



2026-2027 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE GRANT PROGRAM

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

In Person: Thursday, January 14, 2027 by 5pm

Virtually: Friday, January 15, 2027 by 11:59pm

The Town of Gorham's 2026-2027 Capital Expenditure ("CapEx") Matching Grant Program supports local farms, businesses, and organizations ready to invest in their next stage of growth. Through matching grants for a one-time capital purchase, service, facility improvement, or expansion project, the program helps businesses strengthen their operations, pursue new opportunities, and support innovation and job creation in Gorham.

Grants will be awarded through a competitive application process to eligible businesses and farms in three sectors:

- **Agriculture, Agribusiness, and Agritourism**
- **Manufacturing, Construction, and Skilled Trades**
- **Retail, Food, and Other Services**

Proposed investments must be single, non-recurring purchases or projects that advance at least one of the following program goals:

- **Expand reach:** Strengthen a business's presence in existing markets or reach new customers and markets.
- **Increase production or capacity:** Improve the business's ability to meet growing demand for its products or services.
- **Raise the business' profile:** Increase visibility and awareness to generate demand and grow sales.

By supporting strategic investments in equipment, facilities, technology, and services, the CapEx program helps farms, businesses, and organizations build capacity for lasting growth. These investments strengthen Gorham's local economy and contribute to its vitality as a place to operate a business, create jobs, and pursue new ideas.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Town of Gorham has allocated funding through its municipal budget to support investments in the growth of local businesses and farms. Eligibility is limited to businesses and farms currently operating in Gorham on qualifying commercial or agricultural property and meeting the requirements outlined in this announcement.

- **Grant amount and matching requirement:** The program provides reimbursement of up to 50% of approved eligible project costs, with a maximum grant award of \$12,000 per business or farm. Applicants are responsible for the remaining project costs.
- **Reimbursement:** Grant funds are paid after the approved purchase or project is completed and the applicant submits the required proof of payment. Applicants must be able to pay project expenses before receiving reimbursement.
- **Award distribution:** At least one grant will be awarded in each targeted sector, provided applicants meet the program's minimum eligibility requirements. The total number and amount of awards will depend on the applications received, review committee scoring, and available funding.
- **Targeted sectors:**
 - Agriculture, Agribusiness and Agritourism:
Examples include farms, agricultural support businesses, and farm-based visitor experiences.
 - Manufacturing, Construction and Skilled Trades:
Examples include manufacturers, construction contractors, fabrication businesses, and automotive or equipment repair businesses.
 - Retail, Food, and Other Services:
Examples include shops, restaurants, catering businesses, professional services, childcare, healthcare, beauty and wellness businesses, lodging, recreation, and transportation services.

These examples illustrate the major sectors and are not a complete list. Businesses that operate across multiple sectors or are unsure where they fit should contact the Economic Development Division. All applicants must meet the program's eligibility requirements.

- **Revolving Loan Fund participation:** This grant may be used in conjunction with the Town's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program. Businesses with active RLF loans are eligible to apply if they remain current on their loan payments.
- **Minimum award:** Eligible capital expenditures must total at least \$5,000, as described in the Eligibility Requirements section. The program prioritizes investments with a clear potential to support business growth, including expanded market reach, increased production or capacity, or greater business visibility and sales.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- **In-Person** application deadline is Thursday, January 14, 2027 at 5pm EST. Application & materials must be dropped off to the Department of Community Development at the Gorham Municipal Center (75 South Street).
- **Virtual** application deadline is Friday, January 15, 2027 at 11:59pm EST. Application & materials must be emailed to econdev@gorham.me.us (preferred).
- All applications will be reviewed by Town staff for eligibility requirements.
- A review committee comprised of members of the Gorham Economic Development Corporation (GEDC) will score each eligible application and provide recommendations for final approval to Gorham Town Council.
- Any determination of funding award will be based on the following criteria:
 - Overall quality of the application, including alignment with stated program goals
 - Proven performance and stated competitive advantage of the business
 - Strong argument(s) for the impact the grant will have on future growth of the business
 - Demonstrated need of the business applicant for funding the project using grant funds
- Additional information from applicants may be required as part of the review process.

WHAT TO INCLUDE WITH YOUR APPLICATION

These materials help the Town understand your project, review its cost, and evaluate how it will support your business. Please include the following documents if & when applicable.

- **Price quotes:** Include written quotes from at least three vendors or service providers for grant requests of \$5,000 or more. Quotes should describe the proposed purchase or work and its cost.
- **Business financial information:** Include a profit and loss statement or similar financial record showing your business's income and expenses. This helps reviewers understand your business's financial position and need for grant funding.
- **Photos of current conditions:** Include clear photos of the proposed project area before work begins, where applicable. Photos should show the space, equipment, or conditions you plan to improve.
- **A preliminary sketch or layout:** Include a sketch showing the proposed improvements or where new machinery or equipment will be placed, where applicable.
- **Property ownership or owner permission:** Include proof that you own the property or written permission from the property owner supporting the full scope of the proposed project.

If you are unsure which materials apply to your project or need help understanding these requirements, contact the Economic Development Division at (207) 222-1620 or econdev@gorham.me.us.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- A capital expenditure shall be defined as any single non-recurring procurement equal to or in excess of \$5,000 for durable goods, information technology or related services in any fiscal year.
- Capital expenditures may include upgrades made to a building or property if the project will result in a long-term tangible asset that directly benefits business operations.
- The proposed project must conform to Town land use and development code standards, if applicable. All necessary approvals and/or permits are required prior to the start of any project.
- The project applicant must be in good standing on all property taxes, fees, judgements, or liens to the Town of Gorham.
- Applicants are eligible for one project per grant cycle.
- Commercial and mixed-use properties located in the following zoning districts are eligible: Village Centers; Urban Commercial; Narragansett Mixed-Use; Olde Canal Industrial; Industrial; Office-Residential; Mosher Corner Mixed-Use; Roadside Commercial; Agricultural/Industrial; and Rural.
- Home Occupation businesses are not eligible for this grant program at this time.

ELIGIBLE FUNDING ACTIVITIES*

- Machinery and motor vehicles
- Furniture, fixtures and equipment
- Computers, software and website design
- Facility upgrades and expansions

**Other proposed uses may be approved on a case-by-case basis, by the review committee.*

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES*

- Funds cannot be used for general operating expenses, including working capital, inventory purchases, debt repayments, salaries or utility and/or rent payments.
- Funds may not be used to support the purchase of real estate.

**Other proposed uses may be deemed ineligible, as determined by the review committee.*

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

- No grant shall be made unless and until the proposed use of funds has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate Town staff and/or review committee.
- A minimum of three (3) written quotes from competitive sources must be obtained for any grant request of \$5,000 or more and included as part of a complete application.
- Grant funds will be distributed after the work has been completed and proof of payment to the contractor or vendor for materials is provided to the Town. If the work is completed by the building owner or tenant, only materials are eligible for reimbursement.
- Reimbursement will not be made for purchases made or work completed prior to grant application acceptance.
- Grants will be considered voided if the capital purchase is not made or work has not begun within 12 months of award date, and completed within 36 months of award date.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Economic Development Division

Tom Poirier, *Community Development Director*

Nina Snyder, *Economic Development Specialist*

Phone: (207) 222-1620

Email: econdev@gorham.me.us

PAST GRANT INVESTMENTS

Previous CapEx awards have helped Gorham businesses and farms invest in equipment, technology, and improvements to their operating spaces. Examples include:

- **Equipment and furnishings:** Manufacturing machinery, farm and landscaping equipment, restaurant and kitchen equipment, medical diagnostic equipment, and barber chairs.
- **Building systems and safety:** Repairs and upgrades to refrigeration, freezer, and HVAC systems, along with safety and security equipment.
- **Technology and business development:** Point-of-sale system upgrades, marketing services, and research and development of more efficient products.
- **Energy and resource efficiency:** A carbon dioxide recapture system for brewing operations.
- **Facilities and site improvements:** Renovation and expansion of fitness spaces, parking-area expansion, and farm structures such as barns and greenhouses with associated site work.

These examples illustrate past uses of grant funding and are not a complete list of eligible investments. Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that improve efficiency, reduce operating costs, increase accessibility, or support business growth. All proposed costs are subject to the current program guidelines and review.