census; Esri

Age Characteristics

Composition by Age Cohort, 2024



Source: Esri

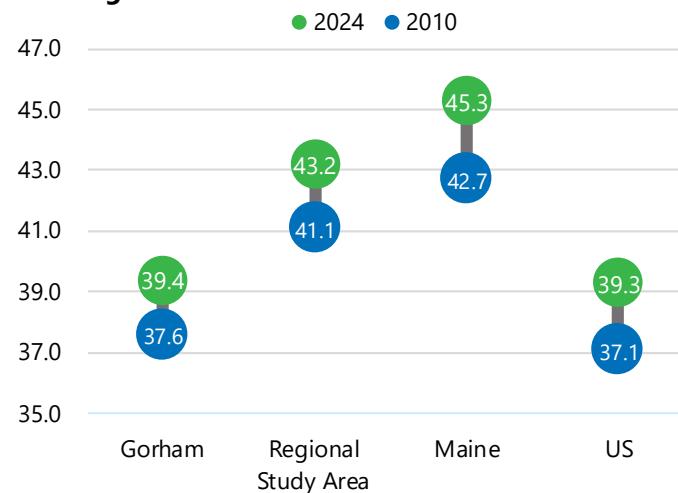
Data Spotlight – The Impact of the University of Southern Maine on Gorham's Demographics

The presence of the University of Southern Maine, including most of the university's dormitories, plays a role in reducing Gorham's median age. 2022 data from the American Community Survey shows that 74% of Gorham's population aged 18 to 24 years is enrolled in college or graduate school, and that 6.6% of Gorham's total population lives in university student housing.

Gorham has a young median age, likely influenced by the student population.

- Gorham's median age is young, at 39.4 years in 2024. This is significantly younger than the Regional Study Area and the state, and on par with the US.
- Around one-quarter of Gorham's population is under the age of 20, compared to about one-fifth in the comparison study areas
- Overall, about 50% of Gorham's population is made up of Young Adults (20-39) and Middle Age (40-59) individuals, indicating the town has a strong core of workers and young families.
- Gorham's high population of individuals aged 15-24 years old is heavily influenced by the presence of the University of Southern Maine. Meanwhile, there is a slightly lower share of the population aged 25-29 (4.5% compared to about 6% in the Regional Study Area), though the town follows closely in parallel to the region for cohorts aged 30-54.

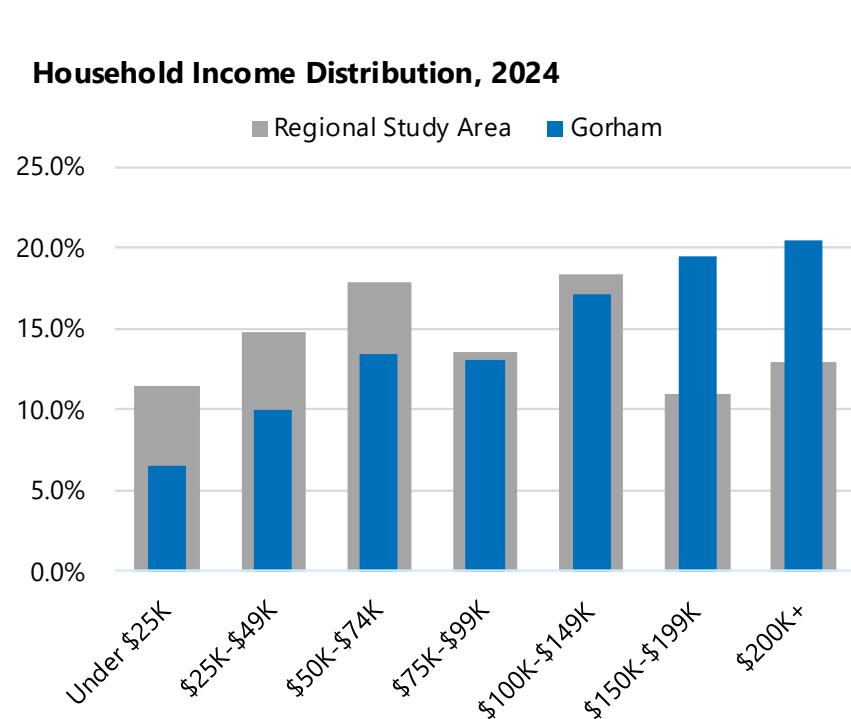
Median Age



Source: Decennial Census; Esri



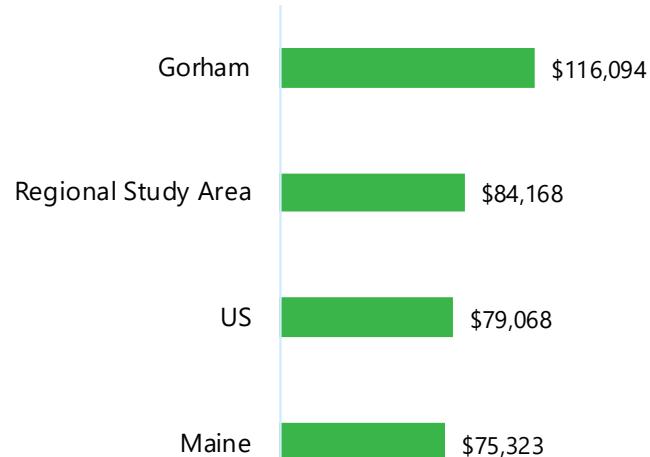
Income



Source: Esri

Imp

Median Household Income, 2024



Source: Esri

Gorham is a relatively high-income community, with a high share of households having annual income of over \$150,000.

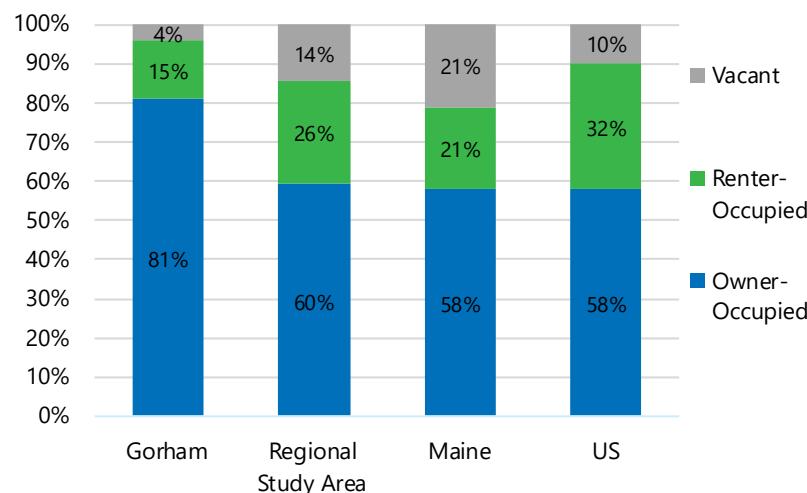
- Gorham's median household income of over \$116,000 in 2024 is significantly higher than the Regional Study Area, the state, and the US.
- In 2024, about 40% of Gorham's households had income at or above \$150,000, compared to 24% in the Regional Study Area, 18% in Maine, and 22% in the US.
- Conversely, only 6.5% of Gorham's households had an income of under \$25,000 in 2024, compared to 11.4% in the Regional Study Area, 14.9% in Maine, and 14.9% in the US.

Housing Characteristics

Gorham's housing is largely characterized by owner-occupied single-family homes.

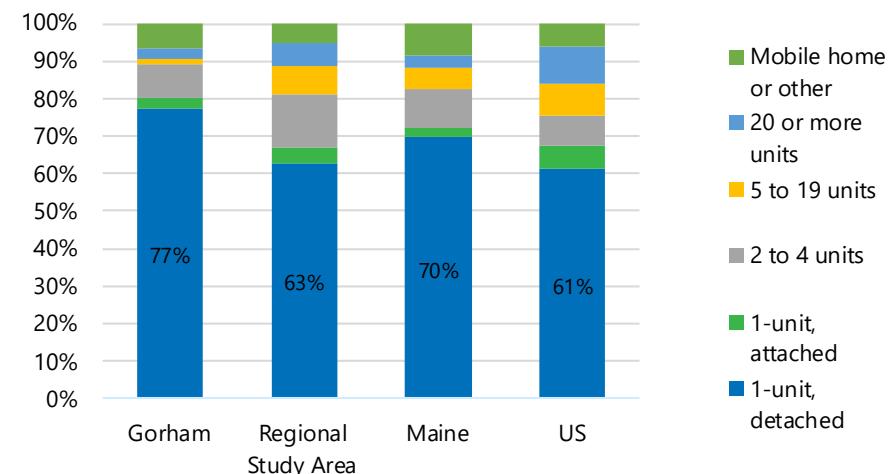
- 81% of Gorham's housing units are owner-occupied, compared to around 60% in the Regional Study Area, Maine, and the US
- Similarly, 70% of Gorham's housing units are single-family detached units, compared to between 60%-70% in the other comparison areas
- Only 13% of Gorham's housing units are in multifamily buildings, compared to 28% in the Regional Study Area, 19% in Maine, and 27% in the US.
- Meanwhile, Gorham is adding significantly to its housing stock in the last two decades at a faster pace than the comparison areas. From 2000-2024, Gorham added just over 1,900 housing units, a 38% increase compared to between 16%-25% in the comparison areas
- The bulk of this growth in housing stock occurred between 2000-2010 (+920 units) and between 2010-2020 (+792 units).
- Gorham's relatively low stock of renter-occupied apartment-style housing may play into the town's comparatively low population aged 25-34.

Housing Inventory, 2024



Source: Esri

Housing Units in Structure by Share, 2022



Source: American Community Survey via Esri



Commuting Patterns

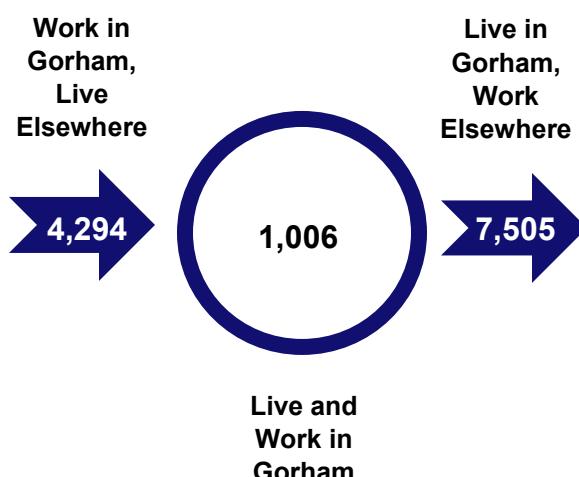
Only about 20% of Gorham's workforce resides in Gorham, while around 80% of Gorham's workers live in other towns and cities.

- This indicates a mismatch between the jobs available in town and the people who live there, but is not uncommon for Portland suburbs.
- Approximately 1,000 people both live and work in Gorham as of 2021.
- Outside of Gorham, the most common towns and cities where Gorham workers live are Portland, Windham, and Standish. Overall, 60% of Gorham's workers live in Cumberland County, with another 21% living in York County.
- On the other hand, about 90% of Gorham's residents work in other towns and cities, with Portland, South Portland, and Westbrook accounting for a combined 46% of Gorham's out-commuters.
- Overall, 76% of Gorham's residents work somewhere in Cumberland County, with York County accounting for another 9%.

Top 10 Towns/Cities where Gorham Workers Live (2021)

	Number	% of Total
Gorham	1,006	19.0%
Portland	376	7.1%
Windham	328	6.2%
Standish	264	5.0%
Westbrook	252	4.8%
Buxton	227	4.3%
South Portland	167	3.2%
Scarborough	146	2.8%
Saco	144	2.7%
Limington	111	2.1%
Total, All Towns and Cities	5,300	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau OnTheMap



Top 10 Towns/Cities where Gorham Residents Work (2021)

	Number	% of Total
Portland	2,208	25.9%
Gorham	1,006	11.8%
South Portland	907	10.7%
Westbrook	861	10.1%
Scarborough	550	6.5%
Windham	209	2.5%
Biddeford	205	2.4%
Falmouth	189	2.2%
Saco	153	1.8%
Augusta	139	1.6%
Total, All Towns and Cities	8,511	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau OnTheMap

Note: Commuting data may include some workers who work from home.

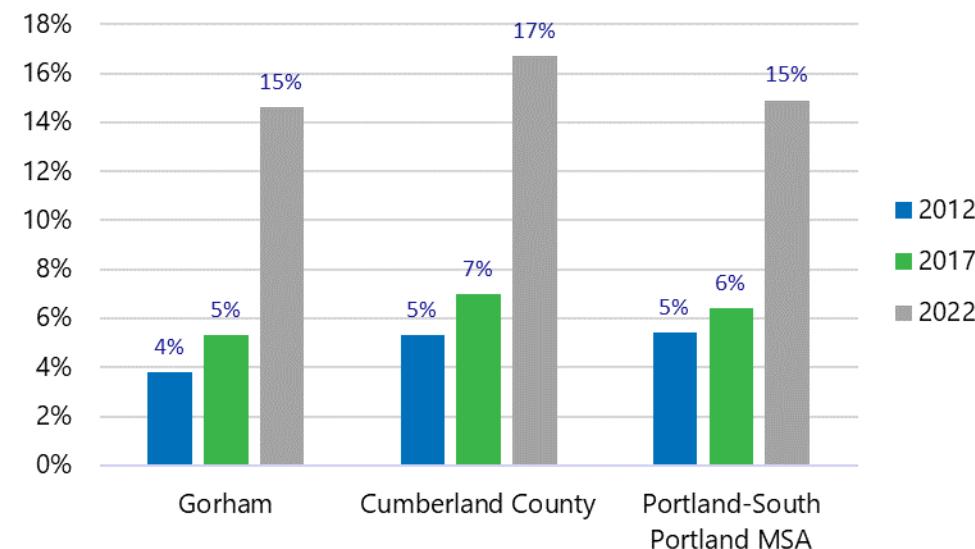


Working From Home

15% of Gorham's working population works from home, a share that has almost quadrupled since 2012.

- In 2022, there were nearly 1,400 working-aged individuals in Gorham who worked from home.
- The rise of working from home is a trend that is seen across many areas in the US, and is pronounced not only in Gorham but also in Cumberland County and in the Portland-South Portland metropolitan area.
- The share of working-aged individuals working from home shifted drastically in the post-pandemic years. While around 5% of Gorham's population worked from home in 2017, that share tripled within only five years, spurred by the pandemic.

Share of Workers who Work From Home, 2012-2022



Source: American Community Survey Table S0801



Economic Base

Past and Projected Growth, Growth Competitiveness (Shift-Share Analysis)

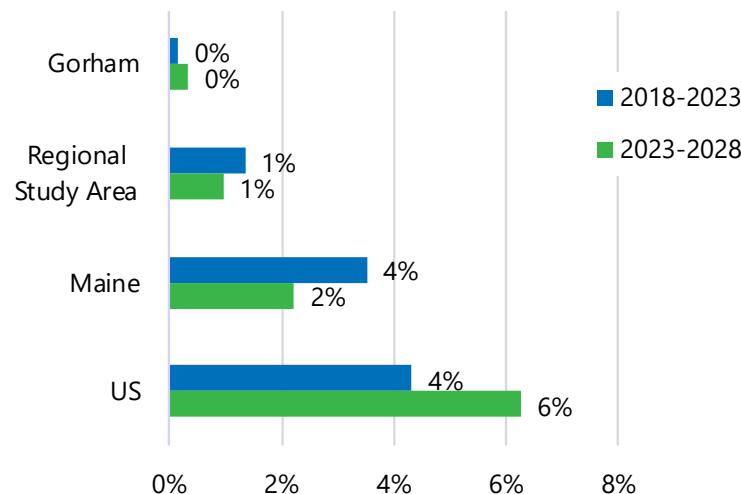
Job Change by Region

Region	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018-2023		2023-2028 Pct. Change in Jobs
				Pct. Change in Jobs	Change in Jobs	
Gorham	5,010	5,018	5,034	0%	0%	0%
Regional Study Area	304,456	308,521	311,470	1%	1%	1%
Maine	710,222	735,189	751,522	4%	2%	2%
US	165,133,784	172,265,362	183,047,822	4%	6%	6%

Source: Lightcast

Pct. Change in Jobs by Geography

Historic & Projected



Source: Lightcast

Gorham's employment has remained steady in the last five years and is projected to remain constant through 2028.

- Gorham's total employment grew by 8 jobs from 2018-2023 and is projected to grow by 17 jobs in the next five years through 2028
- While growth in the Regional Study Area has been slow, 1% over the past five years, it outpaces Gorham's growth. Maine and the United States grew by 4% in the same time period.



Employment by Sector

Job Change by Sector, Comparison Geographies, 2018-2023

NAICS	Description	Gorham	Regional Study Area
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	184	2,814
23	Construction	163	1,711
90	Government	81	(579)
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	34	346
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	24	399
55	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	17	2,713
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	16	1,399
11	Other Services (except Public Administration)	14	(804)
51	Information	7	69
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2	170
22	Utilities	1	69
	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	30
21			
52	Finance and Insurance	(2)	(689)
61	Educational Services	(2)	(1,169)
72	Accommodation and Food Services	(3)	(559)
44	Retail Trade	(16)	(646)
56	Waste Management and	(72)	(2,244)
42	Wholesale Trade	(116)	(297)
31	Manufacturing	(138)	1,088
48	Transportation and Warehousing	(186)	245

Source: Lightcast

Health Care and Social Assistance is the sector that added the most jobs in both Gorham and the Regional Study Area over the last five years.

- In Gorham, the sector grew by 184 jobs from 2018-2023, representing 31% growth. The Regional Study Area added over 2,800 jobs in the sector, representing a much lower growth rate of 5%.
- Other top-growing sectors in Gorham were Construction and Government. Gorham's 163-job growth in Construction represented 20% growth, compared to 10% in the Regional Study Area.
- Transportation and Warehousing, Manufacturing, and Wholesale Trade were Gorham's fastest-declining jobs from 2018-2023, with each dropping by over 100 jobs during the five-year period. In the Regional Study Area, Transportation and Warehousing, as well as Manufacturing, saw job growth during this time period; Wholesale Trade declined at the regional level.
- Overall, sectors with job declines in Gorham also tended to decline at the regional level, with the exception of Manufacturing and Transportation and Warehousing
- Similarly, the sectors that grew in Gorham also tended to grow at the regional level, with the exceptions of Government and Other Services.

Data note: This data reflects **sectors** and includes all different types of occupations that work in a given industry. For example, Manufacturing includes all workers who work in the manufacturing sector, from technicians to managers and executives.

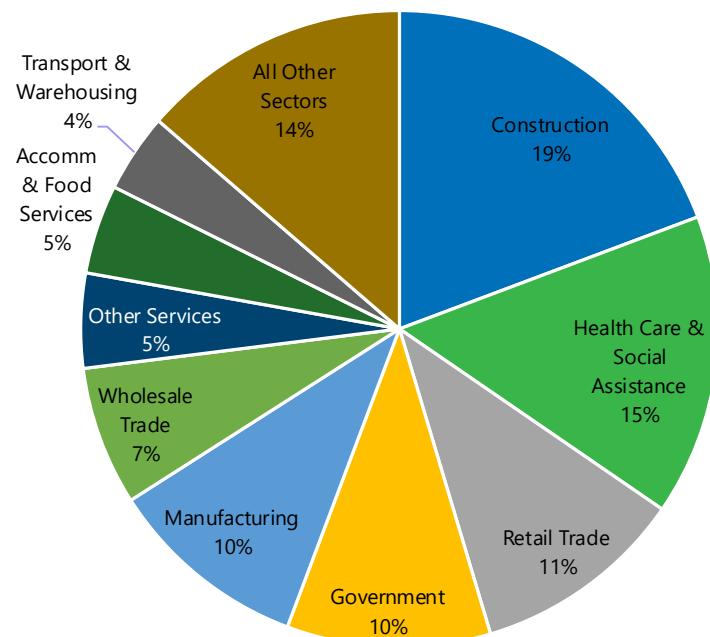


Regional Sector Comparison

Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing are Gorham's largest sectors.

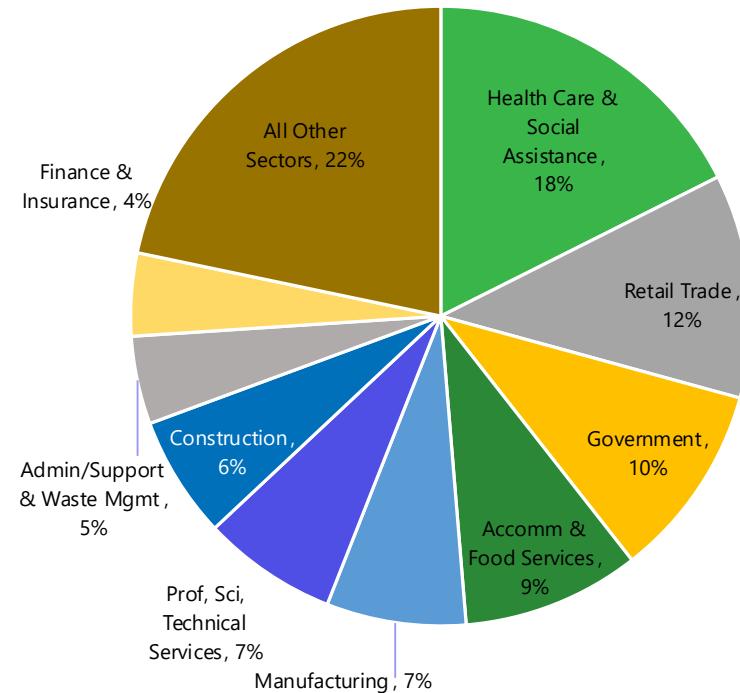
- Nearly one in five of Gorham's jobs is in the construction sector, which was the second-fastest growing sector in Gorham from 2018 to 2023. This compares to only 6% in the Regional Study Area.
- Another 15% of Gorham's jobs were in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector, the fastest-growing sector from 2018-2023.
- Gorham overall has a slightly different mix of sectors than that of the Regional Study Area, although Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Government, and Manufacturing are among the largest sectors in both areas.

Distribution of Employment by Sector in Gorham, 2023



Source: Lightcast

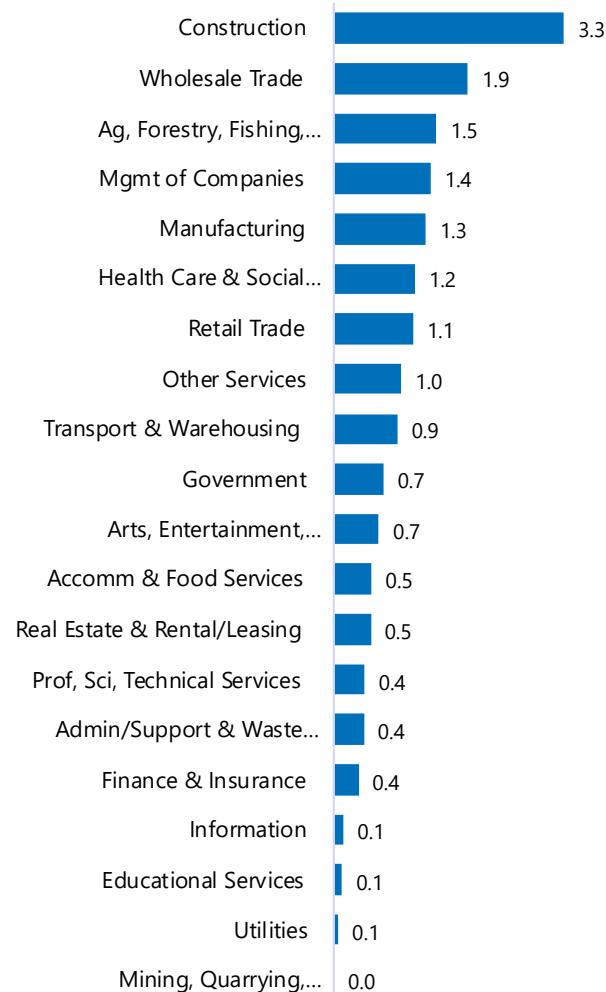
Distribution of Employment by Sector in the Regional Study Area, 2023



Source: Lightcast

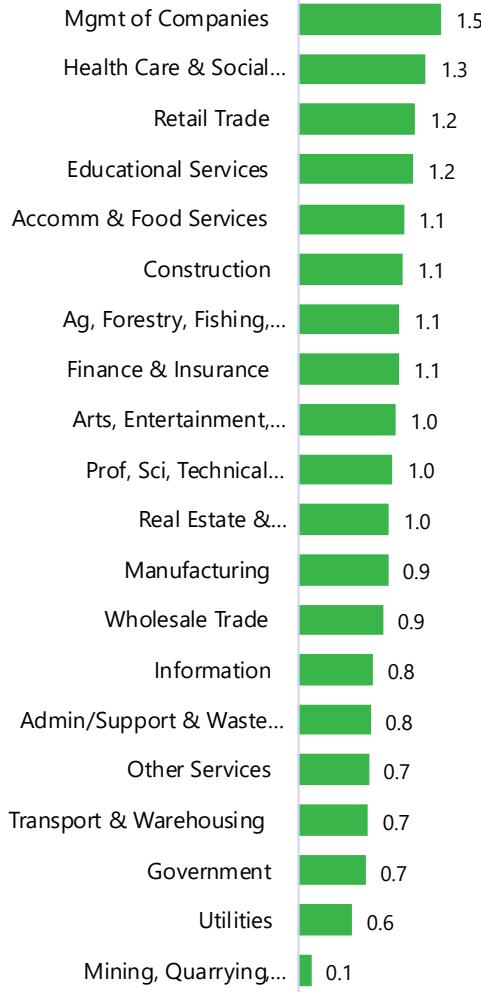


Location Quotients by Sector, 2023, Gorham



Source: Lightcast

Location Quotients by Sector, 2023, Regional Study Area



Source: Lightcast

Sector Characteristics

Construction and Wholesale Trade are Gorham's most concentrated sectors.

- Construction's share of employment is 3.3 times stronger than in the US overall, indicating the sector's strength in the local economy.
- Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade, Gorham's other largest sectors, also have strong concentrations.
- Compared to the Regional Study Area and the state, Construction, Wholesale Trade, and Manufacturing have much stronger concentrations in Gorham, indicating Gorham's specialization in these sectors.
- Meanwhile, other key sectors like Health Care and Social Assistance as well as Retail Trade have similar employment concentration levels as the Regional Study Area and the state.
- Compared to the region, Gorham is significantly more concentrated in Construction, Wholesale Trade, and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting.
- Conversely, sectors such as Educational Services, Information, Finance and Insurance, Professional & Technical Services, Real Estate, and Accommodation and Food Services are significantly more concentrated in the Regional Study Area compared to Gorham.

Location quotient (LQ) is a measure of industry specialization within a region. An LQ of 1.0 means that an industry is as concentrated within the region as it is on a national level. An LQ greater than 1.0 indicates that an industry is more concentrated in a region than at the national level.



Shift Share Competitive Effect by Sector, 2018-2023

NAICS	Description	Regional		
		Gorham	Study Area	Maine
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	139	(1,146)	(6,329)
23	Construction	93	148	1,753
90	Government	78	(811)	(299)
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	33	51	(275)
	Other Services (except Public Administration)			
81	Administration	23	(320)	91
	Management of Companies and Enterprises			
55	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	18	(164)	4,326
11	Hunting	16	1,406	1,980
51	Information	6	(231)	489
22	Utilities	1	46	125
	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction			
21	Extraction	0	45	34
99	Unclassified Industry	0	(7)	(997)
61	Educational Services	(2)	(1,311)	(1,160)
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	(2)	(261)	(357)
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services			
54	Services	(4)	(19)	1,696
72	Accommodation and Food Services	(6)	(915)	(829)
52	Finance and Insurance	(7)	(1,679)	(590)
44	Retail Trade	(9)	(158)	1,949
	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services			
56	Management and Remediation Services	(74)	(2,398)	(3,201)
42	Wholesale Trade	(134)	(688)	(918)
31	Manufacturing	(153)	606	445
48	Transportation and Warehousing	(272)	(1,884)	(3,221)

Source: Lightcast

Sector Competitiveness

Health Care, Construction, Government, and several other sectors have strong positive competitive effects, indicating that these sectors are growing faster than expected given national trends.

- Meanwhile, Gorham's overall negative competitive effect is primarily driven by three industries: Transportation and Warehousing, Manufacturing, and Wholesale Trade.
- In these sectors, Gorham lost more jobs than would be expected given national trends. In the case of Transportation and Warehousing and Wholesale Trade, both the Regional Study Area and the state also face negative competitive effects, indicating that these sectors face challenges in the wider economy, not just in Gorham.
- However, both the Regional Study Area and the state have strong positive competitive effects for Manufacturing, highlighting that Gorham is significantly lagging for the sector.

The **competitive effect** illustrates how much change in an industry is not explained by national economic or industry trends and is expressed in the number of jobs that a region gained or lost beyond expectations given national and industry trends. A positive competitive effect means that the region has unique characteristics giving it a competitive advantage in that respective industry.



Gorham's Largest Industries

This section refers to “industries” within “sectors”. Industries are smaller components that make up sectors. Sectors are represented by 2-digit NAICS codes while industries are represented by 4-digit NAICS codes.

- Gorham’s largest industry by employment is Building Equipment Contractors. Residential Building Construction also appears in Gorham’s top 3 industries, highlighting the town’s strength in Construction
- Public K-12 education is the second-largest industry in Gorham, with nearly 270 jobs in 2023
- Metalworking Machinery Manufacturing is the largest component of Gorham’s Manufacturing Sector, and the ninth-largest industry overall in Gorham. However, it was the fastest-declining industry from 2018-2023 and accounts for a significant share of the overall Manufacturing sectors’ job loss during that time period.

Top 10 4-Digit NAICS Industries by Job Count, Gorham

NAICS	Description	2023	2018-2023	2018-2023	2023 Avg.	2023	2018-2023
		Jobs	Change in Jobs	Pct. Change in Jobs	Earnings Per Job	Location Quotient	Competitive Effect
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	283	71	33%	\$88,651	3.6	44
	Education and Hospitals (Local						
9036	Government)	268	33	14%	\$79,104	1.1	31
2361	Residential Building Construction	238	51	27%	\$68,563	5.6	21
7225	Restaurants and Other Eating Places	199	(4)	(2%)	\$41,250	0.6	(8)
	Local Government, Excluding Education						
9039	and Hospitals	187	17	10%	\$75,264	1.1	15
6214	Outpatient Care Centers	166	50	43%	\$89,512	4.9	29
	Grocery and Related Product Merchant						
4244	Wholesalers	153	(6)	(4%)	\$100,536	6.3	(11)
	Machinery, Equipment, and Supplies						
4238	Merchant Wholesalers	149	(24)	(14%)	\$104,497	6.6	(38)
3335	Metalworking Machinery Manufacturing	143	(139)	(49%)	\$101,843	29.9	(109)
6244	Child Day Care Services	141	24	21%	\$39,990	3.9	23

Source: Lightcast



Workforce and Labor

2-Digit SOC Occupation Distribution in Gorham, the Region, and Maine (2023)

SOC	Description	Gorham		Regional Study Area		Maine	
		#	%		%		%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	660	13%		5%	6%	
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	512	10%		12%	11%	
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	429	9%		7%	7%	
41-0000	Sales and Related	412	8%		9%	9%	
11-0000	Management	388	8%		8%	8%	
51-0000	Production	352	7%		5%	5%	
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	261	5%		4%	4%	
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	260	5%		5%	6%	
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	250	5%		8%	8%	
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	226	5%		7%	6%	
31-0000	Healthcare Support	202	4%		6%	5%	
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	194	4%		5%	5%	
	Building and Grounds Cleaning and						
37-0000	Maintenance	181	4%		4%	4%	
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	168	3%		3%	3%	
21-0000	Community and Social Service	130	3%		2%	2%	
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	93	2%		2%	2%	
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	77	2%		3%	2%	
33-0000	Protective Service	71	1%		1%	2%	
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	66	1%		2%	2%	
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	43	1%		1%	2%	
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	28	1%		1%	1%	
23-0000	Legal	8	0%		1%	1%	
55-0000	Military-only	6	0%		0%	0%	

Source: Lightcast

Occupation Distribution

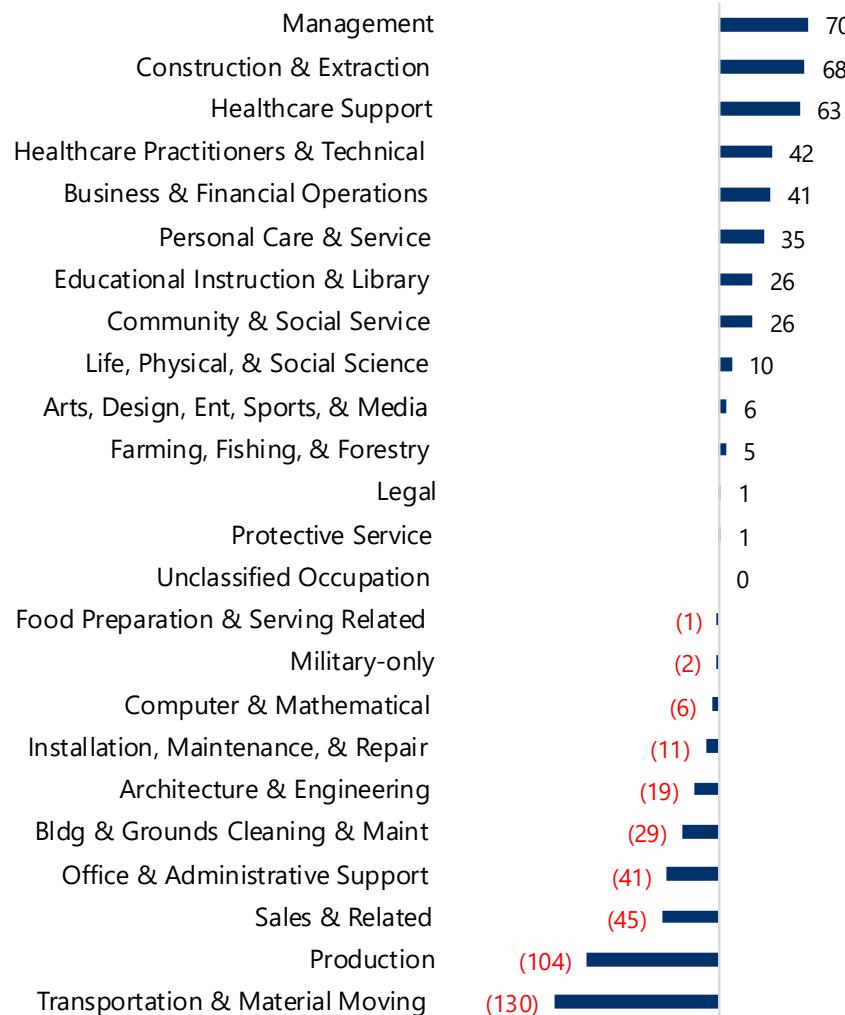
Construction and Extraction Occupations account for the largest share of Gorham's employment, unsurprising given Gorham's strength in the Construction sector.

- 13% of Gorham's jobs are in Construction and Extraction occupations, compared to 5% in the Regional Study Area and 6% in Maine.
- Other major occupations in Gorham are Office and Administrative Support, Transport and Material Moving, and Production occupations.
- Gorham has a lower concentration of workers in Food Preparation and Serving Occupations, Business and Financial Operations Occupations, and Office and Admin Occupations compared to the Regional Study Area and Maine.

This data reflects **occupations**, and describes the individual who is doing a job, and the job roles and skills they use in their work. Occupations can be found across different industries. For example, sales workers can be found across the Insurance, Manufacturing, or Software industries.



Change in Jobs by Occupation Group, 2018-2023, Gorham



Source: Lightcast

Job Growth by Occupation

- Management, Construction & Extraction, and Healthcare Support Occupations grew the most from 2018-2023
- Growth in several key occupations was partially offset by job declines in other occupations. Transportation & Material Moving Occupations and Production Occupations had the most job decline from 2018-2023, accounting for a combined decline of 234 jobs.
- Gorham's job growth in Construction and Extraction as well as Healthcare Support Occupations outpaces rates in the Regional Study Area and Maine



Occupation Characteristics

The median hourly earnings across all occupations in Gorham is \$26.91 in 2023, with earnings ranging from around \$16.40 in Farming as well as Personal Care and Service, up to about \$45.00 per hour for Management positions.

- About half of the occupation groups have strong concentration in Gorham. In addition to Construction and Extraction, other occupation groups like Community and Social Service and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair are more concentrated in Gorham than in the nation.
- About half of Gorham's most concentrated occupation groups have median hourly earnings higher than the overall median.
- Six out of the ten occupations with a strong location quotient have a negative competitive effect. This indicates that although Gorham has a strong concentration of these workers, jobs in these occupations declined faster than would be expected given national trends.

LQ>1

Occupation Characteristics in Gorham, 2023

Occupation	2023 Jobs	Median		
		Hourly Earnings	Location Quotient	Competitive Effect
Construction and Extraction	660	\$27.29	2.9	57
Community and Social Service	130	\$25.91	1.5	19
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	261	\$28.57	1.3	(26)
Production	352	\$23.93	1.3	(89)
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	43	\$16.43	1.3	8
Personal Care and Service	168	\$16.46	1.2	44
Architecture and Engineering	93	\$42.93	1.2	(19)
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	181	\$18.27	1.1	(24)
Management	388	\$45.33	1.0	(31)
Transportation and Material Moving	429	\$21.60	1.0	(193)
Sales and Related	412	\$19.81	0.9	(18)
Educational Instruction and Library	260	\$25.57	0.9	28
Office and Administrative Support	512	\$22.54	0.9	(8)
Healthcare Support	202	\$19.81	0.9	50
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	226	\$42.57	0.8	25
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	66	\$23.20	0.7	2
Protective Service	71	\$25.62	0.7	0
Food Preparation and Serving Related	250	\$19.17	0.6	(1)
Business and Financial Operations	194	\$37.87	0.6	1
Life, Physical, and Social Science	28	\$37.61	0.6	8
Computer and Mathematical	77	\$40.32	0.5	(17)
Military-only	6	\$26.20	0.2	(3)
Legal	8	\$41.42	0.2	1
Total	5,018	\$26.91	N/A	(185)

Source: Lightcast



Top Growing Occupations

Home Health Aides, Childcare Workers, and General Managers are the occupations that have grown the most in Gorham from 2018-2023.

- These three occupations have added a combined 88 jobs over the five-year period.
- Other health and social service jobs such as Registered Nurses, Misc. Community/Social Service Specialists, and Healthcare Support Occupations top the list of fastest-growing occupations.
- Finally, several construction-related occupations are among the fastest-growing in Gorham. These include Supervisors of Construction Workers, Construction Managers, and Construction Trades Helpers.

Top 10 4-Digit SOC Occupations by Historic Job Growth, 2018-2023, Gorham

NAICS	Description	2023 Jobs	2018-2023		2018-2023 Pct. Change in Jobs	2023 Median Hourly Earnings	2023 Location Quotient	2018-2023 Competitive Effect
			Change in Jobs	Pct. Change in Jobs				
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	106	46	75%	\$18.23	0.9		35
39-9010	Childcare Workers	113	23	25%	\$16.04	3.1		37
11-1020	General and Operations Managers	114	20	22%	\$47.59	1.1		(26)
29-1140	Registered Nurses	53	17	49%	\$41.00	0.5		14
Miscellaneous Community and Social Service Specialists								
21-1090	Service Specialists	43	17	64%	\$22.41	2.0		16
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Workers								
47-1010	Trades and Extraction Workers	64	17	36%	\$36.63	2.5		6
11-9020	Construction Managers	49	16	46%	\$45.96	3.0		5
25-9040	Teaching Assistants	71	14	24%	\$21.40	1.6		13
Miscellaneous Healthcare Support Workers								
31-9090	Occupations	69	14	24%	\$24.42	1.4		7
47-3010	Helpers, Construction Trades	40	14	51%	\$22.36	6.7		18

Source: Lightcast



Top Declining Occupations

Occupations related to transportation and driving frequently appear among the list of the fastest-declining occupations in Gorham over the last five years.

- The three fastest-declining occupations are in this category, all relating to both passenger and commercial driving and transportation. Industrial truck drivers also appear among the top 10 fastest-declining occupations.
- All of the top 10 fastest-declining occupations have a negative competitive effect, which means that they either declined faster than would be expected given national trends, or otherwise that they declined when national trends would suggest growth.
- Other occupations in decline retail workers, manufacturing and wholesale sales workers, and several others, which are detailed in the table below.

Bottom 10 4-Digit SOC Occupations by Historic Job Growth, 2018-2023, Gorham

NAICS	Description	2023					
		2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	2018-2023 in Jobs	Median Hourly Earnings	2023 Location Quotient	2018-2023 Competitive Effect
53-3030	Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers	167	(39)	(19%)	\$24.48	1.5	(61)
53-7060	Laborers and Material Movers	146	(34)	(19%)	\$17.89	0.7	(57)
53-3050	Passenger Vehicle Drivers	49	(33)	(40%)	\$23.51	1.7	(25)
41-2030	Retail Salespersons	136	(31)	(18%)	\$17.84	1.2	(5)
	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing						
41-4010	Manufacturing	75	(26)	(26%)	\$31.35	1.5	(22)
37-2010	Building Cleaning Workers	114	(18)	(13%)	\$17.90	1.0	(11)
51-4040	Machinists	51	(18)	(25%)	\$27.14	5.8	(1)
43-4150	Order Clerks	5	(16)	(77%)	\$19.91	1.7	(8)
53-7050	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	26	(16)	(38%)	\$22.11	1.1	(27)
43-4050	Customer Service Representatives	50	(14)	(22%)	\$20.42	0.6	(14)

Source: Lightcast



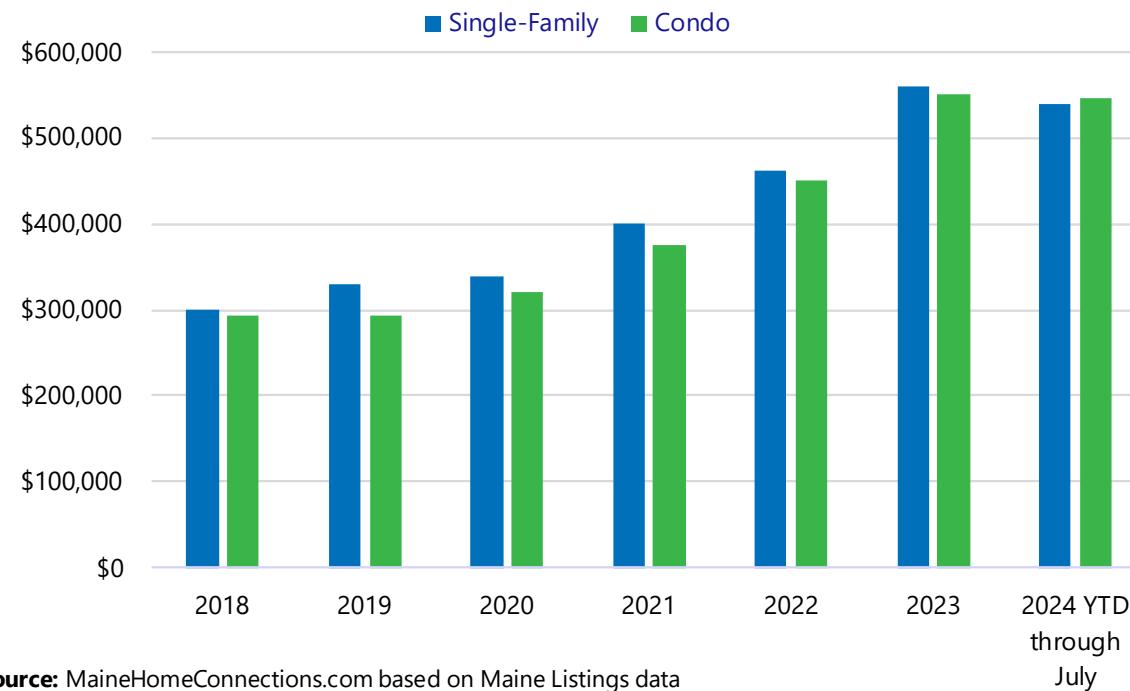
Workforce Housing Affordability

Median Sale Price

Both single-family homes and condos in Gorham have seen price appreciation of nearly 90% from 2018-2023.

- The median single-family home in Gorham sold for \$560,000 in 2023. In the first half of 2024, the median sale price in Gorham was down slightly, at \$540,000.
- Looking at condos, prices are similar to single-family homes. In 2023, the median sale price of condos in Gorham was \$550,600, and was relatively unchanged in the first half of 2024, at \$547,450.
- The number of single-family home sales significantly declined between 2018 and 2023, falling from 266 to 149, respectively. Conversely, more condos were sold in 2023 compared to in prior years, with 48 condo sales in 2023 compared to 34 in 2018.

Median Sale for Homes in Gorham, 2018-2024



Source: MaineHomeConnections.com based on Maine Listings data



Home Ownership Affordability Gap

Gorham Home Affordability Gap: Housing Prices vs. Income Levels (2024 Through July)

Median Sale Price	\$540,000
Down Payment of 10%	\$54,000
Loan Amount	\$486,000
Principal & Interest Payment	\$2,245
Estimated Additional Costs per Monthly Payment	\$1,577
Total Monthly Payment on Median Home Sold	\$3,822
Household Income Needed	\$152,899
Median Household Income (MHI)	\$116,094
Income Gap	(\$36,805)
Affordable Home Price based on MHI	\$335,962
Home Price Affordability Gap	(\$204,038)

Source: MaineHomeConnection.com, Maine Listings, mortgagenewsdaily.com, American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates, Camoin Associates

Gorham faces a home affordability gap, meaning that a household earning the median income in town is not able to afford a house selling for the median sale price in town.

- Based on the median sale price of \$540,000 in Gorham in 2024, the monthly payment on the median home sold is approximately \$3,800.
- To afford monthly payments on the median home sold in Gorham, a household would need annual income of approximately \$153,000 per year.
- However, Gorham's median household income is \$116,094, meaning there is an income gap of nearly \$37,000.
- A household with median income in Gorham could afford a home priced at approximately \$336,000.
- Overall, homes currently being sold in Gorham are priced approximately \$200,000 higher than can be afforded by the local population.



Cost Burden

Cost burdened households are defined as those that spend more than 30% of their pre-tax income on housing costs. In 2022, nearly a quarter of owner households in Gorham were cost burdened.

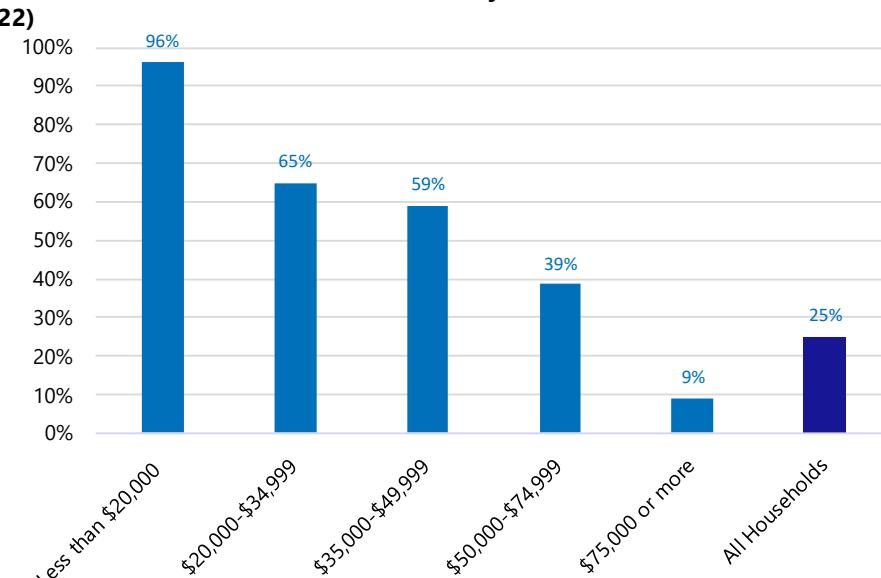
- This figure is slightly higher than ten years earlier when 22% of owner households were cost burdened.
- Overall, nearly 1,500 households in Gorham, including both those who own and rent their homes, were cost-burdened as of 2022.
- As a share of total households, those with income less than \$50,000 face the most cost burden, with over 50% of these households being described as cost burdened. Nearly all households with income less than \$20,000 are cost burdened in Gorham.

Cost Burdened Households in Gorham, 2012-2022

	2012	2017	2022
Owner	22%	24%	24%
Renter	58%	43%	29%
Total	28%	27%	25%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Share of Households that are Cost Burdened by Income Bracket (2022)



Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates

Gorham Cost Burdened Households by Income (2022)

	All Households	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Less than \$20,000	251	186	65
\$20,000-\$34,999	259	155	104
\$35,000-\$49,999	323	226	97
\$50,000-\$74,999	285	263	22
\$75,000 or more	349	349	0
All Households	1,467	1,179	288

Source: American Community Survey 2022 5-year estimates



ATTACHMENT A: DATA SOURCES



Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type. [Click to learn more.](#)



Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst combines proprietary statistical models covering demographic, business, and spending data with map-based analytics to offer insights on market opportunities for industries, businesses, and sites. Business Analyst integrates datasets covering a wide range of topics including demographics, consumer spending, market potential, customer segmentation, business locations, traffic counts, and crime indexes, which can be overlaid spatially to produce customizable maps and uncover market intelligence. Data can be pulled for standard and custom geographies, allowing for valuable comparison between places. [Click to learn more.](#)



Multiple Listings Services (MLS) are individual private databases of for-sale residential property listings designed to consolidate property information and connect homebuyers and sellers. More than 500 MLSs exist in the US, covering different geographic regions and markets. Individual property listings are often publicly accessible, while aggregated data on sales prices and trends can typically only be accessed through direct cooperation with an MLS. Many MLSs also provide listing information to third-party aggregators such as Realtor.com or Zillow. [Click here to learn more.](#)



The **American Community Survey (ACS)** is an ongoing statistical survey by the US Census Bureau that gathers demographic and socioeconomic information on age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, commute patterns, and other topics. Mandatory to fill out, the survey is sent to a small sample of the population on a rotating basis. The questions on the ACS are different than those asked on the decennial census and provide ongoing demographic updates of the nation down to the block group level. [Click to learn more.](#)



Conducted every ten years in years ending in zero, the **US Decennial Census of Population and Housing** is a complete count of each resident of the nation based on where they live on April 1st of the Census year. The Constitution mandates the enumeration to determine how to apportion the House of Representatives among the states. The latest release of the 2020 Census contains data for a limited number of variables, including: total population by race/ethnicity, population under 18, occupied and vacant housing units, and group quarters population. [Click to learn more.](#)

OnTheMap | US Census Bureau



[more.](#)

OnTheMap is a tool developed through the US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program that helps to visualize Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data about where workers are employed and where they live. It offers visual mapping capabilities for data on age, earnings, industry distributions, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and sex. [Click to learn more.](#)





Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

APPENDIX II: REAL ESTATE MARKET OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS, LAND USE ASSESSMENT, AND LOCAL COMPETITIVENESS ANALYSIS

A collage of images related to real estate market analysis and planning. It includes a map of a town with various icons and a red dashed line, a laptop keyboard, a hand pointing at a map, a tablet displaying data, a potted plant, and a notebook with a pencil.

Real Estate Market Opportunity Analysis, Land Use Assessment, and Local Competitiveness Analysis

TOWN OF GORHAM

December 2024

PREPARED FOR:

Town of Gorham, ME
75 South Street
Suite 1
Gorham, ME 04038

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REAL ESTATE MARKET OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS

Retail and Restaurant

This section evaluates the market potential for retail goods and services, restaurants, and entertainment in Gorham. It examines past industry and market trends, assesses local and regional consumer characteristics, and projects demand potential for new space in the community.

The following key takeaways can be drawn from the data:

Retail Consumer Demand Key Findings:

- Limited-service restaurants have the most market potential based on recent consumer spending patterns
- Most of the day-to-day retail needs of local customers are being met by Gorham's current retail offerings

Retail Real Estate Key Findings:

- Gorham has a tight retail market, with a low 0.3% vacancy rate for retail space in the town, compared to 2.0% throughout the Regional Study Area.
- The nearly 72,000 SF addition of retail space at Station Square in 2019 was a major addition to Gorham's retail inventory. Since then, development has been limited.
- Given Gorham's extremely tight retail market and relatively low vacancy throughout the surrounding area, there is room for Gorham's retail real estate portfolio to grow. It is important to note that while some of this development could occur in the Gorham Village area, it could also represent a range of opportunities in other outlying areas like Little Falls or South Gorham. These areas either currently have or are working towards zoning that is advantageous for retail uses and are primed to be destination locations. The Local Asset Assessment maps portions of Gorham that are well-suited for development opportunities (across all land use types) and can be referenced on page 36.

Retail Market: Gorham

- The current vacancy rate of 0.3% is very low, but a slight tick up from 2023.
- The 2019 delivery of nearly 72,000 SF at Station Square increased Gorham's retail real estate inventory by 15%. Since then, there has been relatively little retail development throughout the town.
- The asking rent per SF in Gorham has been relatively stable and tends to see spikes following any major delivery of space (2015, 2019). The current asking rent of around \$12/SF is lower than the Regional Study Area's \$14.63/SF. This is based on data from CoStar's database of retail properties in Gorham, including both available and existing occupied properties.

Retail Projects in the Pipeline:

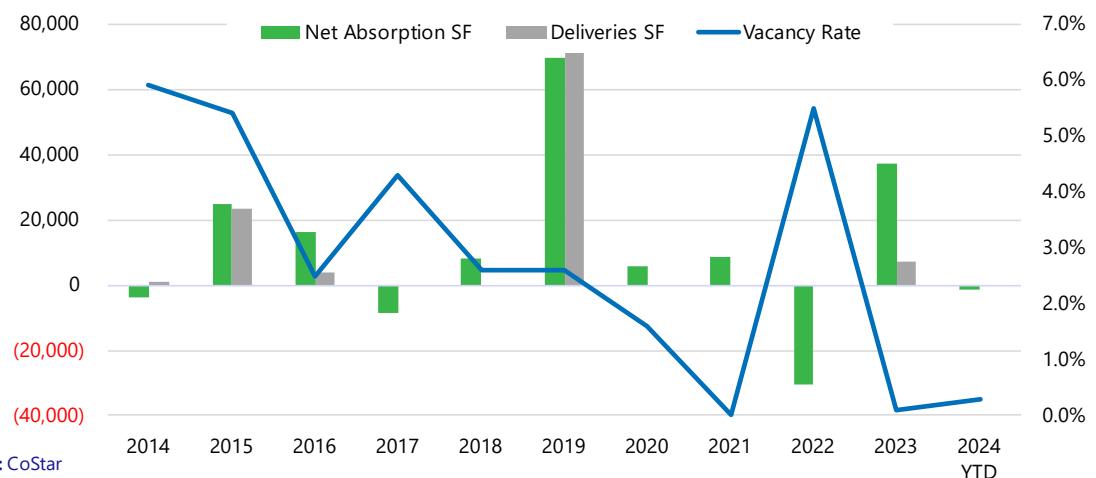
- Tractor Supply** – 22,000 SF – Currently seeking planning board approval
- Dry Good Store** – 9,000 SF – Approved, but the timeline is still being determined
- Nouria Energy Redevelopment** – Redevelop existing gas station and convenience store with updated pumps, new retail space, restaurant, and EV charging

Gorham Key Retail Metrics

Year	Total SF	Asking Rent per SF	Vacant SF	Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption	Net Deliveries
2014	463,255	\$12.35	27,515	5.9%	(3,728)	783
2015	486,750	\$15.19	26,132	5.4%	24,878	23,495
2016	484,669	\$13.25	12,210	2.5%	16,268	3,846
2017	484,669	\$10.41	20,931	4.3%	(8,721)	-
2018	484,669	\$10.77	12,620	2.6%	8,311	-
2019	556,543	\$20.66	14,741	2.6%	69,753	71,874
2020	556,543	\$17.39	8,771	1.6%	5,970	-
2021	556,543	\$15.65	-	-	8,771	-
2022	556,543	-	30,605	5.5%	(30,605)	-
2023	563,543	\$11.66	500	0.1%	37,105	7,000
2024 YTD	563,543	\$12.17	1,710	0.3%	(1,210)	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3

Net Absorption and Vacancy in Gorham's Retail Market



Source: CoStar



Gorham's Consumer Tapestry Segmentation Profile

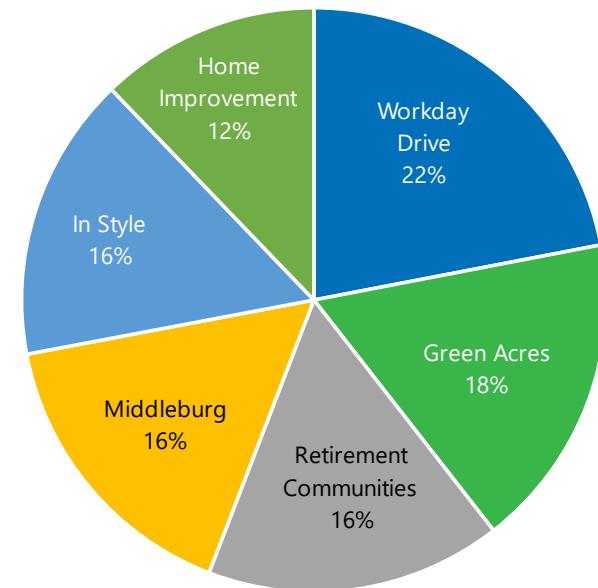
Segment	Description
Workday Drive	An affluent, family-driven subgroup of residents partial to new housing, away from the city but close enough to commute to professional jobs. They tend to have two working parents with young children, who rely on services like online banking and housekeeping services.
Green Acres	This subgroup features DIYers who maintain and remodel their homes, garden, and engage in outdoor recreation. They typically live in rural enclaves of metropolitan areas and live in single-family homes.
Retirement Communities	These neighborhoods combine single-family homes and independent living with apartments, assisted living, and care nursing facilities. Residents take pride in financial responsibility and keep a close eye on finances. That said, they enjoy recreational activities like going to the movies, fishing, or taking vacations. Many would rather dine out than eat in.
Middleburg	These neighborhoods transformed from being country living to semirural subdivisions in the last decade as housing development spread beyond metro areas. This subgroup includes family-oriented consumers who are thrifty but invest in their future. They prefer to buy US-made goods and travel domestically, and while they are younger the group is growing in size and assets.
In Style	This segment lives a more urban lifestyle that includes supporting the arts, traveling, and reading extensively. They include professional couples or single households without children, with time to focus on homes and their interests. They are slightly older and planning for their retirement.
Home Improvement	These tend to be married-couple families living in single-family, owner-occupied homes. They spend a lot of time on the go and eat out regularly, with weekends consumed by home improvement and remodeling projects.

Source: Esri

Gorham's Consumer Tapestry Segments

Market segmentation is based on the concept that people with similar demographic characteristics, purchasing habits, and media preferences naturally gravitate toward one another and into the same communities and can be used to understand customers' lifestyle choices, purchasing preferences, and how they spend their free time. It is important to recognize that Esri uses classifications and labels for defining market segments are generalizations. The description of each segment is based on comparisons within the US as a whole and reflect the propensity of a household within that segment to exhibit certain demographic, lifestyle, and consumer characteristics relative to the overall population.

Gorham's Consumer Tapestry Segmentation Profile



Source: Esri



Retail Market: Regional Study Area

- The retail real estate market has seen somewhat different trends throughout the Regional Study Area than in Gorham.
- Over the last decade, the vacancy rate for retail space has gradually declined, from 4.0% in 2014 to 2.0% in 2024 through the third quarter. While this is higher than in Gorham, it still represents a relatively low vacancy rate.
- In the last decade, the Regional Study Area has seen its inventory of retail space increase by almost 1 million SF.
- Overall, net absorption tends to be positive throughout the Regional Study Area, meaning that more space is being newly occupied than newly vacated in a given year.

Regional Study Area Key Retail Metrics

Year	Asking Rent			Net		
	Total SF	per SF	Vacant SF	Vacancy Rate	Absorption	Deliveries
2014	42,225,913	\$11.15	1,712,166	4.0%	603,256	289,999
2015	42,443,309	\$12.09	1,768,616	4.0%	160,946	263,731
2016	42,504,304	\$12.95	1,181,678	2.7%	652,360	113,092
2017	42,581,533	\$13.13	1,436,814	3.3%	(177,907)	127,809
2018	42,652,019	\$17.83	941,447	2.2%	565,853	73,341
2019	42,702,039	\$13.04	1,137,773	2.6%	(146,306)	111,778
2020	42,852,320	\$14.08	1,293,669	3.0%	(4,685)	160,336
2021	42,922,213	\$14.59	1,063,433	2.4%	300,129	118,263
2022	42,977,643	\$14.97	1,049,602	2.3%	69,261	66,470
2023	43,216,287	\$15.38	1,039,660	2.3%	248,586	238,644
2024 YTD	43,204,954	\$14.63	880,691	2.0%	147,636	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3



Gorham's Retail Demand

In a retail gap analysis, the existing retail sales ("supply") of trade area businesses are compared to the estimated retail spending of trade area residents ("demand"). The difference between demand and supply is referred to as the "retail gap." The retail gap can be positive or negative.

When the demand (spending by trade area residents) for goods and services is greater than sales at trade area businesses, sales are said to "leak out" of the trade area, creating a positive retail gap (i.e., sales leakage).

Conversely, if the supply of goods sold (local trade area sales) exceeds trade area demand (spending by trade area residents), it is assumed that non-residents are coming into the trade area and spending money, creating a negative retail gap (i.e., sales surplus).

Sales leakage and sales surplus carry different implications. In many cases, sales leakage presents an opportunity to capture unmet demand in a trade area since a percentage of residential spending occurs outside the trade area. This demand can be met within the trade area by opening new businesses or expanding existing businesses within retail sectors that show sales leakage. However, not all retail categories that exhibit sales leakage within a particular trade area are a good fit for the region. Rapidly changing retail norms mean long term consequences for potential build out of retail space. It is important to consider that while there may be leakage indicated for a certain industry, that leakage could be due to ecommerce and therefore is not a retail category that would be as productive as a brick-and-mortar space. What were once retail locations may have more economic potential as flex space, office or redevelopment in housing. This data should be used as a starting point to determine which categories have leakage and whether they are viable for brick-and-mortar locations.

A sales surplus might exist for several reasons. For example, a region might be a popular shopping destination for tourists and other out-of-towners, or a cluster of competing businesses offering a similar product or service may be located within the trade area, creating a specialty cluster that draws in spending by households from outside the trade area. Alternatively, a sales surplus could be an indicator of market saturation.

The following Retail Gap Analysis table contains a list of industries by 6-digit NAICS codes and includes figures for sales demand (estimated purchases by local trade area residents both in and out of the trade area, and purchases by non-trade-area residents), sales supply (existing sales within the trade area), and retail gap (demand minus supply). Retail categories with the greatest sales leakage are displayed.

Limited-Service Restaurants represent the largest retail gap for Gorham, with \$28.4 Million of retail leakage in 2023.

- Other retail industries that have an overall leakage include new car dealers, supermarkets, gasoline stations, clothing stores, and several others.
- On the flip side, there are several types of retailers that have exhibit a surplus, meaning that they draw customers from outside of the town. These include Miscellaneous Retailers, Sporting Goods Retailers, Boat Dealers, Bowling Centers, and several others

Retail Gap: Top 10 Leakage Industries



Source: Lightcast

Retail Gap: Top 10 Surplus Industries



Source: Lightcast



The following table shows the retail industries with the most market-supportable new businesses in Gorham. Assuming that Gorham could recapture 15% of the retail leakage occurring throughout the town, we estimate the supportable demand for different retail establishments.

- Limited-Service restaurants has the most market-supportable potential. Based on statewide average sales per business in Limited-Service Restaurant, between 2-3 businesses of this type could be supported by the market in Gorham
- While no other retail industries have enough potential to support at least one business, a handful show potential. These include clothing retailers, gas station convenience stores, pharmacies, and snack bars. Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars include food and beverage establishments like bagel shops, coffee shops, ice cream stands, bakery cafes, donut shops, smoothie shops, etc.
- Note that this does not include considerations for demand from tourists and other consumers outside the local trade area.
- Continued growth in household through new development as well as transportation infrastructure improvements and increased capacity will increase demand in the long-term

Supportable Retail Businesses, Gorham

NAICS	Description	2023 Total Demand	2023 Total Sales	Retail Leakage (Surplus)	15% Recapture	Average Sales per Business*	Supportable Businesses
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	\$28,653,525	\$247,702	\$28,405,822	\$4,260,873	\$1,601,844	2.7
458110	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Retailers	\$9,738,225	\$1,567,176	\$8,171,049	\$1,225,657	\$1,483,367	0.8
457110	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	\$9,557,178	\$231,135	\$9,326,043	\$1,398,907	\$1,982,817	0.7
456110	Pharmacies and Drug Retailers	\$9,136,811	\$1,850,118	\$7,286,693	\$1,093,004	\$1,923,624	0.6
722515	Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	\$2,273,740	\$129,232	\$2,144,508	\$321,676	\$579,430	0.6

*Average sales for businesses in Maine

Source: Lightcast



Office and Medical Office

The office and medical office market analysis compares existing conditions and projects trends in office development within the town Gorham and the Regional Study Area. The current supply of office space is examined at the two geographical levels and broken out by total office space and medical office space. The reason for this is that medical office buildings have unique characteristics and a different market than traditional office space and as such provide a unique opportunity to explore independently of traditional office space.

To estimate market demand, job growth for the industries most likely to use office space is projected over the next five years. These industries are separated between traditional office space-using industries and medical office space-using industries.

Office Market Key Findings:

- Gorham has a relatively tight office market with a low vacancy rate compared to the Regional Study Area.
- There has been little development in the office market in the last decade in Gorham.
- Despite these market conditions, there is limited potential for traditional office space in Gorham. Any new development would need to focus on high-quality, unique spaces that are distinct from Gorham's current inventory of spaces.
- **Market Demand for Office Space: Limited**

Medical Office Market Key Findings:

- Gorham's inventory of medical office space is limited, and there is currently no vacancy for this type of space.
- According to CoStar, there have been no new medical office spaces developed in Gorham in the last decade.
- Growth in industries like Outpatient Care Centers is likely to support market demand for new medical office space in Gorham through 2028.
- **Supportable Space: 5,200-10,400 SF through 2028**



Office Real Estate Market

Gorham Key Office Metrics

Year	Total SF	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net	
		per SF	Vacant SF		Absorption	Deliveries
2014	190,589	\$9.99	18,582	9.7%	(790)	-
2015	209,151	\$10.63	22,283	10.7%	14,861	18,562
2016	209,151	\$11.15	5,863	2.8%	16,420	-
2017	209,151	\$11.79	2,948	1.4%	2,915	-
2018	209,151	\$11.48	13,272	6.3%	(10,324)	-
2019	229,151	\$12.45	2,008	0.9%	31,264	20,000
2020	229,151	-	1,837	0.8%	171	-
2021	229,151	-	638	0.3%	1,199	-
2022	229,151	\$17.14	4,310	1.9%	(3,672)	-
2023	229,151	\$14.92	2,650	1.2%	1,660	-
2024 YTD	229,151	\$19.57	2,423	1.1%	227	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3

Regional Study Area Key Office Metrics

Year	Total SF	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net	
		per SF	Vacant SF		Absorption	Deliveries
2014	29,511,645	\$13.00	2,059,611	6.9%	12,988	22,600
2015	29,725,530	\$13.14	1,896,941	6.3%	376,555	243,885
2016	29,723,716	\$13.12	1,622,726	5.3%	272,456	57,683
2017	29,874,375	\$13.32	1,391,459	4.5%	381,926	176,348
2018	29,929,833	\$13.90	1,099,566	3.5%	347,351	55,458
2019	30,094,464	\$15.59	866,495	2.8%	397,702	167,612
2020	30,066,951	\$16.48	1,383,013	4.4%	(544,031)	171,965
2021	30,181,948	\$16.05	1,457,078	4.3%	40,932	123,188
2022	30,380,354	\$15.90	1,456,758	4.2%	198,726	227,728
2023	30,458,009	\$16.99	1,738,656	4.9%	(204,243)	77,655
2024 YTD	30,458,009	\$16.73	1,569,501	4.9%	169,155	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3

Gorham's office market has a very low vacancy rate

- Despite national trends indicating a flight from office real estate, Gorham's vacancy rate for office space is very low at 1.1%, and has remained low for the past several years even during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This compares to 4.9% in the Regional Study Area, a rate that has been climbing steadily since 2019.
- There has been relatively little activity in the office market in Gorham over the last several years. The last major delivery of new space was in 2019, with the addition of 20,000 SF to the market.
- Average asking rent per SF of office space in Gorham is \$19.57, somewhat higher than the \$16.73 average in the Regional Study Area.

Current Office Pipeline in Gorham

- The Residences at Gorham Country Club:** 6 units of commercial space at 5,000 each



Medical Office Real Estate Market

Gorham Key Medical Office Metrics

Year	Total SF	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption Deliveries	
		per SF	Vacant SF		Absorption	Deliveries
2014	21,280	-	-	-	-	-
2015	21,280	\$10.00	-	-	1,980	-
2016	21,280	\$11.44	1,980	9.3%	(1,980)	-
2017	21,280	-	-	-	-	-
2018	21,280	-	-	-	-	-
2019	21,280	\$12.00	-	-	6,682	-
2020	21,280	\$12.00	6,682	31.4%	(6,682)	-
2021	21,280	-	-	-	-	-
2022	21,280	\$9.78	-	-	3,341	-
2023	21,280	\$9.78	3,341	15.7%	(3,341)	-
2024 YTD	21,280	\$8.31	-	-	2,700	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3

Regional Study Area Key Medical Office Metrics

Year	Total SF	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption Deliveries	
		per SF	Vacant SF		Absorption	Deliveries
2014	4,565,151	\$9.93	360,927	7.9%	40,708	10,905
2015	4,591,077	\$10.71	430,623	9.4%	(43,770)	25,926
2016	4,591,077	\$11.32	376,428	8.2%	54,195	-
2017	4,591,077	\$12.05	310,387	6.8%	66,041	-
2018	4,623,236	\$11.08	296,157	6.4%	46,389	32,159
2019	4,623,236	\$10.98	120,471	2.6%	175,686	-
2020	4,628,384	\$11.55	142,497	3.1%	(16,878)	5,148
2021	4,630,991	\$11.25	192,062	4.1%	(46,958)	2,607
2022	4,601,669	\$12.44	93,261	2.0%	69,479	-
2023	4,601,669	\$14.51	121,184	2.6%	(27,923)	-
2024 YTD	4,601,669	\$15.47	110,409	2.4%	10,775	-

Source: CoStar as of 2024 Q3

There is limited available space in Gorham's small medical office market.

- Data on Gorham's medical office market is somewhat limited due to a relatively low inventory of medical office space.
- In 2024, all 21,280 SF of Gorham's medical office space was occupied, leaving a 0% vacancy rate.
- In the Regional Study Area, there is a 2.4% vacancy rate for medical office space.
- Medical office space in Gorham is nearly half the price per SF compared to the Regional Study Area.
- In the last 10 years, there have been no new medical office developments in Gorham, with relatively little development in the Regional Study Area since 2018.

Current Medical Office Pipeline in Gorham

No specific development plans for medical offices.



Office Market Demand

Future demand for office space can be understood by looking at the employment projections with the industry sectors likely to use this space. Specifically, the following NAICS industries are examined:

For Office Demand:

- Information
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental Leasing
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Management of Companies
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services

For Medical Office Demand:

- Offices of Physicians
- Offices of Dentists
- Offices of Other Health Practitioners
- Outpatient Care Centers
- Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories
- Other Ambulatory Health Care Services

The following tables show the projected five-year employment growth in these industries in Gorham and the Regional Study Area, identifying potential opportunities for office demand within Gorham.



Over the next five years, Gorham's employment in office-utilizing industries is projected to decline.

- Growth in industries like Management of Companies will be mitigated by declines in other industries, for a net decline of 21 jobs through 2028.

Office-Utilizing Industries: Historic and Projected Employment, Gorham

NAICS	Description	Current Jobs		Historic (2018-2023)		Projected (2023-2028)	
		2023	Change	Pct. Change	Change	Pct. Change	
512 Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries		0	0		0		N/A
513 Publishing Industries		4	1	16%	(3)	(68%)	
516 Broadcasting and Content Providers		3	3	692%	(0)	(10%)	
517 Telecommunications		3	2	202%	2	60%	
52 Finance and Insurance		73	(1)	(2%)	(3)	(5%)	
531 Real Estate Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets (except Copyrighted Works)		40	0	1%	0	0%	
5331 Copyrighted Works		0	0	N/A	0	N/A	
5411 Legal Services		2	(0)	(21%)	(0)	(15%)	
5412 Services		4	(0)	(8%)	1	25%	
5413 Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services		58	5	9%	1	2%	
5414 Specialized Design Services		4	0	7%	0	11%	
5415 Computer Systems Design and Related Services Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting		34	2	6%	4	13%	
5416 Services		32	9	37%	7	21%	
5418 Advertising, Public Relations, and Related Services		9	0	6%	(1)	(8%)	
55 Management of Companies and Enterprises		105	25	31%	10	9%	
5611 Office Administrative Services		1	(1)	(54%)	0	15%	
5613 Employment Services		5	(0)	(8%)	(4)	(98%)	
5614 Business Support Services		9	(5)	(33%)	(8)	(91%)	
5615 Travel Arrangement and Reservation Services Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar		3	1	21%	1	31%	
813 Organizations		98	(18)	(16%)	(7)	(7%)	
9011 Federal Government, Civilian		8	7	693%	0	1%	
9029 State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals		46	30	190%	(11)	(25%)	
9039 Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals		188	18	11%	(9)	(5%)	
Total		728	76	12%	(21)	(3%)	

Source: Lightcast



Gorham's employment in industries that typically rely on medical office space is projected to grow 6% over the next five years.

- Medical office-using industries also grew by 29% from 2018-2023
- Over the next five years, Outpatient care Centers are expected to see the most growth, and are projected to add 28 jobs in Gorham through 2028
- This job growth has the potential to drive market demand for medical office space in Gorham

Medical Office-Utilizing Industries: Historic and Projected Employment, Gorham

NAICS	Description	Current Jobs		Historic (2018-2023)		Projected (2023-2028)	
		2023	Change	Pct. Change	Change	Pct. Change	
6211 Offices of Physicians		93	22	30%	(2)	(2%)	
6212 Offices of Dentists		88	18	25%	(4)	(5%)	
6213 Offices of Other Health Practitioners		72	17	32%	4	5%	
6214 Outpatient Care Centers		167	50	43%	28	17%	
6215 Medical and Diagnostic Laboratories		0	(7)	(100%)	0	0%	
6219 Other Ambulatory Health Care Services		2	(6)	(71%)	0	8%	
Total		422	94	29%	26	6%	

Source: Lightcast



While traditional office space has limited market potential, medical offices may represent a development opportunity in Gorham.

- In the next five years, the number of jobs in traditionally office-using industries is projected to decline slightly, indicating that there will be limited, if any, new demand for office space in Gorham, particularly if employers trend towards hybrid or work-from-home arrangements for their workers.
- In the regional study area, any new demand for office space generated by office-using job growth is outweighed by the availability of vacant space and the pipeline of new offices that are already planned for development.
- That said, projected growth in medical office-using jobs, coupled with a lack of vacant space and plans for new development, point to market potential for medical office space in Gorham.
- This is consistent with the Regional Study area, where market potential for new medical office space is indicated in scenarios that require more space per worker.
- **This analysis indicates that Gorham could support between 5,200 and 10,400 SF of new medical office space through 2028.**

Supportable Office Demand, 2023-2028

	Regional Study Gorham	Gorham Share of Area	Gorham Share of Regional Study Area
Office-Utilizing Jobs, 2023	728	71,789	1%
Growth Forecast, 2023-2028	(3%)	1%	
Projected New Jobs	(21)	660	-3%
New Demand (SF)			
High WFH Scenario	(2,122)	65,960	-3%
Hybrid Scenario	(3,183)	98,940	-3%
Fully In-Office Scenario	(4,244)	131,921	-3%
Available Supply (SF)			
Occupied Space	226,728	28,888,508	1%
Vacant Space	2,423	1,569,501	0%
Development Pipeline	0	328,688	0%
Net Supportable Space (SF)			
High WFH Scenario	(4,545)	(1,832,229)	0%
Hybrid Scenario	(5,606)	(1,799,249)	0%
Fully In-Office Scenario	(6,667)	(1,766,268)	0%

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, CoStar

Supportable Medical Office Demand, 2023-2028

	Regional Study Gorham	Gorham Share of Area	Gorham Share of Regional Study Area
Medical Office-Utilizing Jobs, 2023	422	16,176	3%
Growth Forecast, 2023-2028	6%	7%	
Projected New Jobs	26	1,132	2%
New Demand (SF)			
200 SF per Worker	5,205	226,385	2%
300 SF per Worker	7,807	339,577	2%
400 SF per Worker	10,409	452,769	2%
Available Supply (SF)			
Occupied Space	21,280	4,491,260	0%
Vacant Space	0	110,409	0%
Development Pipeline	0	209,385	0%
Net Supportable Space (SF)			
200 SF per Worker	5,205	(93,409)	-6%
300 SF per Worker	7,807	19,783	39%
400 SF per Worker	10,409	132,975	8%

Source: Camoin Associates, Lightcast, CoStar



Industrial

Coming out of the global pandemic, industrial real estate continues to be a positive feature across commercial sectors in the U.S., fueled by a growing demand for logistics and distribution space from both e-commerce and other industries. Beyond e-commerce, other demand drivers include users of general logistics and distribution space, third-party logistics (3PL) tenants, food and beverage warehousing (cold storage in particular), traditional retailers, and construction materials and building fixture distributors. There is also a longstanding trend to convert underutilized industrial space to uses such as apartment lofts, breweries, and other entertainment venues.

The industrial market analysis compares existing conditions and project trends in industrial development within the Town of Gorham and the Regional Study Area.

The current supply of industrial space is examined at the two geographical levels, taking an inventory of recent supply trends. To estimate market demand, we estimate the new industrial space needed to achieve a stabilized 5% vacancy rate.

Industrial Market Key Findings:

- **CoStar data:** Gorham has a very tight industrial real estate market, with a 0.6% vacancy rate compared to 3.7% in the Regional Study Area. A relative lack of development in Gorham in the last decade has contributed to a tighter market.
- **Pipeline:** Over 200,000 SF of industrial space is planned for development in Gorham. These projects are at varying points in the construction process.
- **Job growth:** In the last five years, jobs in industries that typically use industrial space have declined by about 30% in Gorham as a handful of major businesses have relocated or closed. Over the next five years, employment in these industries is expected to level off. This projection could change under evolving economic or development conditions.
- **Supportable demand:** Gorham is due to account for an outsized share of new absorption in the region. Over the next five years, the market in Gorham could support around 89,000 SF of new industrial space, accounting for 12% of the total supportable demand in the Regional Study Area. Gorham could capture more of the region's demand if other towns, particularly in Greater Portland, lack available sites for development.
- **Shovel-ready sites:** Gorham has a healthy selection of shovel-ready sites for industrial development, including several sites at its expanded Industrial Park.



Industrial Real Estate Market

Gorham Key Industrial Metrics

Year	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net		
	Total SF	per SF		Vacant SF	Absorption	Deliveries
2014	832,830	\$4.71	15,400	1.8%	17,528	-
2015	832,830	\$4.58	20,341	2.4%	(4,941)	-
2016	841,800	\$4.82	12,974	1.5%	16,337	8,970
2017	841,800	\$6.14	13,670	1.6%	(696)	-
2018	851,800	\$8.56	18,652	2.2%	5,018	10,000
2019	851,800	\$8.40	10,770	1.3%	7,882	-
2020	861,187	\$8.49	7,200	0.8%	12,957	9,387
2021	861,187	\$8.32	-	-	7,200	-
2022	861,187	\$8.62	20,508	2.4%	(20,508)	-
2023	884,187	\$8.63	101,696	11.5%	(58,188)	23,000
2024 YTD	884,187	\$8.12	5,000	0.6%	96,696	-

Source: CoStar, 2024Q4

Regional Study Area Key Industrial Metrics

Year	Asking Rent		Vacancy Rate	Net		
	Total SF	per SF		Vacant SF	Absorption	Deliveries
2014	40,106,463	\$4.38	1,975,709	4.9%	(232,880)	3,125
2015	40,143,463	\$4.83	1,516,572	3.8%	496,137	37,000
2016	40,190,375	\$5.04	652,232	1.6%	911,252	52,052
2017	40,202,375	\$5.94	599,384	1.5%	64,848	12,000
2018	40,292,940	\$6.25	507,596	1.3%	182,353	90,565
2019	40,492,428	\$6.58	967,388	2.4%	(260,304)	240,256
2020	40,614,643	\$7.70	1,126,790	2.8%	(36,316)	232,844
2021	40,759,323	\$8.40	702,707	1.7%	568,763	144,680
2022	40,932,211	\$8.68	1,127,717	2.8%	(252,122)	172,888
2023	41,152,611	\$8.90	1,351,096	3.3%	(2,979)	265,000
2024 YTD	41,180,211	\$9.39	1,506,064	3.7%	(127,368)	27,600

Source: CoStar, 2024Q3

Gorham's industrial market is large and growing

- Gorham has 884,000 SF of industrial space throughout the town. Over the last decade, over 50,000 SF of industrial space has been added, with more in the pipeline.
- The industrial vacancy rate in Gorham is very low at 0.6%, down from 11.5% when 23,000 SF of new industrial space was added to the market and is being absorbed over time.
- Before the delivery of 23,000 SF in 2023, Gorham's industrial market was extremely tight, even having no vacant space in 2021.
- Compared to the Regional Study Area, Gorham has seen relatively little development in the industrial market over the last ten years.
- Gorham's current average asking rent per SF of industrial space is around \$8, slightly lower than the Regional Study Area's average of \$9.39.



Gorham's Industrial Pipeline

There are several industrial projects in planning or currently underway in Gorham, with over 200,000 SF of planned or under-construction industrial space throughout the town.

Planned and Under Construction Industrial Projects in Gorham

Project Name	Address	Description	Zone	Square Feet
Core X Partners Cold Storage	TBD Main Street	Cold storage warehouse building consisting of freezer warehouse space, office space, cold docks, and equipment storage. Located within the new GIP West Campus expansion project.	Industrial	106,000
Moody Heavy Truck Repair	48 Raceway Drive	Newly constructed truck repair facility in a commercial subdivision.	Narragansett Mixed Use	27,600
Cross Town Energy Storage	Hutcherson Drive	Will provide battery storage capacity for the electrical grid, charges during periods of low demand, and discharges during high demand periods.	Industrial	N/A
Pro-Key Development	2 Gorham Industrial Parkway	Two-unit commercial project with an estimated Spring 2025 completion	Industrial	9,000
Maine Metal Buildings	625 Main Street Ossipee	New building with up to 5 commercial units, depending on end users. Late 2025 completion estimate.	Roadside commercial	9,000
Patriot Self Storage and Contractor Flex Space	Trail/Dingley Spring Road	Eight self storage building plus one contractor flex space with a TBD timeline		65,100
Total				216,700+

Source: Town of Gorham



Projected Industrial Job Growth

Future demand for industrial space can be understood by looking at the employment projections of the industry sectors that are likely to use this space. Specifically, the following NAICS industries are examined:

- Utilities
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation and Warehousing

The following tables show the projected five-year employment growth in these industries in Gorham and the Regional Study Area, identifying potential opportunities for industrial demand within Gorham.

Over the last five years, industrial-utilizing industries such as Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, and Transportation and Warehousing have declined in employment by about 30%. This trend is projected to ease, with only about 2% jobs decline in these industries through 2028.

Industrial-Utilizing Industries: Historic and Projected Employment, Gorham

NAICS	Description	Current Jobs		Historic (2018-2023)		Projected (2023-2028)	
		2023	Change	Pct. Change	Change	Pct. Change	
31	Manufacturing	478	(148)	(24%)	6	1%	
42	Wholesale Trade	354	(116)	(25%)	(14)	(4%)	
	Transportation and Warehousing						
48	Warehousing	201	(186)	(48%)	(12)	(6%)	
Total		1,033	(450)	-30.4%	(20)	-1.9%	

Source: Lightcast

Supportable Demand for Industrial Space

Supportable Industrial Demand

	Gorham	Regional Study Area	Gorham Share of Regional Study Area
Current inventory (Buildings)	39	1,239	3%
Current inventory (SF)	884,187	41,180,211	2%
Current Vacant Space	5,000	1,506,064	0%
Current Vacancy Rate	0.6%	3.7%	
Target Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.0%	
5-Year Average Annual Absorption	7,631	29,996	25%
Year 1 New SF Needed to Meet 5% Vacancy	48,900	582,000	8%
Annual New SF Needed to Stabilize 5% Vacancy	8,033	31,574	25%
Total 5-Year Supportable SF	89,065	739,872	12%

Source: CoStar, Camoin Associates

projected to be as competitive as ever in 2024, and the Greater Portland area's industrial vacancy dipped below 1% for the first time since data has been recorded. A critical lack of inventory is mitigating growth in the number of transactions and overall economic growth.

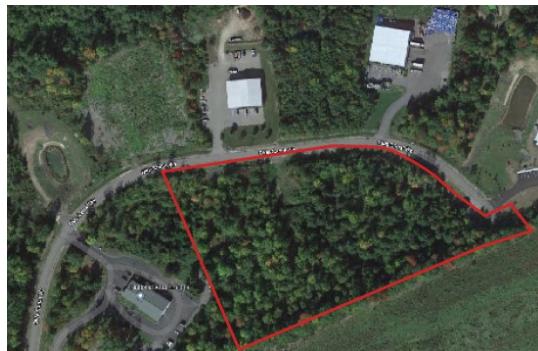
Supportable demand for industrial space can be estimated by using inventory and vacancy data. In this case, a target "healthy" vacancy rate of 5% was used alongside current inventory, vacancy, and net absorption data for Gorham and the Regional Study Area. In other words, how much space could be added to the market to achieve a more stable 5% vacancy rate for industrial space, assuming a portion of newly constructed space is absorbed upon completion?

In Gorham, the market could add approximately 48,900 SF of space in the short term to achieve a 5% vacancy rate. Assuming the 5-year average annual net absorption will continue in the future, Gorham could add an additional 8,000 SF annually over the next five years to stabilize the 5% vacancy rate longer-term, for a total of 89,065 SF over the next five years. In the Regional Study Area, about 740,000 SF could be added to the market over five years. Alongside the current pipeline of development, Gorham is due to account for an outsized share of the new development and new absorption in the Region. It has the potential to capture even more demand if other towns, particularly those in Greater Portland, begin to run out of developable sites. Additionally, some older buildings in Gorham may no longer be suitable for their tenants, which could temper overall absorption regionally but still contribute to the demand for new-build industrial space, with existing users shifting to updated space.

While job projections are helpful for context, they do not directly correlate with the need for most types of industrial space. Industrial uses typically generate fewer jobs per square foot compared to other use types, and space needs aren't closely tied to changes in employment for specific industries. Additionally, manufacturing employment has been declining in most US markets.

In 2024, the industrial market in Southern Maine was characterized by significant supply constraints. Gorham's current industrial vacancy rate of 0.6% allows for only 5,000 SF of available industrial space in the market, while the Regional Study Area has a 3.7% vacancy rate. According to [the Dunham Group](#), Southern Maine's industrial market was

Shovel-Ready Sites



65 Olde Canal Way

- 6.53+/- acres
- Full planning board approval for 40,800+/- SF industrial building
- Municipal water and sewer access
- 3-phase power and natural gas at the road
- Industrial zoning



42 Olde Canal Way

- 3.3 Acres
- Cleared lot at Olde Canal Way industrial park
- Uses could include manufacturing, storage, research facilities, or cannabis facility
- Municipal water and sewer access
- 3-Phase power and natural gas at the road



Gorham Industrial Park West

- Total 141 Acres
- Town-owned lots ranging from 3.4-94 acres
- Building sizes can range from 15,000-250,000 SF
- Municipal water and sewer access
- 3-Phase power and natural gas connection
- DEP approvals in progress for some parts



Gorham Industrial Park

- 0.46 acres
- Approved for 70,000-100,000 SF industrial building
- Municipal water and sewer access
- 3-Phase power and natural gas connections
- Full town and DEP approvals in place

LOCAL ASSET ASSESSMENT

Land Use Analysis

The Town of Gorham is about 51 square miles, and is bordered by the Presumpscot River to the northeast, and the towns of Westbrook, Windham, Standish, Buxton, and Scarborough.

Zoning

Gorham has 20 zoning districts. The largest by land area is the Rural district, which comprises 35.22% of Gorham's land area.

For the purposes of this analysis, Gorham's zoning districts have been organized into categories as follows:

Residential: Urban Residential, Suburban Residential, Rural, Urban Residential Expansion

Mixed Use: Little Falls Village, Gorham Village, Office-Residential, South Gorham Commercial Corridor, White Rock Mixed-Use, South Gorham Crossroads

Commercial: Urban Commercial, Roadside Commercial, Mosher Corner Mixed Use, Narragansett Mixed Use (these mixed-used districts allow both commercial and industrial.)

Industrial: Industrial, Olde Canal Industrial District, Agricultural/Industrial

These categories are based on the primary uses described in the purpose statement and permitted uses for each zone in Gorham's Land Use and Development Code, Chapter 1, along with parcel data on existing land uses from the Gorham tax assessor. The categories simplify some nuances of Gorham's zoning in order to make land use comparisons with other towns possible. Notably, the purpose statement for Gorham's Rural zone prioritizes maintaining agricultural land, and the zoning allows for some commercial uses. This zone has been categorized as "residential" here because the minimum lot size (60,000 square feet per dwelling unit) and the prevalence of parcels in use as single-family homes are comparable with "rural residential" districts in peer communities.

Zone	Land Area (acres)	Percentage
Agricultural-Industrial	723.75	2.17%
Gorham Village Center District	15.49	0.05%
Industrial	944.01	2.83%
Little Falls Village Center District	8.88	0.03%
Mosher Corner	201.81	0.61%
Narragansett District	425.60	1.28%
Olde Canal Industrial	59.27	0.18%
Office-Residential	152.77	0.46%
Rural	11,746.70	35.22%
Rural-Manufactured Housing	4,657.09	13.96%
Roadside Commercial	326.69	0.98%
South Gorham Commercial Corridor	222.44	0.67%
South Gorham Crossroads	830.50	2.49%
Suburban Residential	4595.43	13.78%
Suburban Residential-Mobile Home	2,348.45	7.04%
Urban Commercial	31.38	0.09%
Urban Residential	2,066.52	6.20%
Urban Residential-Mobile Home	510.01	1.53%
Urban Residential Expansion	3,415.95	10.24%
White Rock	73.66	0.22%



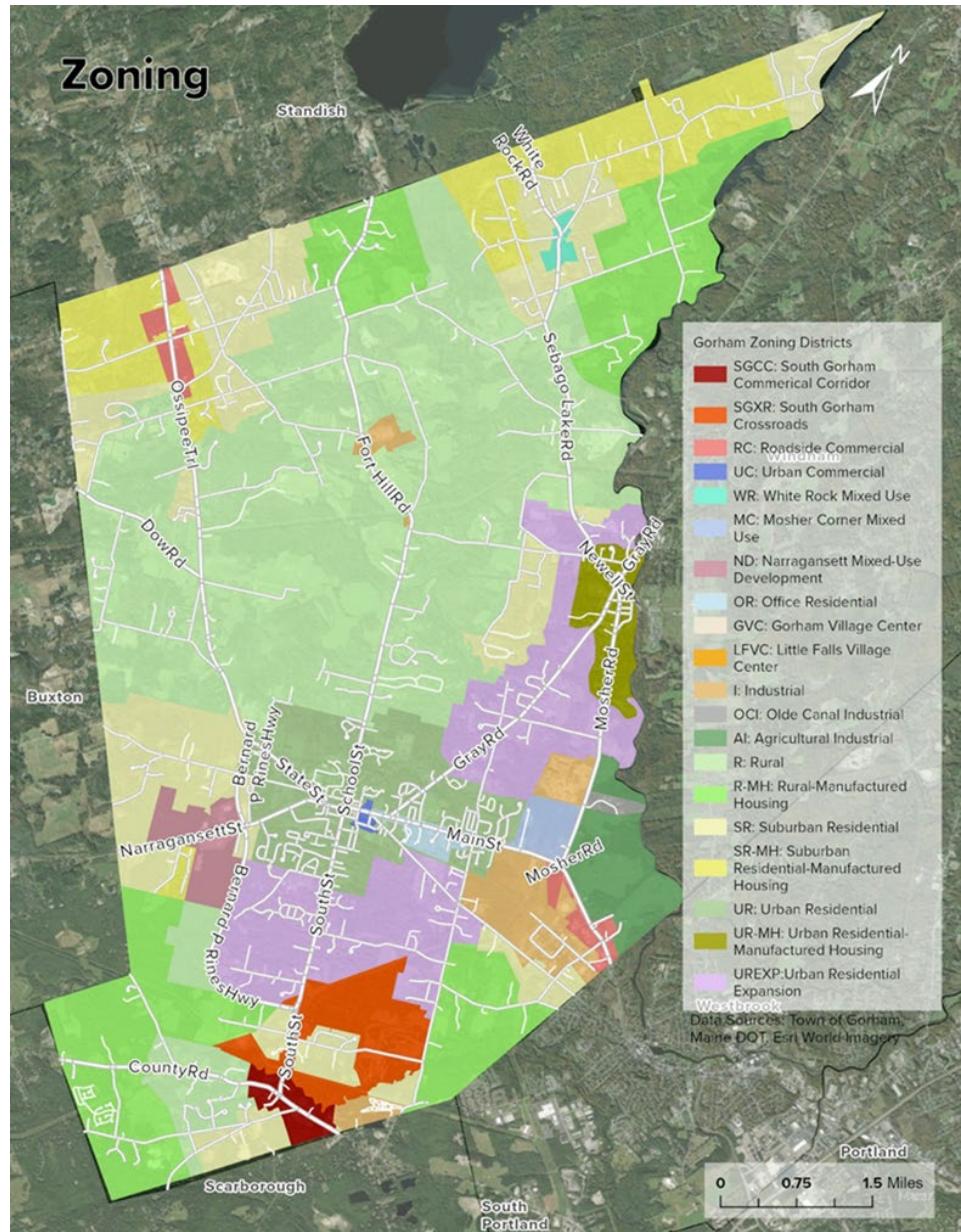
Land Area of Gorham's Zoning Categories

Zoning Category	Acreage in Growth Area	Percentage of Growth Area	Acreage of Rural Area	Percentage of Rural Area
Commercial	152.77	0.83%	0	0%
Industrial	1,726.94	9.40%	0	0%
Mixed Use	2,136.43	11.70%	0	0%
Residential	14,277.66	78%	14,103	100%

Zoning – Continued

Almost 88% of Gorham's land is in a residential zone. 6.41% of land is in a Mixed-Use zone, which allows both residential and commercial uses and includes Gorham's villages: Gorham Village and Little Falls. About 5% of Gorham is zoned industrial, and only a very small portion: 0.46%, is zoned primarily for commercial use.

Gorham's most recent Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2016, amended in 2021) designates a Growth Area and a Rural Area. The Growth Area comprises about 57% of Gorham's total land area, and the Rural Area is about 43%. All of Gorham's commercial, mixed-use, and industrial-zoned land is in the Growth Area. All of the land in the Rural Area is zoned rural or suburban residential. Existing land uses in the rural area are primarily single-family homes or agriculture/woodlot uses. The town has used mechanisms including a Transfer of Development Rights program to encourage development outside of the Rural Area to protect existing agriculture, forests, and working lands.



Existing Land Use

Single-family residential is the most common land use in Gorham, accounting for 46.48% of Gorham's land area. 51.42% of Gorham's land area is currently used for residential uses, including single-family, two-family, 3+ unit, condo, and manufactured housing.

Agriculture and tree growth comprises 14.36% of land area in Gorham, with large parcels throughout town.

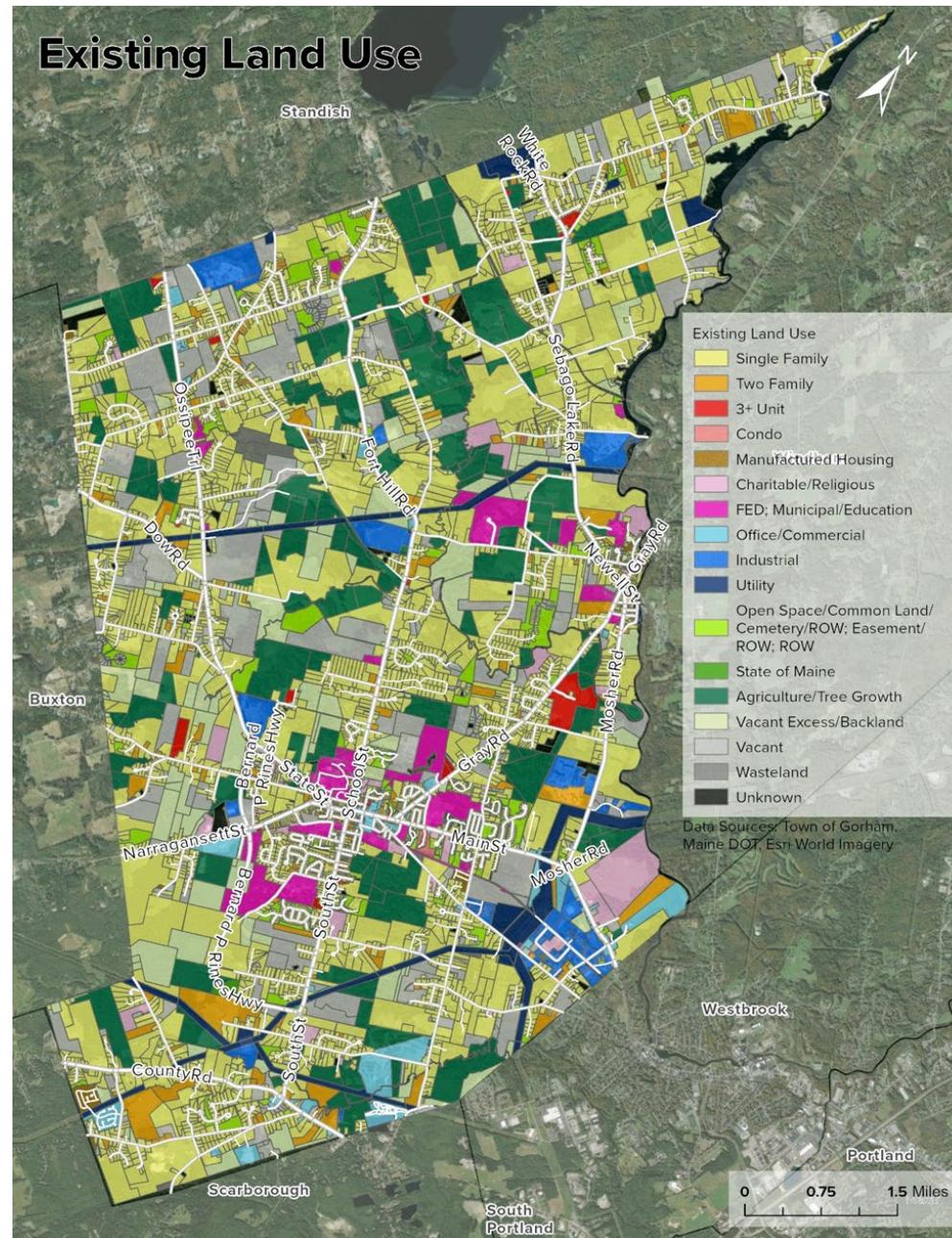
2.7% of Gorham's existing land use is municipal or education, including Gorham's municipal buildings, public schools, and the University of Southern Maine campus, most of which are clustered in and around Gorham Village.

2.64% of Gorham's existing land use is industrial, with most industrial parcels in the Industrial District near Mosher Road and the border with Westbrook. 1.94% of land use is office or commercial, including many small parcels in Gorham Village and larger commercial parcels scattered mostly in the southeastern part of Gorham.

About 20% of Gorham's land area is vacant: 11.77% undeveloped land, 6.95% is backland (vacant land without road frontage), and 0.39% wasteland (unbuildable land.)

Land Area of Existing Land Uses in Gorham

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Single-Family	14,305.65	46.48%
Two Family	1,175.41	3.82%
3+ Units	212.98	0.69%
Condo	55.09	0.18%
Manufactured Housing	75.88	0.25%
Charitable/Religious	659.77	2.14%
Government/Education	831.06	2.70%
Office/Commercial	597.09	1.94%
Industrial	810.33	2.63%
Utility	921.73	2.99%
Open Space/Common/Cemetery	807.13	2.62%
State	25.32	0.08%
Tree Growth/Agriculture	4,420.21	14.36%
Backland/Excess Land	2,140.24	6.95%
Vacant	3,621.95	11.77%
Wasteland	119.53	0.39%



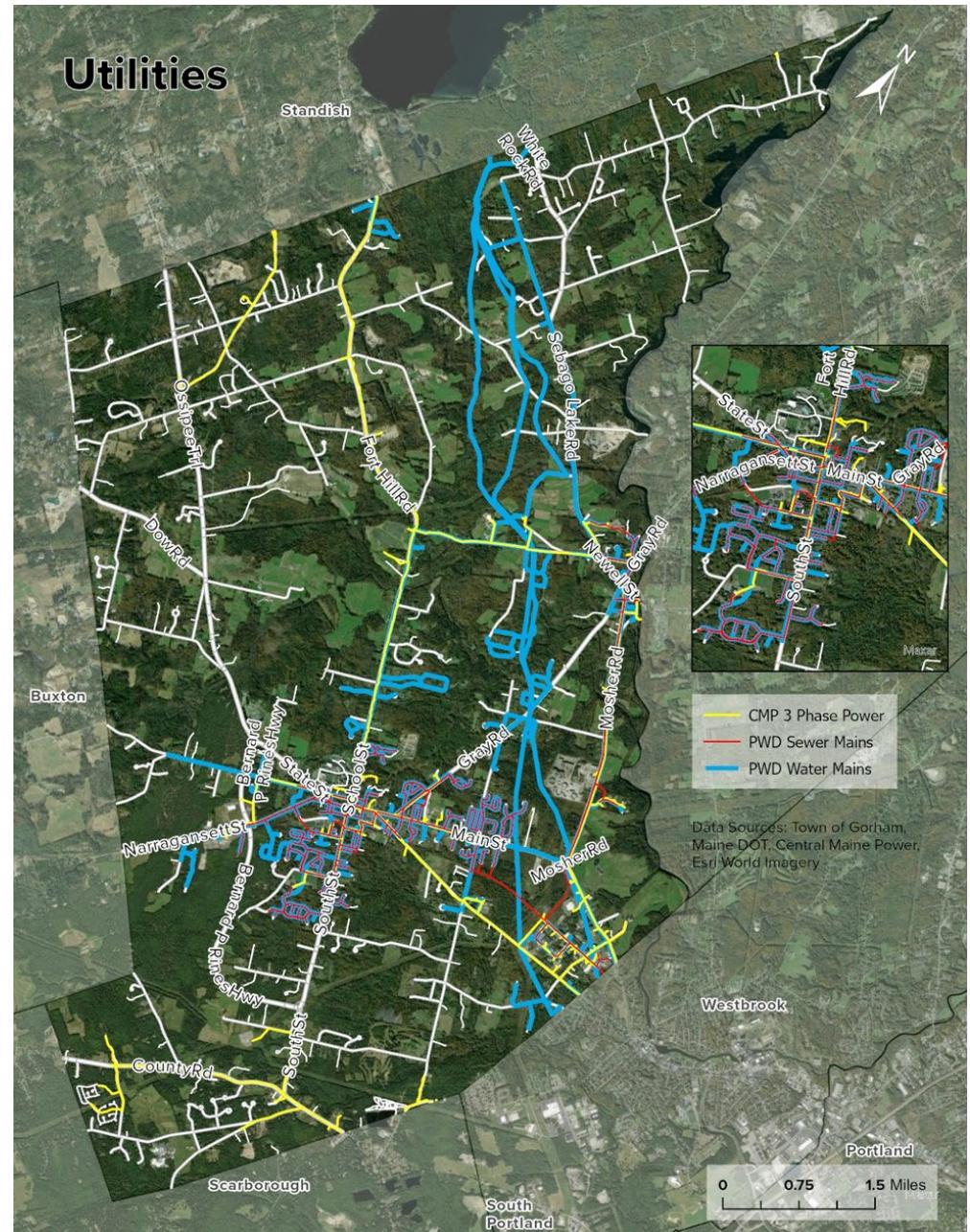
Utilities

Gorham is served by public water by the Portland Water District, town sewer and stormwater utilities, and electricity provided by Central Maine Power. According to the FCC National Broadband Map, Gorham is 100% covered by broadband service of at least 100/20 mbps.

Public water service is available primarily along the northeast side of Gorham and through the center of town in Gorham Village along Main Street and surrounding areas. Water service extends to Narragansett Street in the Narragansett Mixed-Use Development District, and to the industrial district off Mosher Road.

Public sewer service in Gorham serves Gorham Village and the village of Little Falls. The sewer connects along Mosher Road and extends to the industrial district off Mosher Road.

3-phase power is available in Gorham Village and Little Falls, along School Street and Mosher Road, in the industrial district off Mosher Road, along County Road in south Gorham, and along Fort Hill Road and Shaws Mill Road in North Gorham.



Transportation

Gorham is traversed by a number of arterial roads: State Highways 202, 25, 112, and 114. The nearest Interstate highway access is I-95 in Westbrook or Scarborough.

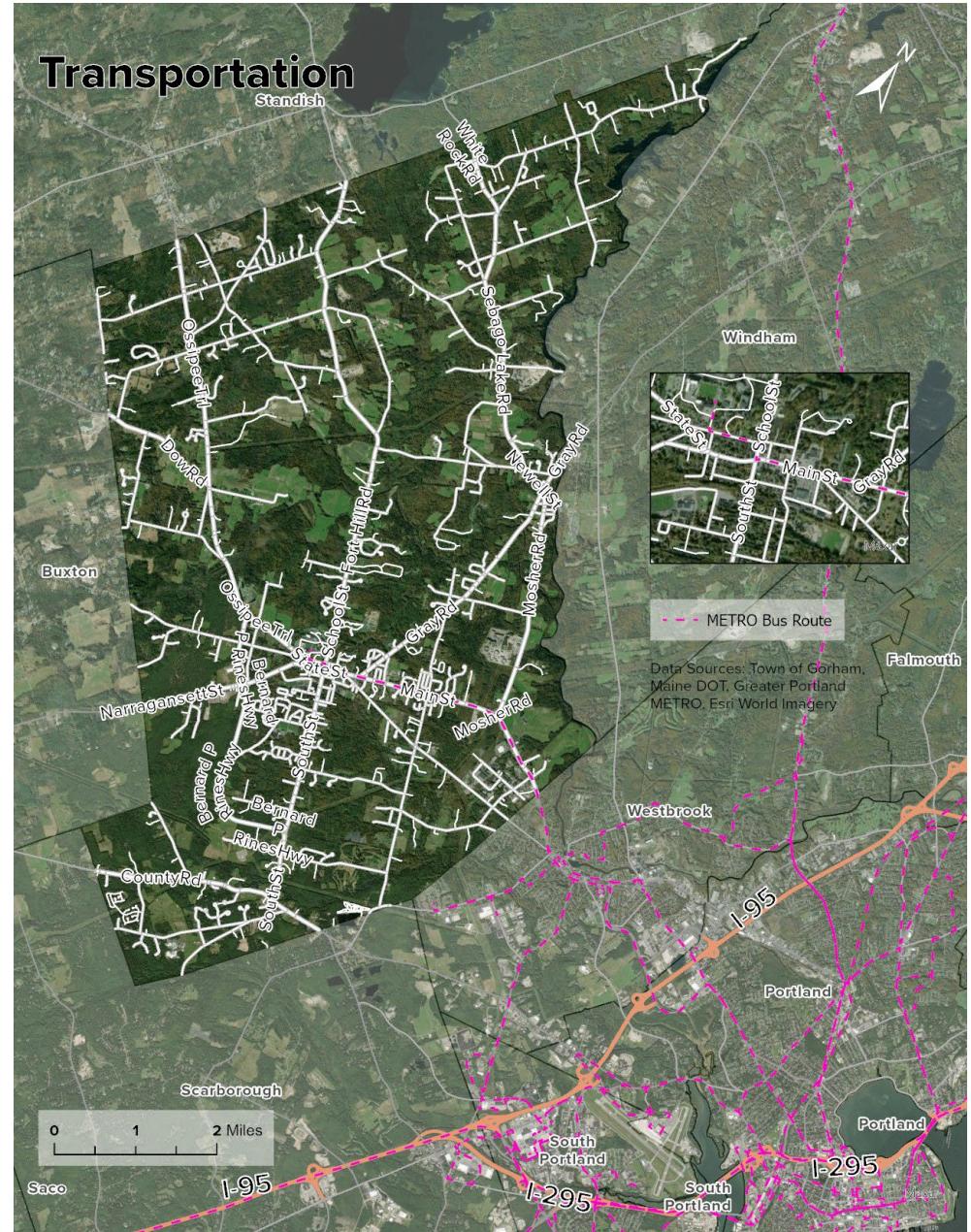
There is no active rail in Gorham.

The Greater Portland METRO's Husky Line bus stops in Gorham Village to serve the University of Southern Maine (USM) Campus, and is used by both students and the general public.

The Sebago to the Sea trail, a bicycle and pedestrian trail, passes through Gorham on the inactive Mountain Division rail line.

For more than a decade, the Maine Turnpike Authority has been working on plans for a Gorham Connector regional toll road to connect Gorham to I-95. The proposed 5-mile connector would be constructed from Maine Turnpike Exit 45 in South Portland to the Gorham Bypass at Route 114 in Gorham, just south of the town center. The project was endorsed by the Maine State Legislature, the Maine Department of Transportation and the municipalities of Gorham, Scarborough, Westbrook and South Portland. However, in fall 2024, as the project went public with a construction schedule, new opposition emerged from property owners and community groups, and in October 2024, Scarborough withdrew its support for the project. At the time of this report, the likelihood of the project moving forward is uncertain.

In January 2024, the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) published a Gorham-Westbrook-Portland Rapid Transit Study. The study proposes a rapid bus service originating at the USM campus in Gorham, serving Gorham Village and traveling along Main Street into Westbrook, then along Brighton Ave to service USM's Portland campus, Maine Medical Center, and downtown Portland.



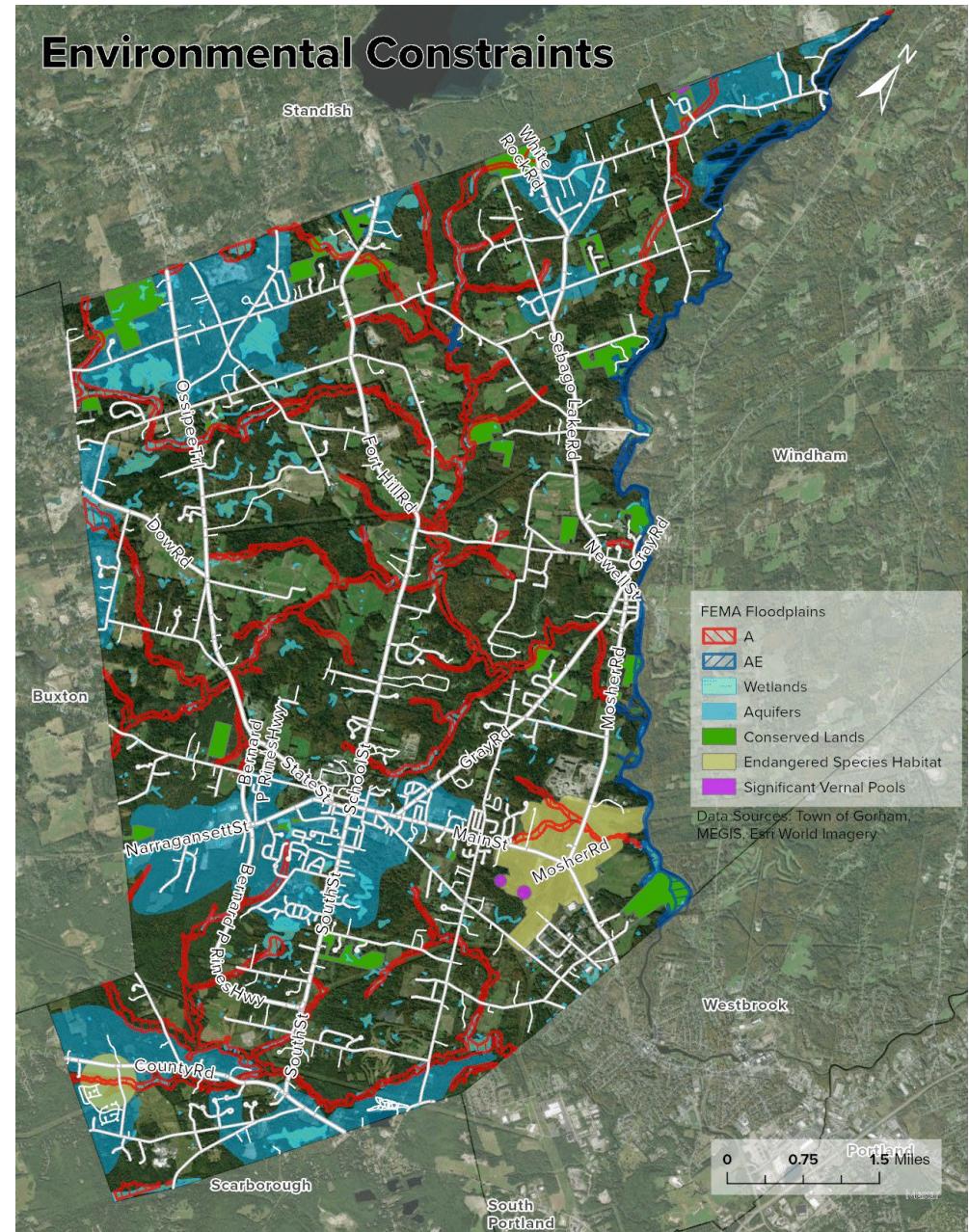
Environmental Constraints

Gorham has several large mapped aquifers. The largest underlies Gorham Village, extending around Narragansett Street to the Buxton town line. There is another large aquifer in the northwest corner near the border with Standish, and one in the southwest corner where Gorham borders Scarborough. Development over these aquifers must be designed to protect groundwater quality by limiting runoff and ensuring proper disposal of waste and chemicals. In Gorham Village, the public sewer system allows for growth and density with more limited impacts on the aquifer. The areas above the aquifers in the northwest and southwest corners of Gorham are not served by public water and sewer utilities. The use of advanced wastewater systems or community septic systems could improve development potential while protecting groundwater.

Gorham has two endangered species habitat areas. The largest is concentrated around Mosher Road and overlays much of the Industrial and Agricultural-Industrial zoning districts there. There are two significant vernal pools in the Mosher Road habitat area. The second is around County Road in the southwest corner of Gorham, in an area zoned Rural Residential. New development in these areas will need to be designed in consultation with Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife to limit impacts on endangered species and vernal pools.

Flood zones in Gorham are limited to the areas directly adjacent to the Presumpscot River and other small rivers and streams.

There are many small areas of noncontiguous mapped wetlands throughout Gorham. The largest concentration of wetlands is in the northwest corner of Gorham, above and around the large aquifer. Impacts to wetlands are part of the development review process in Gorham and at the State level.



Developable Land

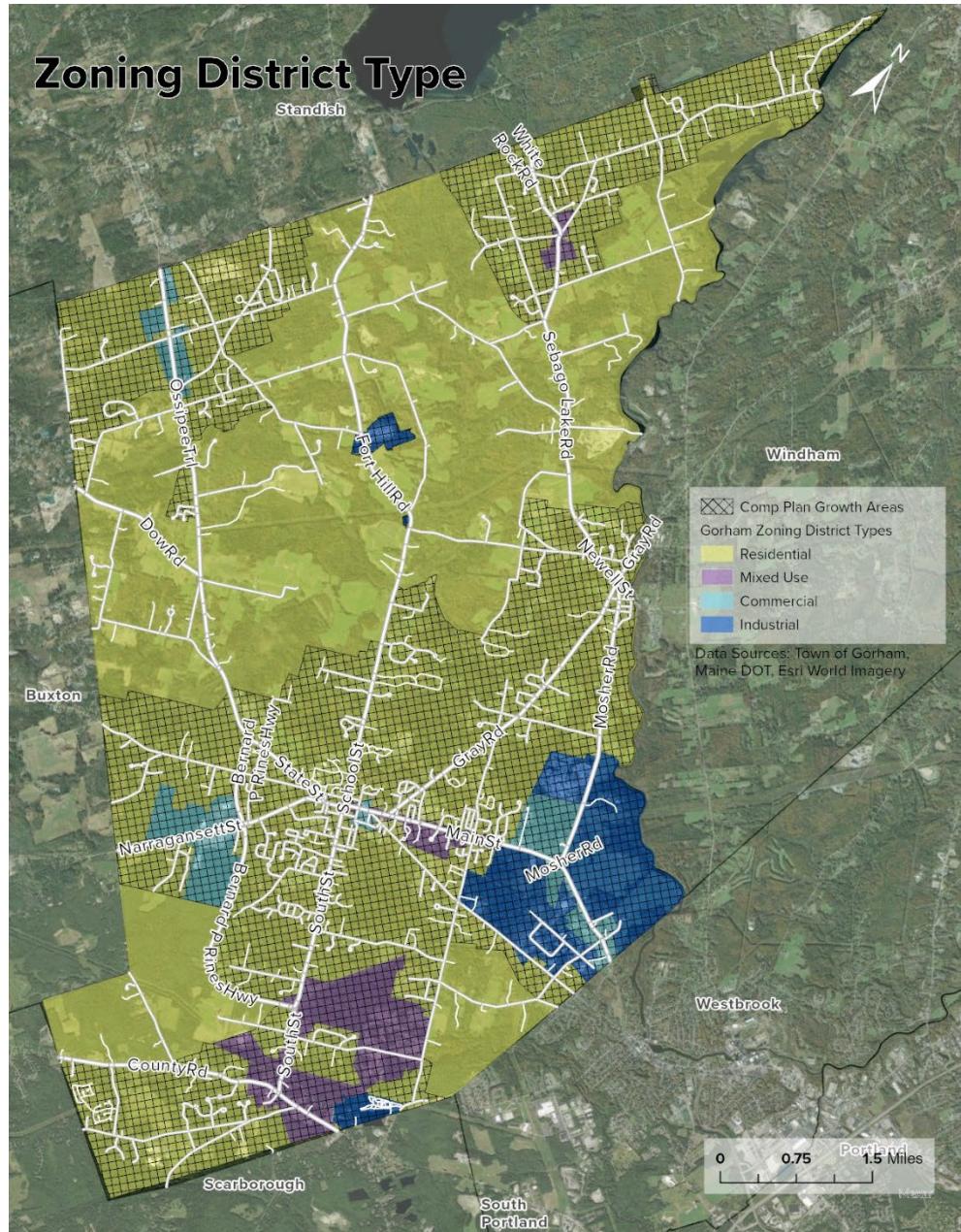
Gorham's parcel database categorizes several types of vacant land: undeveloped lot, vacant industrial, auxiliary/backland, excess land, and wasteland. Wasteland is not developable. Auxiliary, backland and excess land are parcels without road frontage that are generally assumed to be buildable. For the purpose of this analysis, land categorized as undeveloped, vacant industrial, backland, and excess land are included as developable. Data on existing land uses in Gorham was provided by the Gorham Tax Assessor, from the 2023 Assessing Data.

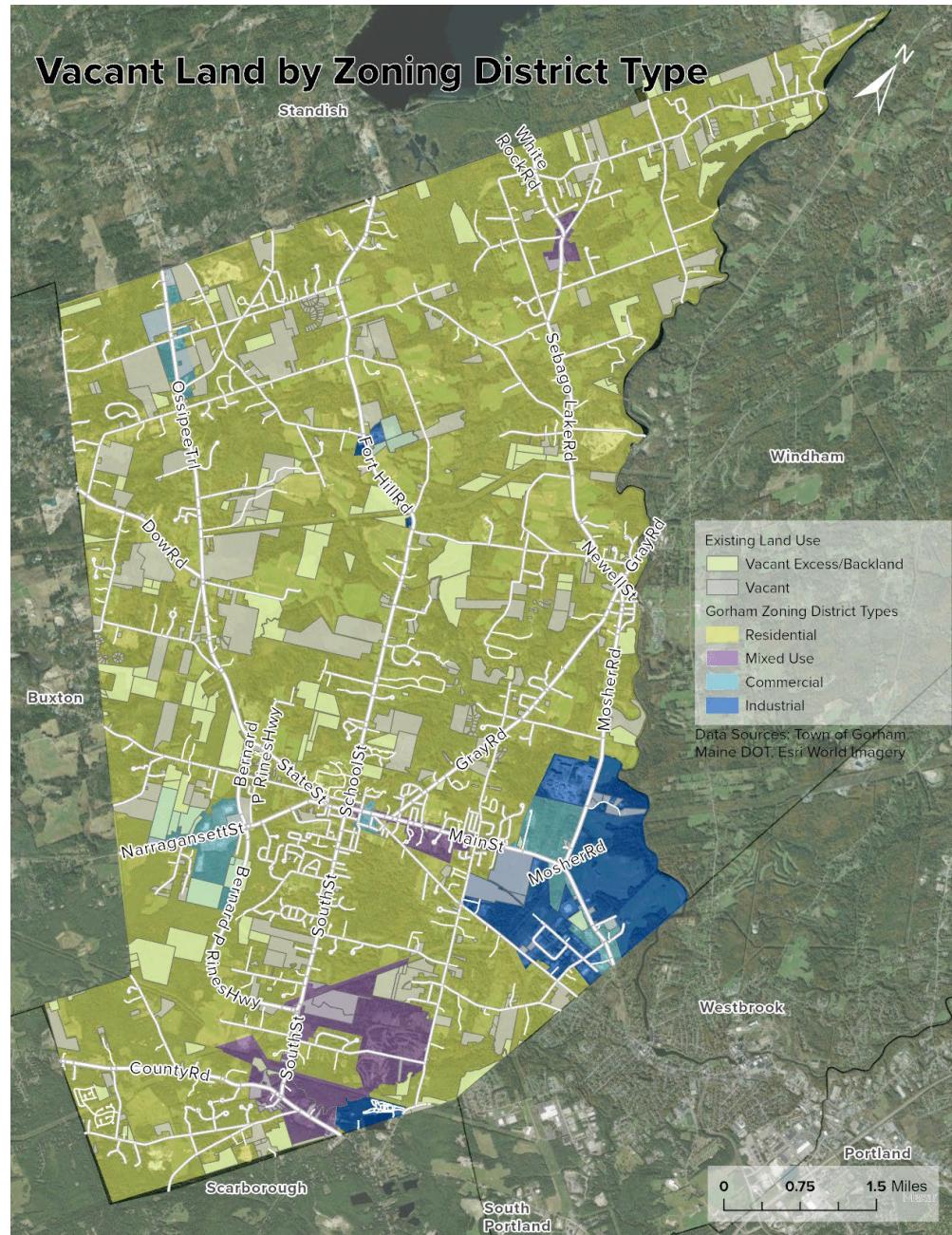
Gorham has approximately 5,211.13 acres of vacant developable land. 3,216.22 acres of this land, or about 62%, is in Gorham's designated Growth Area.

The majority (92.21%) of Gorham's vacant developable land is currently zoned residential. Most of this vacant residential land is in the western half of Gorham and is not served by public water, sewer, stormwater, or 3-phase power.

Developable Land Area by Zoning Category

Zoning Category	Estimated Developable Land Area (acres)	Percentage
Commercial	1.60	0.04%
Industrial	107.20	2.41%
Mixed Use	237.99	5.35%
Residential	4,104.68	92.21%





Comparison with Peer Communities

5 peer communities - Gray, Saco, Scarborough, Westbrook, and Windham - were selected for comparison with Gorham. For each community, zoning districts were categorized by their primary intended use: residential, mixed-use (residential and commercial), commercial, and industrial. Permitted uses and dimensional standards were also compared. Existing land use data was not included in the comparison. Some nuances of each town's zoning districts were necessarily simplified in order to allow a peer-to-peer comparison.

Like Gorham, each town analyzed has a rural zoning district intended to preserve agricultural and forest lands while allowing housing and other compatible uses. These rural zones were categorized as "residential" because their minimum lot sizes and allowed uses are in line with low-density residential development.

Gorham's Rural district allows a 60,000 SF minimum lot size. In Westbrook, the Rural district also has a 60,000 SF minimum lot size. Windham's Farm-Residential district is a 50,000 SF minimum lot size, while the Farm district is 80,000 SF. Saco's Rural Conservation and Scarborough's Rural Farming District have minimum lot sizes of 2 acres and 80,000 SF, respectively. While each town may be using different tools to promote agriculture and rural working lands in these zones, the lot sizes of 2 acres or less allow for typical single-family residential growth – whereas a strictly agricultural zone would typically have a very large (5 acres or more) minimum lot size to disallow extensive development of homes.

In each town, residential zoning (including rural residential) makes up the largest amount of land area. Gorham has the least amount of commercially-zoned land of any community in the analysis, and has the second-lowest amount of mixed-use zoned land (only Gray is lower.) Gorham has the second-highest amount of residentially-zoned land, second only to Gray.

Comparative Land Area by Zoning Category

Town	Commercial	Industrial	Mixed Use	Residential
Gorham	0.4%	5.2%	6.4%	88.0%
Gray	2.5%	2.4%	3.0%	92.1%
Saco	0.8%	4.5%	10.3%	84.4%
Scarborough	3.5%	4.8%	9.2%	82.5%
Westbrook	4.1%	16.0%	7.7%	72.2%
Windham	5.7%	1.5%	11.2%	81.6%
AVERAGE	2.8%	5.7%	8.0%	83.5%



Development Opportunity Map

To identify proposed development areas, North Star Planning conducted a land use analysis by overlaying existing land use, zoning, vacant land, roads, transit routes, and utilities. The team identified areas where multiple opportunities like utility access, vacant land, and proximity to compatible land uses coincided and refined areas to avoid environmental constraints where possible. We incorporated input from Gorham staff regarding proposed planning and infrastructure projects. Based on our land use analysis, we know that Gorham has less land area zoned mixed-use or commercial than its peer communities. Our development areas are focused on places with existing mixed-use, commercial, or industrial zoning where these uses - and potentially the zoning - can be expanded to cover more land area.

Our development areas cover several different types of economic growth opportunities that are compatible with existing land uses.

1. Gorham Village

This area has the most extensive public utility coverage in Gorham. A mixed-use area with a strong commercial market with an existing business association, dense residential development, and an institutional anchor (University of Southern Maine campus), Gorham Village has the potential to concentrate residential and mixed-use growth through infill and redevelopment. This is also the only part of Gorham with public transit access through the METRO Husky Line and would be served by GPCOG's proposed Gorham-Westbrook-Portland rapid bus route. New businesses here could include local stores, cafes, restaurants, and small-scale entertainment or amusements to serve residents and students. Enhancing connections to nearby trails and mountain bike parks would encourage regional visitors to spend time in the Village. Growth here would rely on an expansion of mixed-use zoning, increased density, traffic improvements, increased bicycle and pedestrian safety, and developing a "park once" model.



2. Little Falls Village

Little Falls is partially served by public utilities and is the subject of extensive recent planning work in the Villages Masterplan with South Windham, and zoning changes to implement the goals in the plan. Implementing those changes to expand mixed-use zoning in this area is in progress. Little Falls does not have much vacant land, but most lots are underdeveloped. Growth here would include infill and redevelopment to add residential density alongside neighborhood businesses and restaurants. Utility expansion, improved bicycle and pedestrian safety, and trail connections will be key to encouraging growth in this area.

3. South Gorham Corridor Commercial

This area was identified as a key development area in Gorham's 2021 Comprehensive Plan update, and zoning changes in 2022 created two mixed-use districts, South Gorham Crossroads and South Gorham Commercial. These zoning changes were intended to promote higher-density residential development, retail, services, hotels, and light industrial in this area along the Gorham/Scarborough border. There are vacant parcels available for development here, but constraints include a lack of utilities and existing traffic congestion. This area is also on an aquifer, so utility connection would improve development potential. The proposed Gorham Connector would provide direct access to I-95 from this area, which would improve highway access for industry and freight as well as commuters; however, the future of the Connector project is uncertain.

4. Mosher Corner

This area contains the most vacant industrially zoned land in Gorham, as well as parcels zoned for roadside commercial development. This area provides opportunities for industrial, warehouse, and auto-oriented commercial growth; however, available land is limited and borders residential neighborhoods. There is limited utility access in this area with potential to connect. If Gorham wants to support industrial growth, this would be the best place in town for investment, but growth potential will be influenced by whether a developer or the town would fund utility expansion. Additionally, this area contains significant wildlife habitat and identified vernal pools.

5. Agriculture

In addition to these four focus areas, the team noted through land use analysis and comments during the public engagement process that Gorham has a significant base of farms and agricultural businesses scattered throughout the town. While Gorham has an Agricultural/Industrial Zone, the majority of farms and tree growth parcels are located in the Rural Zone alongside single-family homes. There is potential to grow this area of the economy through town action to support farming. These farms are part of Gorham's heritage, and the town has worked to support their preservation through rural zoning and the Transfer of Development Rights program. We recommend that agriculture in Gorham is examined as one of the development profiles, taking a town-wide view at how to expand and support this industry.

LOCAL COMPETITIVENESS ANALYSIS

Development Conditions Index

	Gorham	Gray	Saco	Scarborough	Westbrook	Windham
Industrial/Commercial % of Assessed Value	Yellow	Red	Light Green	Dark Green	Yellow	Red
Land Area Zoned Industrial or Commercial	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Dark Green	Dark Green	Yellow
Industrial Vacancy Rate	Yellow	Red	Dark Green	Yellow	Yellow	Light Green
Wastewater Costs	Yellow	Red	Light Green	Dark Green	Yellow	Red
Distance to Interstate	Red	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Red
Distance to PWM	Light Green	Red	Red	Light Green	Dark Green	Yellow
2022 Full-Value Tax Rate	Yellow	Dark Green	Red	Light Green	Yellow	Light Green
2020 Population Density	Yellow	Red	Light Green	Yellow	Dark Green	Yellow
2010-2020 Population Growth	Light Green	Red	Yellow	Dark Green	Dark Green	Red
% Age 25-54	Red	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Dark Green	Light Green
2018-2023 Employment Growth	Yellow	Dark Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow
Median Age	Dark Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Dark Green	Light Green
HS Graduation Rate	Dark Green	Red	Light Green	Dark Green	Red	Yellow
% of Households Cost-Burdened	Light Green	Light Green	Red	Yellow	Dark Green	Red
Housing Affordability Ratio	Light Green	Dark Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Light Green

Note: Wastewater costs reflect typical monthly payment for a small to medium sized industrial business. These do not include impact fees related to new development. The competitiveness is based on operating rates, which includes a composite of minimum service fees plus variable charges related to amount of use.

Source: Town of Gorham, Town of Gray, City of Saco, Town of Scarborough, City of Westbrook, Town of Windham, Maine Revenue Services, US Census Bureau, Lightcast, Maine Department of Education, MaineHomeConnections.com based on Maine Listings data, Camoin Associates, North Star Planning, Portland Water District, Scarborough Sanitary District

Local Development Conditions

Business attraction and retention can be a competitive prospect for communities, as companies are looking for a location that is the most advantageous for their operations. The Local Development Conditions analysis compares Gorham to its neighbors Gray, Saco, Scarborough, Westbrook, and Windham to evaluate the factors businesses look at when choosing a location. While all are geographically close, each locality has unique conditions that make up its business climate.

Gorham ranks in the middle of the pack compared to this set of comparison geographies.

- Gorham is best in two categories: school quality (high school graduation rate) and median age, indicating the town's strong demographics and attractiveness as a place to live. Meanwhile, Gorham is also competitive in its distance to the Portland International Jetport, 2010-2020 population growth, its share of cost-burdened households, and its housing affordability
- Meanwhile, Gorham is rated as not competitive for its distance to the interstate and its current working-aged population, despite having the lowest median age. This can be explained by a high concentration of college-aged students that bring down the median age but do not contribute to the working-aged population.
- Based on this set of indicators, Westbrook is the most competitive comparison geography with the most "very competitive" indicators and only two "not competitive" indicators. Scarborough and Windham are other key competitors, while Gray and Saco are generally less competitive than Gorham, based on these indicators.

Key:

■	Very Competitive
■	More Competitive
■	Competitive
■	Less Competitive
■	Not Competitive

- Improving on commercial and industrial indicators like zoning, improving industrial vacancy, and attracting more working-aged population relative to Westbrook and Windham would improve Gorham's standing.



Summary of Key Development Conditions Indicators

Below is a summary of all key indicators discussed in this section.

Local Development Conditions Summary

	Gorham	Gray	Saco	Scarborough	Westbrook	Windham
Industrial/Commercial % of Assessed Value	14%	8%	18%	24%	TBD	8%
Land Area zoned industrial or commercial	6%	5%	5%	8%	20%	7%
Industrial Vacancy Rate	0.6%	0.0%	2.4%	0.7%	1.1%	1.9%
Wastewater Cost (For 150 HCF)	\$382.69	N/A	\$351.99	\$174.92	\$399.23	\$561.00
Distance to Interstate (miles)	7.6	0.7	1.2	3.2	1.0	8.2
Distance to PWM (miles)	8.5	18.3	14.4	6.2	4.0	13.7
2022 Full-Value Tax Rate	12.22	9.94	13.34	11.64	12.41	10.58
2020 Population Density	362.5	191.0	528.2	463.6	1,187	395.8
2010-2020 Population Growth	12%	7%	10%	17%	17%	8%
% Age 25-54	37%	40%	40%	36%	43%	41%
Median Age	39.4	43.5	43.0	46.5	40.1	42.0
2018-2023 Employment Growth	0.2%	10.6%	2.3%	0.4%	-0.4%	1.5%
HS Graduation Rate	94.9	83.3	92.1	92.5	81.5	88.3
Housing Cost Burdened Share	25%	25%	34%	31%	21%	34%
Housing Ownership Affordability Ratio	5.3	5.1	6.5	6.0	5.7	4.9

Source: Town of Gorham, Town of Gray, City of Saco, Town of Scarborough, City of Westbrook, Town of Windham, Maine Revenue Services, US Census Bureau, Lightcast, Maine Department of Education, MaineHomeConnections.com based on Maine Listings data, Camoin Associates, North Star Planning, Portland Water District, Scarborough Sanitary District



Tax Base Diversity and Industrial Zoning

The share of land area zoned for commercial or industrial use can help determine the inventory of available land that a developer can utilize and can also serve as a proxy to indicate a town or city's willingness to facilitate commercial and industrial development compared to residential uses.

- Approximately 5.6% of Gorham's land area is zoned as commercial or industrial, with most of it zoned as industrial.
- Among this set of towns, Westbrook has by far the highest share of commercially- or industrially-zoned land, at 20.1%. 16.0% of Westbrook's land is zoned for industrial use.
- Gray and Saco trail Gorham, coming in at 4.9% and 5.3% respectively.

Comparative Land Area by Zoning Category

Town	Commercial	Industrial	Mixed-Use	Residential	Total	Commercial/Industrial
Gorham	0.4%	5.2%	6.4%	88.0%		5.6%
Gray	2.5%	2.4%	3.0%	92.1%		4.9%
Saco	0.8%	4.5%	10.3%	84.4%		5.3%
Scarborough	3.5%	4.8%	9.2%	82.5%		8.3%
Westbrook	4.1%	16.0%	7.7%	72.2%		20.1%
Windham	5.7%	1.5%	11.2%	81.6%		7.2%
Average	2.8%	5.7%	8.0%	83.5%		8.6%

Source: North Star Planning

Wastewater Costs

Gorham's wastewater service provider is the Portland Water District. In 2024, wastewater in Gorham costs \$15.69 for the first hundred cubic feet, and \$7.34 for each additional hundred cubic feet.

- For a commercial or industrial business, Scarborough has the lowest-cost wastewater services. Although the minimum charge is higher than the comparison municipalities, the variable cost for additional service over 100 cubic feet is significantly lower.
- Gorham's wastewater service is slightly higher than Saco, but lower than Westbrook and Windham.
- Gray is not competitive in wastewater service, as all properties in Gray are required to have on-site septic rather than municipal wastewater.
- In terms of impact fees, Westbrook is the most competitive as it has only a \$250 sewer connection fee
- The pending impact fee applicable to certain parts of Gorham (\$47.35 per gallon per day) will be more expensive than Saco (\$34.65) and Scarborough (\$19.82). Windham's impact fee is based on housing units and does not apply to commercial or industrial development.

Municipal Wastewater Rates & Impact Fees

Municipality	Service Provider	Minimum Charge	Additional Charge Per Hundred Cubic Feet	Impact Fee
Gorham	Portland Water District	\$15.69	\$7.34	Pending impact fee applicable to Main Street (Route 25) between Portal Way to the intersection at Mosher Road (Route 237) fee is \$47.35 per gallon estimated per day.
Gray	NA*	NA*	NA*	NA*
Saco	Maine Water	\$45.32	1-29 HCF beyond the base: \$6.44 29-70 HCF beyond the base: \$5.71	Impact fee based on \$34.65 per gallon estimated per day.
Scarborough	Scarborough Sanitary District	\$59.92	\$2.30	Capacity reserve fee is \$19.82 per estimated gallon. Fee is based on 90 day average of wastewater flow. The \$19.82 fee is based on the Engineering News Record Construction Index and has a 2-3% annual escalator.
Westbrook	Portland Water District	\$12.73	\$7.73	No impact fee, \$250 sewer connection fee
Windham	Portland Water District	\$51.00	\$10.20	\$3,500 per unit, increasing \$5,000 per unit in January 2025 (e.g. if a new housing development has 50 units, $50 * \$5,000 = \$250,000$ impact fee)

*The Town of Gray operates entirely on septic systems, with no municipal sewer system.

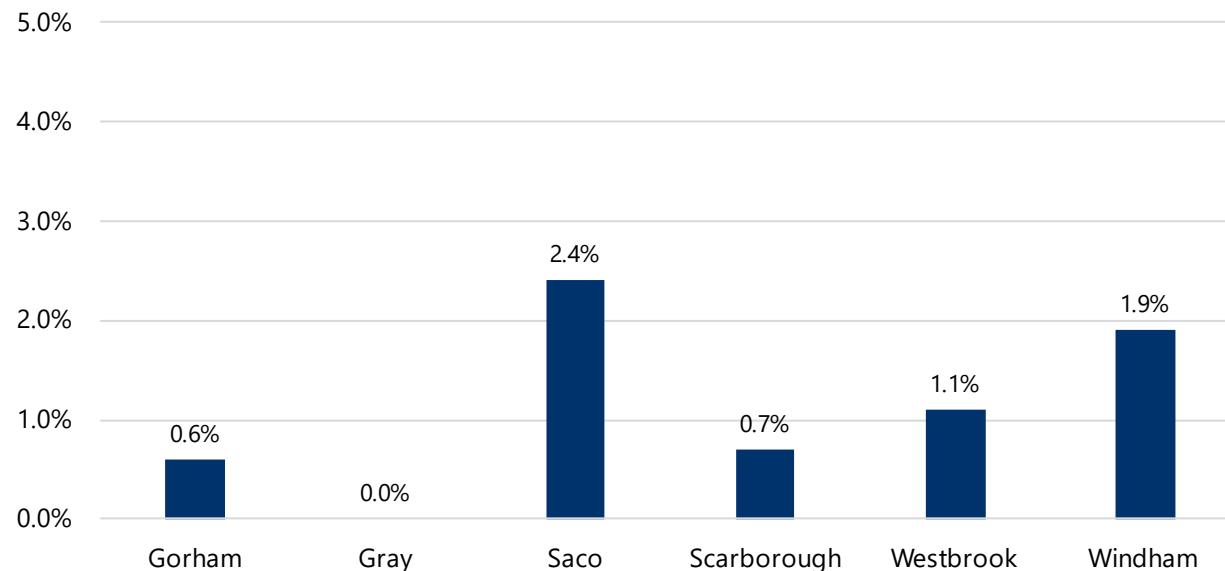


Industrial Real Estate Vacancy Rate

This indicator helps to describe the available space that a town or city can offer to industrial businesses and tenants. A higher vacancy rate for industrial use types indicates that there are more options for industrial businesses to locate, while a low vacancy rate indicates a tighter, more challenging real estate market.

- Industrial vacancy is relatively low in all of the comparison geographies.
- In Gorham, industrial vacancy is extremely low, at 0.6%, and only Gray has a lower vacancy rate (0%).
- All comparison towns except for Saco have industrial vacancy rates below 2.0%.

Industrial Vacancy Rate



Source: CoStar 2024 Q4

Municipal Wastewater Rates & Impact Fees

Municipality	Service Provider	Minimum Charge	Additional Charge Per Hundred Cubic Feet	Impact Fee
Gorham	Portland Water District	\$15.69	\$7.34	Pending impact fee applicable to Main Street (Route 25) between Portal Way to the intersection at Mosher Road (Route 237) fee is \$47.35 per gallon estimated per day.
Gray	NA*	NA*	NA*	NA*
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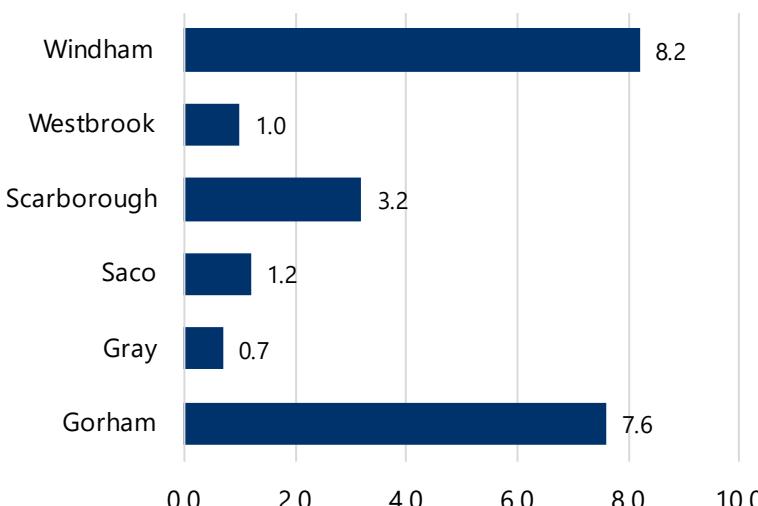


Distance to Key Transportation Infrastructure

This indicator shows how difficult it may be for a business to reach key transportation infrastructure necessary to access customers and markets and can also serve as a proxy for whether the town or city has traffic challenges that could limit growth. Meanwhile, it can also indicate how easy or difficult it might be for commuters to access their jobs in Gorham. This indicator was calculated using the town or city hall as the community center.

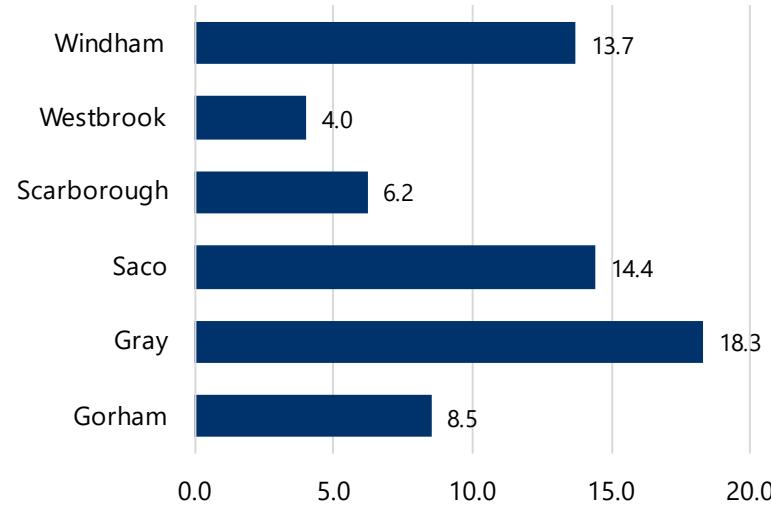
- Gorham is located about 8 miles from the nearest interstate highway (I-95), a longer distance than all comparison geographies except for Windham.
- That said, Gorham ranks more competitively in terms of its distance to the Portland International Jetport, and is located closer than Windham, Saco, and Gray.

Distance to Interstate (miles)



Source: Google Maps

Distance to Portland International Jetport (miles)



Source: Google Maps

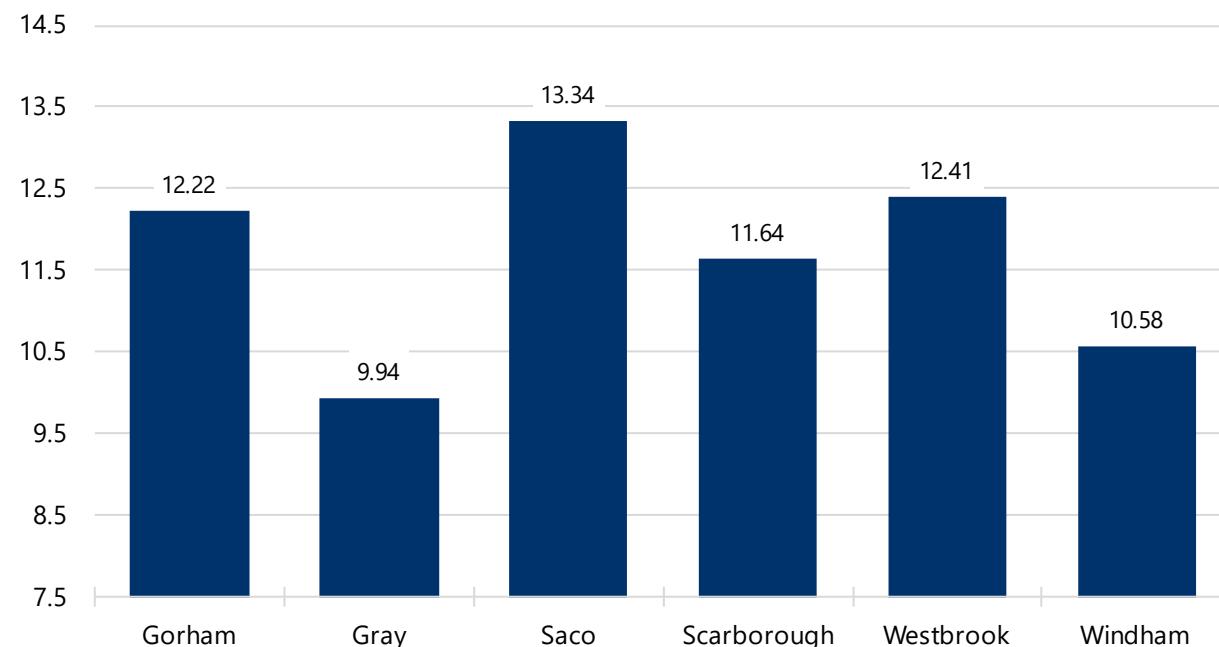


Property Tax Rates

Property tax rates indicate how financially competitive a town may be for a business or developer to locate.

- Gorham's full-value tax rate¹ per \$1,000 of value was 12.22 in 2022.
- The comparison geographies have rates ranging from 9.94 in Gray to 13.34 in Saco.
- Overall, Gorham ranks in the middle of this group of geographies, with both Westbrook and Scarborough having relatively similar property tax rates hovering around 12/\$1,000 of value.

Comparison of 2022 Full Value Tax Rates

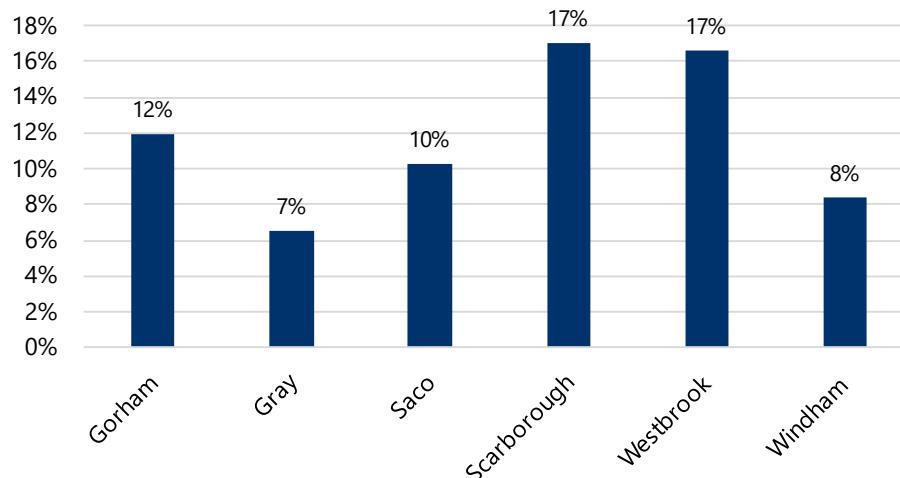


Source: Maine Revenue Services

¹ The full value tax rate, or equalized tax rate, is calculated by Maine Revenue Services and is derived by dividing the 2022 municipal commitment by 2024 state valuation with adjustments for homestead and BETE exemptions as well as TIFs.

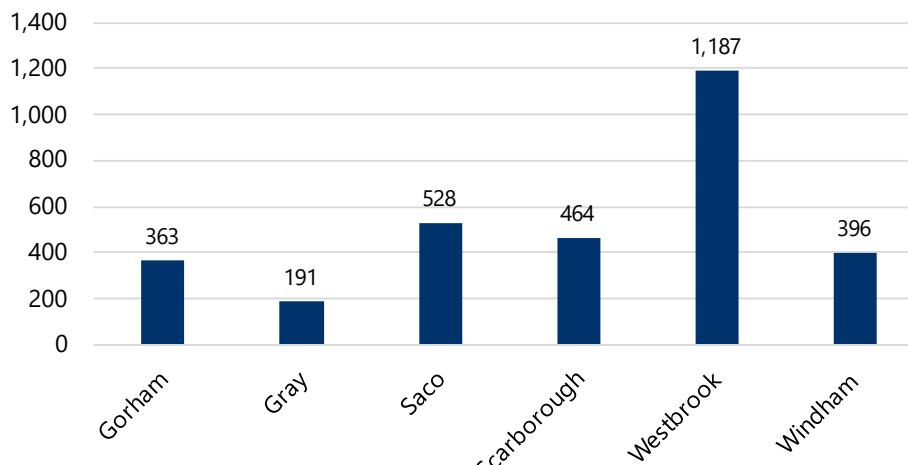
Population

Population Growth, 2010-2020



Source: US Census Bureau Decennial Census

Population per Square Mile (2020)



Source: US Census Bureau Decennial Census

Population growth can serve as an indicator of whether a town or city is generally growing and can indicate whether it is an attractive place to live.

- Gorham's growth rate of 12% from 2010-2020 outpaces Gray, Saco, and Windham.
- Scarborough and Westbrook have growth the fastest among this cohort of municipalities, both seeing 17% growth from 2010-2020.

Population density can indicate whether there is a strong local customer base, and whether there is generally an agglomeration of economic activity in a town or city.

- Gorham's population density generally ranks lower than the other comparison geographies.
- At 363 people per square mile, Gorham's population is less dense than Westbrook, Saco, Scarborough, and Windham, but is more dense than Gray.

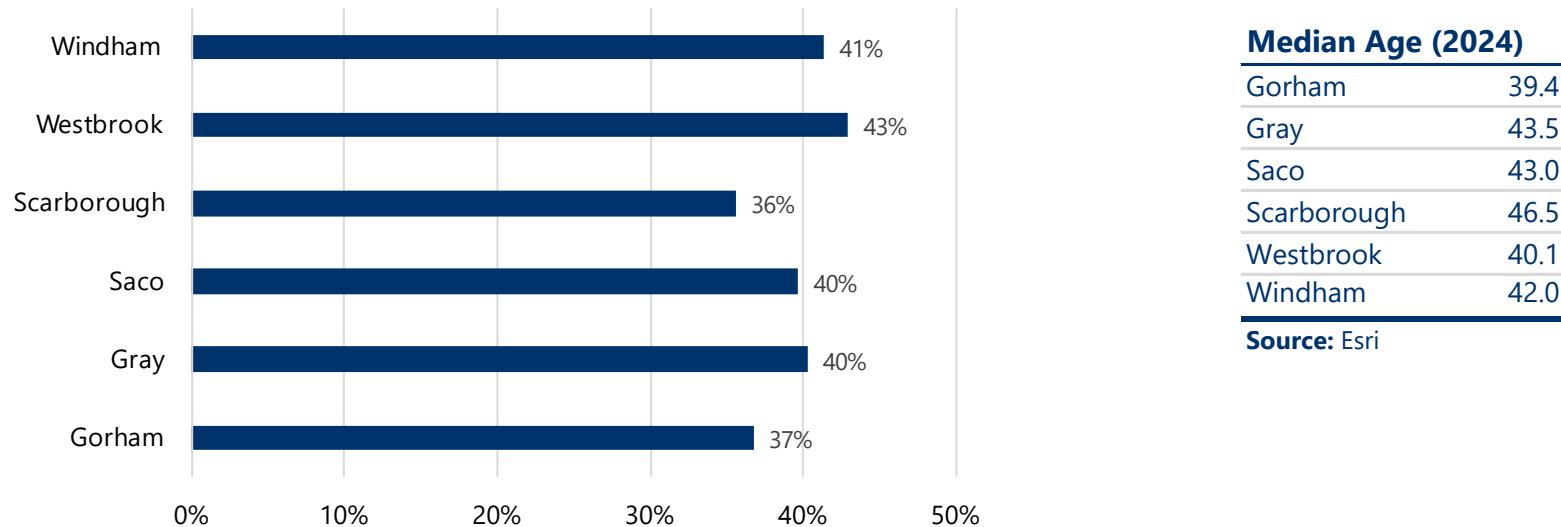


Demographics

Whether a town or city has a strong population of young people and working-aged individuals indicates whether it has strong local labor force availability.

- Gorham has the youngest median age among this cohort of municipalities, at 39.4 years old. Westbrook comes in a close second at 40.1 years old.
- Gorham's median age is impacted heavily by the presence of USM students. That said, Gorham ranks relatively low for its share of population within key working age, between 25 and 54 years old.
- In terms of age demographics, Westbrook is the most competitive, with both a young median age and the strongest share of its population in prime working age.
- Conversely, Scarborough might be considered the least competitive in terms of its age demographics, with the highest median age (46.5) and the lowest share of key working-age population.

Share of Population Aged 25-54 (2024)



Source: Esri



Employment Growth

Whether or not a local economy experiences recent employment growth serves as an indicator of the general trend of the overall economic health in the town or city. In particular, employment growth in the last five years can indicate how resilient a local economy was to the COVID-19 pandemic, and whether employment was able to recover to pre-pandemic levels or not.

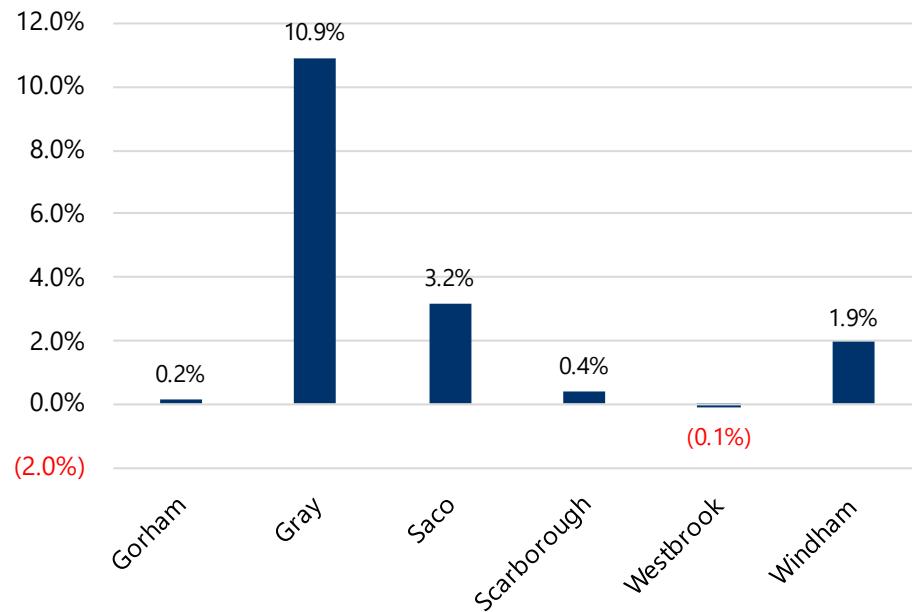
- Gorham's employment growth rate was very low but positive in the last five years, and it had a growth rate similar to that of Scarborough and Westbrook.
- Gray had the strongest employment growth from 2018-2023, growing nearly 11% over the five-year period.

Total Employment Change, 2018-2023

	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	% Change	# Change
Gorham	5,010	5,018	0.2%	8
Gray	2,748	3,047	10.9%	299
Saco	8,433	8,701	3.2%	268
Scarborough	19,041	19,120	0.4%	79
Westbrook	14,182	14,170	(0.1%)	(12)
Windham	7,368	7,511	1.9%	143

Source: Lightcast

Employment Growth, 2018 to 2023



Source: Lightcast



School Quality

School quality is a major indicator of whether a town or city is attractive for families to live, and is often one of the most important determining factors of whether a household decides to move to the town or city.

- Based on high school graduation rates, Gorham has the highest-quality school system in this cohort of comparison geographies, with nearly 95% of high school seniors reaching graduation.
- Saco and Scarborough have the most comparable graduation rates, both around 92%. Meanwhile, Westbrook and Gray-New Gloucester High Schools have the lowest graduation rates, at under 85%.

Comparative School Quality - High School Graduation Rates

	Graduation Rates	Size of Senior Class
Gorham High School	94.9	197
Gray-New Gloucester High School	83.3	144
Thornton Academy (Saco)	92.1	278
Scarborough High School	92.5	227
Westbrook High School	81.5	173
Windham High School	88.3	239

Source: Maine Department of Education

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability has major implications for the growth potential of a town or city. When housing is less accessible, new residents are less able to move to the town, limiting growth of the local customer base and the ability of businesses to fill jobs with the local labor pool.

- In the year ending September 2024, Gorham had the second-highest median sale price of homes (single family, condo, and manufactured), at nearly \$550,000. This is second only to Scarborough (\$684,183). Windham, Westbrook, and Gray have relatively similar median sale prices during this time period, around \$460,000.
- That said, controlling for household income paints a portrait of a slightly more affordable housing market in Gorham. The median sale price in Gorham is 5.3 times higher than median household income, the third-lowest. Saco and Scarborough have the highest ratios, above 6.0.
- 25% of all households (owner and renter) are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of gross income on housing. This is higher than Windham, but closely aligned with Gray and Scarborough.

Share of Households that are Cost-Burdened

Gorham	25%
Gray	25%
Scarborough	25%
Westbrook	31%
Windham	21%
Saco	34%

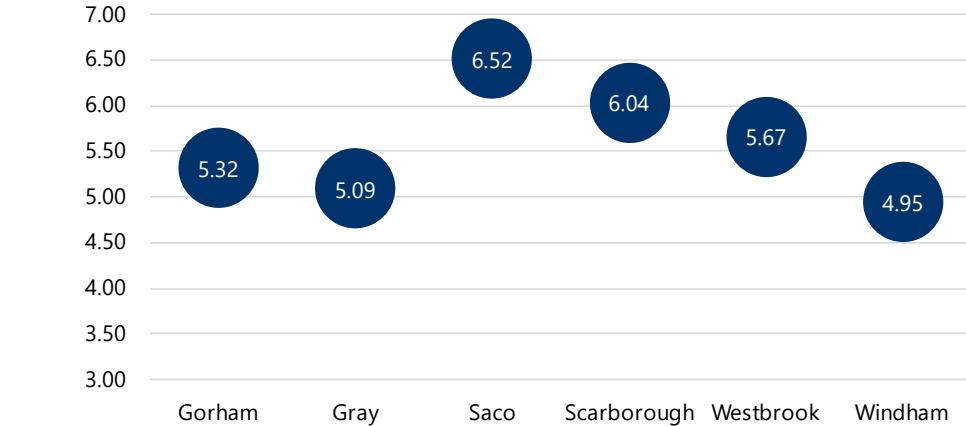
Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Sale Price - 12 Months Ending September 2024



Source: MaineHomeConnections.com based on Maine Listings

Housing Cost Ratio - Median Sale Price Compared to Household Income



Source: MaineHomeConnections.com based on Maine Listings; American Community Survey Camoin Associates



ATTACHMENT A: DATA SOURCES



Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type. [Click to learn more.](#)



Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst combines proprietary statistical models covering demographic, business, and spending data with map-based analytics to offer insights on market opportunities for industries, businesses, and sites. Business Analyst integrates datasets covering a wide range of topics including demographics, consumer spending, market potential, customer segmentation, business locations, traffic counts, and crime indexes, which can be overlaid spatially to produce customizable maps and uncover market intelligence. Data can be pulled for standard and custom geographies, allowing for valuable comparison between places. [Click to learn more.](#)



Multiple Listings Services (MLS) are individual private databases of for-sale residential property listings designed to consolidate property information and connect homebuyers and sellers. More than 500 MLSs exist in the US, covering different geographic regions and markets. Individual property listings are often publicly accessible, while aggregated data on sales prices and trends can typically only be accessed through direct cooperation with an MLS. Many MLSs also provide listing information to third-party aggregators such as Realtor.com or Zillow. [Click here to learn more.](#)



The **American Community Survey (ACS)** is an ongoing statistical survey by the US Census Bureau that gathers demographic and socioeconomic information on age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, commute patterns, and other topics. Mandatory to fill out, the survey is sent to a small sample of the population on a rotating basis. The questions on the ACS are different than those asked on the decennial census and provide ongoing demographic updates of the nation down to the block group level. [Click to learn more.](#)



Conducted every ten years in years ending in zero, the **US Decennial Census of Population and Housing** is a complete count of each resident of the nation based on where they live on April 1st of the Census year. The Constitution mandates the enumeration to determine how to apportion the House of Representatives among the states. The latest release of the 2020 Census contains data for a limited number of variables, including: total population by race/ethnicity, population under 18, occupied and vacant housing units, and group quarters population. [Click to learn more.](#)

OnTheMap | US Census Bureau



[more.](#)

OnTheMap is a tool developed through the US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program that helps to visualize Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data about where workers are employed and where they live. It offers visual mapping capabilities for data on age, earnings, industry distributions, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and sex. [Click to learn more.](#)





Gorham Economic Development Strategic Plan

APPENDIX III: ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Engagement Summary

Town of Gorham

March 2025

Prepared for:

Town of Gorham, ME
75 South Street
Suite 1
Gorham, ME 04038

Summary of the Town of Gorham's Engagement Activity

Background

The Town of Gorham initiated the development of an updated economic development strategic plan to better guide the City's future development. In an effort to understand the needs, opportunities, and challenges facing the Town, community engagement was undertaken through various methods in order to capture a holistic understanding of the town. These efforts aimed to gather the insights and perspectives of a wide swath of Gorham's population so that the strategies and actions would better meet the needs of the whole community.

The following pages summarize the various engagement activity that was undertaken in the Town of Gorham.

Type of Engagement Activity

1. Public Open House

- The public open house was held on October 15, 2024, and had approximately 25 attendees.
- The Open House included four stations, an open concept meeting space for interaction and participation among community members and facilitators.

2. Focus Groups

- Focus groups were held in person during the site visit. Approximately 35 professionals participated in across the focus group sessions, including members of the Gorham Economic Development Committee.
- The focus groups were broken out by professional type, including:
 - Retail, personal services, restaurant and hospitality professionals
 - Construction, Trades, Landscaping, and HVAC professionals
 - Agriculture and Agritourism professionals
 - Healthcare and Child Care professionals
 - Economic Development Partners
 - Manufacturing and Industrial Supplies and Services professionals
 - Professional, Technical, and Office Intensive professionals

3. Digital Interviews

- Camoin Associates conducted digital interviews with individuals that spanned a range of sectors and provided more detailed insights into market opportunities, competitive factors, workforce challenges, and local business intelligence.

4. Steering Committee Guidance

- Regular steering committee meetings provided guidance, feedback, and vital information for reviewing the current conditions and future needs of the Town.

5. Town of Gorham Leadership

- The Town of Gorham leadership and the Gorham Economic Development Commission were instrumental in the process of this engagement.

Summary of the Town of Gorham's Open House Engagement

Background

On October 15, the Town of Gorham hosted an open house for the community in an effort to share progress on their current strategy development work. The open house also served as a forum for the Town to gather feedback from community members. Attendees were asked to consider a variety of statements about the Town of Gorham, provide their vision for the Town, identify assets and challenges, and indicate development priorities. The following pages summarize community input that was gathered at the open house event.

Key Takeaways from Public Participation

Topic 1: Development Opportunities

- There is a relative consensus that Gorham's assets include its trails, vibrant village, and school system. Other participants identified that local businesses are an asset, while others called out a strong sense of community as a strength.
- Many participants identified traffic and cost of living as key challenges in Gorham. Similarly, housing costs was identified by several participants as a top challenge.

Topic 2: Business and Culture

- Participants had widely varying views on many of the business and culture statements.
- For the most part, participants agreed that they are excited to showcase Gorham to visitors. Participants also generally disagreed with the statement that cultural, recreational, and entertainment options in Gorham support a vibrant business environment.

Topic 3: Gorham's Style

- Participants generally agreed that wayfinding signage, bike lanes, mixed-use buildings, enhanced streetscapes, off-street and multi-use paths, and sidewalk cafés would fit well in Gorham's landscape.
- Participants generally agreed that a park and ride would not be a good fit in Gorham

Topic 4: Mapping Gorham

- Participants highlighted diverse business, community asset, and recreation activities both downtown and throughout Gorham's outlying areas.

Topic 5: Vision for the Future

- Residents look forward to a diverse and accessible Gorham, that includes amenities like sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Participants highlight that community-oriented, locally-owned businesses are an important part of the Town's vision.

For this activity, participants were asked to use four total stickers to mark the top two assets and top two challenges for the Town of Gorham.

	Assets	Challenges
Trails	10	0
College Town	1	2
Vibrant Village	10	0
Industrial Park	3	0
Local Businesses	5	2
Bedroom Community	0	3
Tourism	0	0
School System	8	2
Parking	0	2
Housing Costs	0	7
Child Care Availability	0	0
Public Transportation	0	4
Traffic	0	11
Walkability	1	1
Cost of Living	0	11
Entrepreneurship	0	2

For this activity, participants were asked to provide details on other assets or challenges that were not listed in activity 1A. Not all of the comments collected in this activity are included in this summary. Comments were excluded for several reasons including legibility, duplication, and relevancy.

Assets:

- Small town feeling with medium town possibilities
- Love of community and its resources
- Great people thriving here
- Coordination with USM, new grad center, and Roux – entrepreneurship, Tech/Engineering business incubator
- Producing high quality jobs – good pay in growth sectors
- Strong sense of community – people care about each other and the town
- Schools have excellent reputation
- All age groups

Challenges:

- High taxes
- Lack of a vision for what Gorham can be – Gorham Village, USM college
- Residents against development that could help pay the tax bill
- The cost of running the school system & town outpacing residents' ability to pay with tax increases.
- We need traffic infrastructure to support commercial/industrial development in approved zoned areas.
- Need to diversify tax base
- Building within the center of town is creating lots of traffic congestion
- Not enough resources for everything we want to accomplish
- Contract zones

Summary of Topic Area

2

Business & Culture Ratings

For this activity, participants rated a series of statements about Gorham's business climate and cultural environment by placing stickers along a spectrum, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Please note that stickers were regularly placed in between rankings so the counts are somewhat subjective. For transparency, a note explaining the sticker distribution is included under each statement.

STATEMENT 1: Gorham has an active business climate, where businesses can effectively start, sustain, and grow..

Participant Ranking by Sticker Count

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	4	6	2	0

Note on participant ranking: Most of the strongly disagree stickers were placed between *Strongly Disagree* and *Disagree*. Four of the *No Opinion* stickers were between *No Opinion* and *Strongly Agree*

STATEMENT 2: Gorham is growing as a hub of goods and services for the town and surrounding communities.

Participant Ranking by Sticker Count

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	4	2	7	0

Note on participant ranking: Three of the *Agree* stickers were placed between *No Opinion* and *Agree*.

STATEMENT 3: The Town of Gorham has opportunities to travel easily by bike, vehicle, or on foot.

Participant Ranking by Sticker Count

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	4	5	5	0

Note on participant ranking: Four of the *Disagree* stickers were placed between *Disagree* and *No Opinion*. Two of the *No Opinion* stickers were placed between *No Opinion* and *Agree*. Two of the *Agree* stickers were placed between *No Opinion* and *Agree*.

STATEMENT 4: Cultural, Recreational, and entertainment options in the town support a vibrant business environment.

Participant Ranking by Sticker Count

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	5	7	1	1

Note on participant ranking: Two of the *Disagree* stickers and two of the *No Opinion* stickers were placed between *Disagree* and *No Opinion*. The *Agree* sticker was placed between *No Opinion* and *Agree*. The *Strongly Agree* sticker was placed between *Agree* and *Strongly Agree*.

STATEMENT 5: I am excited to have visitors in town and showcase Gorham's businesses, attractions, and entertainment opportunities.

Participant Ranking by Sticker Count

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	1	1	11	2

Note on participant ranking: Many of the *Agree* stickers were placed between *No Opinion* and *Agree*.

Summary of Topic Area

3

Style and Design of Gorham

For this activity, participants reviewed a series of design styles and communities and indicated whether they looked good or were not a fit for Gorham.

Wayfinding Signage



Park & Ride



Apartment Buildings



Looks Good

15

Not a Fit

1

Looks Good

2

Not a Fit

8

Looks Good

10

Not a Fit

9

Bike Lanes



Mixed-Use Buildings



Enhanced Streetscape



Looks Good

13

Not a Fit

3

Looks Good

13

Not a Fit

0

Looks Good

10

Not a Fit

1

Landscaped Parking Lot



Off-Street and Multi-Use Paths



Sidewalk Cafe



Looks Good

11

Not a Fit

5

Looks Good

14

Not a Fit

1

Looks Good

13

Not a Fit

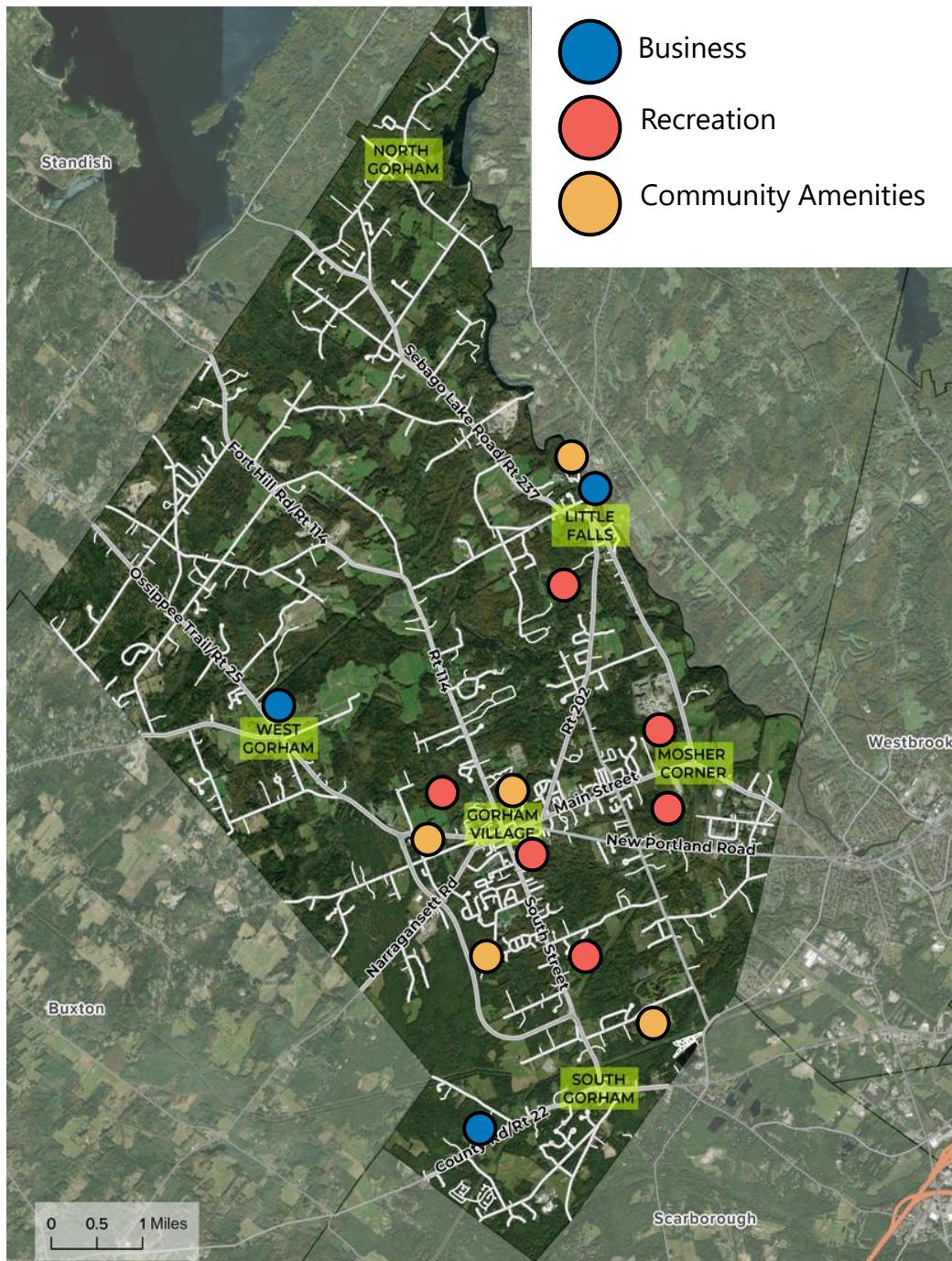
1

Summary of Topic Area

4A

Map: Gorham

For this activity, participants used dog stickers and sticky notes to indicate future ideas for future businesses, recreation, or community amenities.



Comments:

Business suggestions

- Reny's
- Sherman's
- Ice cream parlor in village
- Tractor Supply
- Harbor Freight

Recreation

- Gorham rec area – country club "front 9"

Community amenities

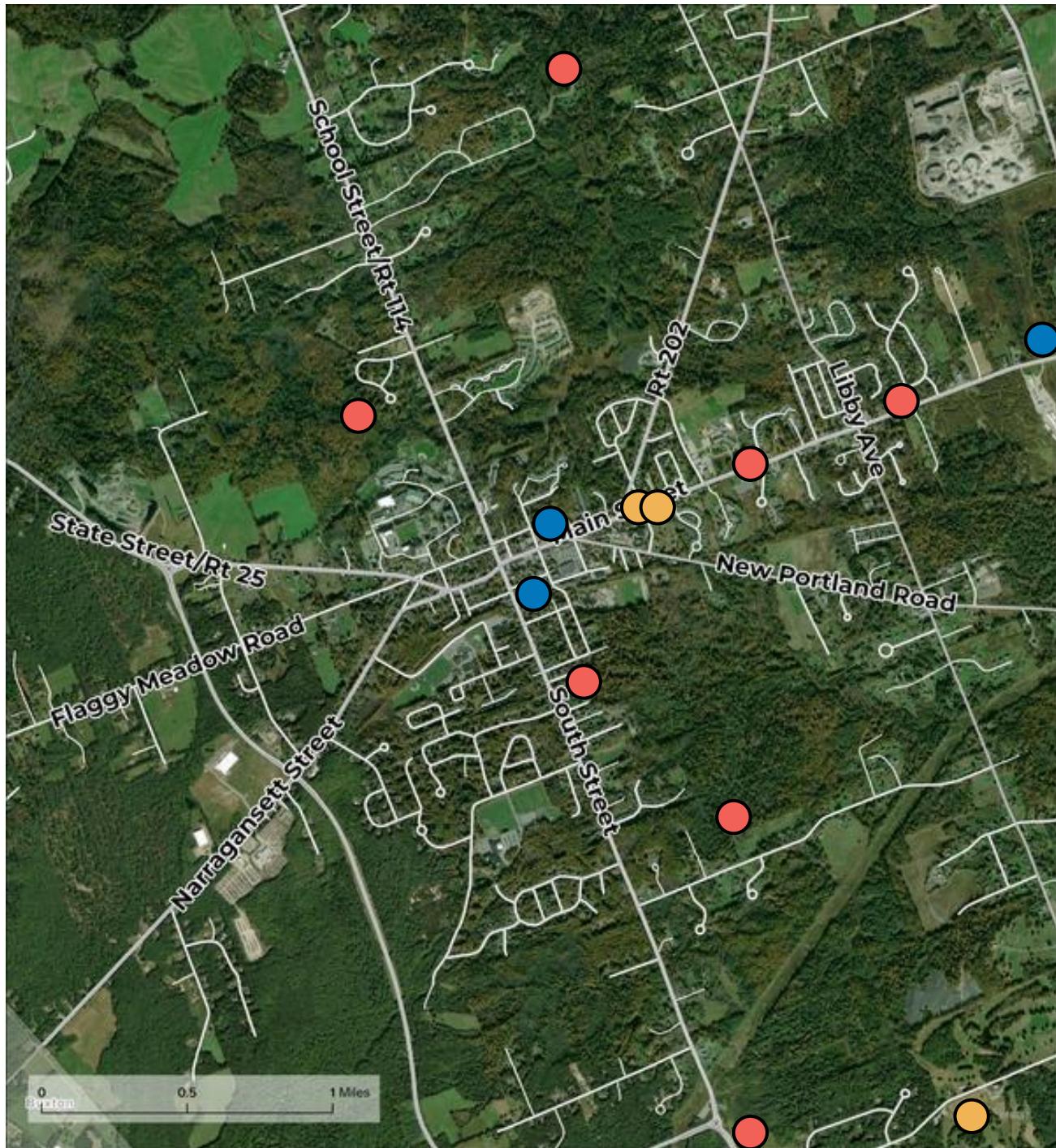
- Connected sidewalks
- Bike lanes on the road networks
- Extraordinary development on IP Expansion – Research/Education
- High density mixed use in So. Gorham

Summary of Topic Area

4A

Map: Gorham Village

For this activity, participants used dog stickers and sticky notes to indicate future ideas for future businesses, recreation, or community amenities.



Business



Recreation



Community Amenities

Comments:

- Redo of Main Street/Village – wider sidewalks, bike lanes, trees, underground utilities, traffic calming
- Create a denser mixed-use village with locally owned businesses (see Station Square)
- Bike path along Hines

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

- "The addition to the IP becomes an exceptional development – not storage/trucking, a place to be proud of."
- "Gorham Village evolves into a denser village center with a mix of businesses and residential – Station Square as a model"
- "Gorham evolves into an entrepreneur community – creative, innovative businesses that are small and locally owned with an education system that promotes entrepreneurship."

In addition to general comments, participants were asked to imagine it is the year 2044 and provide three words they hope would describe Gorham's business community.

THREE-WORD VISION

- Farming | Agriculture | Community
- Walkable | Bikeable | Community and family-oriented
- Advanced | Accessible | Champions
- Vibrant | Diverse | Successful
- Diverse | Robust | Strategic
- Entrepreneurial | Thriving | Proud
- Local Ownership | Family-friendly | Diverse

Summary of the Town of Gorham's Focus Group Engagement

Background

Between October 15 and 16, the Town of Gorham hosted seven focus groups geared toward specific professional demographics in the Town. The focus groups served as a forum for the Town to gather feedback from specific segments of the workforce and community members. Attendees were asked to consider a variety of questions about the Town of Gorham, provide their vision the future business climate, identify assets and challenges, and indicate priorities in their field of work within the Town.

Business Focus Groups Sectors

Group 1: Retail, Personal Services, Restaurant and Hospitality

Group 2: Construction, Trades, Landscaping, and HVAC

Group 3: Agriculture and Agritourism

Group 4: Healthcare and Child Care

Group 5: Economic Development Partners

Group 6: Manufacturing and Industrial Supplies and Services

Group 7: Professional, Technical, and Office Intensive

Sample Questions for the Focus Groups

- How would you describe the current business climate in Gorham?
- What are the biggest challenges you face as a business owner or professional in this area?
- Where is most of your clientele from? (Gorham? Out of town?)
- Are there specific services in Gorham that you feel are lacking?
- Are there existing programs or initiatives that you find helpful, or do you see gaps in support?
- What opportunities for growth do you see in Gorham's economy?
- Are there particular industries or sectors that you think the Town should focus on attracting?

Summary of the Town of Gorham's Digital Interview Engagement

Background

Camoin Associates conducted digital interviews over the course of the project. The Town of Gorham recommended organizations that could shed light on the current conditions and future needs of the business and development community in Gorham. The Camoin Team conducted 45-minute interviews with a representative from each organization. The following are key takeaways and themes from those interviews. Findings that identified specific businesses have been removed to keep anonymity.

Key Takeaways from Digital Interviews

Theme 1: Regulatory Challenges

- Strict regulations and regulatory steps have hindered new businesses from entering the Town, discouraging potential investors and entrepreneurs.
- Small business owners face excessive scrutiny and challenges when trying to utilize existing facilities, which can lead to frustration and project abandonment.

Theme 2: Educational Program Innovation Potential

- There is a strong demand for educational programs that explore career paths, connect students with local businesses, and create maker spaces or business incubators in schools to foster innovation and entrepreneurship among students.

Theme 3: Workforce and Employment Issues

- Seasonal workforce fluctuations and an aging workforce are impacting business operations.
- There is a shortage of workers in specific sectors due to competition among local companies.

Theme 4: Development Barriers

- The lack of adequate infrastructure around industrial parks makes Gorham less attractive for businesses, which impacts economic growth potential.

Theme 5: Community Relations and Representation

- The lack of representation for business interests in local government leads to tension between agricultural and business communities.
- Collaboration with local authorities has been positive, indicating effective communication and trust-building.

