



Community Development Economic Development Division

Thomas M. Poirier, *Director of Community
Development*

tpoirier@gorham.me.us

Kevin Jensen, *Director of Economic Development*

kjensen@gorham.me.us

GORHAM MUNICIPAL CENTER, 75 South Street, Gorham, ME 04038 Tel: 207-222-1620 / Fax: 207-839-4793

DATE: 1/17/24

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

TOWN OF GORHAM PROVIDES BOOST TO LOCAL BUSINESSES WITH NEW CAPITAL EXPENDITURE MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

Gorham Savings Bank awards additional "Hometown Match" funding to three grantees

Gorham, Maine – On January 2, 2024, the Gorham Town Council voted unanimously in support of grant funding awarded to local businesses as part of a new Capital Expenditure Matching Grant program. Eight local businesses were awarded a total of \$45,000 in matching grant funds as part of a competitive application process.

In support of the program, Gorham Savings Bank awarded three grantee businesses a total of \$10,000 in additional funding as a "Hometown Match" for their projects.

The Capital Expenditure Matching Grant program provides 50% reimbursement of a capital item, service or site expansion project, up to a maximum award of \$15,000. The Town prioritized allocating grant funds to businesses in three sectors, specifically agriculture; manufacturing & skilled trades; and retail & food service. The program intends to accelerate growth of local businesses and farms by enabling the purchase of a capital item or service. These single, one-time procurements will help grantees accelerate plans for growth, and create opportunities for expansion, entrepreneurship, and job creation in Gorham.

"This is the type of grant program our business community has been asking for," said Gorham Town Councilor Lee Pratt. "The goal is to provide the type of funding they need to make their own decisions on what's best for growing and expanding their business in Gorham."

"Local businesses are the core of our communities," stated Becky Winslow, SVP, Director of Community Relations & Development. "Initiatives such as this are essential to supporting their growth and we are very pleased to provide additional grants to Azul Tequila Restaurant, Orchard Ridge Farm and Rustic Farm Holdings, LLC for their upcoming projects, particularly in our hometown of Gorham."

Eligible uses for grant funding under the program include a single, non-recurring procurement of \$5,000 or more for durable goods, IT needs or related services, and upgrades to buildings or property that directly benefit business operations.

Grant awards went to businesses of various sizes and across sectors in support of a broad host of capital items. Examples include the purchase of new machinery for both established Gorham manufacturing companies and start-up family businesses, as well as construction of new barns and greenhouses that will boost production and expand program offerings for the local community.

"In the past, we have hosted field trips for schools, retirement community outings, and special needs groups," said Erica Gottschalk, co-owner of Orchard Ridge Farm. "This grant will help us elevate the experience by offering an interactive and centralized location for the animals. We are so grateful and



Community Development Economic Development Division

Thomas M. Poirier, *Director of Community
Development*

tpoirier@gorham.me.us

Kevin Jensen, *Director of Economic Development*

kjensen@gorham.me.us

GORHAM MUNICIPAL CENTER, 75 South Street, Gorham, ME 04038 Tel: 207-222-1620 / Fax: 207-839-4793

can't wait to get started.”

“It’s a blessing as it provides us the opportunity to purchase machinery made only in Brazil that will allow us to expand our services into the catering sector,” said Claudia Katz, owner of Iaia Brazil eatery. “This is something we have intended to do but found it very difficult to manage without the proper equipment.”

“Delivery times of industrial controls have become very important in the last decade. The old metal lathe we currently use has caused a bottleneck in our manufacturing process,” said Russ Hall, Chief Executive Officer for The Montalvo Corporation. “Improved quality and delivery times with this new lathe will help us grow our customer base and provide more jobs with better benefits to those in our community.”

The grant program expands upon the services already available to local businesses in Gorham. The Town established a façade and leasehold improvement grant program last spring, and its Revolving Loan Fund program provides loans to businesses up to \$150,000 with competitive rates and flexible terms. In addition, recent hires in Planning and Economic Development have increased the capacity for Town staff to work closely with business owners to ensure projects move through the approval process in a timely manner.

“As a Town, we continue to seek ways to better support our local business community, based on the needs expressed by the business owners themselves,” said Kevin Jensen, Economic Development Director for Gorham. “This program builds on our approach to developing and sustaining a vibrant local economy, and we are excited to watch these businesses grow, innovate and expand.”

CONTACT:

Kevin Jensen

Economic Development Director

Town of Gorham

kjensen@gorham.me.us

(207) 222-1628