



# Bath Business Fit Up Grant Program

This document outlines the details and requirements for the Bath Development Corporation's Bath Business Fit Up Grant Program, aimed at investing in, enhancing economic viability, and supporting growth in Bath.

## **Program Overview**

A healthy community has a vibrant mix of businesses, lifts up and helps existing businesses grow, and supports newcomers. The Bath Business Fit Up Grant Program (Fit-Up grant) deploys matching grant funds of up to \$12,500 to eligible businesses seeking to open or expand a brick & mortar location within the City of Bath. The grant will provide financial assistance for fit up, interior improvements, expansions, and other activities that help improve existing or activate underutilized commercial spaces.

## **Program Goals**

Fit-Up grant assists businesses to redevelop, restore, renovate, and reconfigure commercial spaces throughout Bath.

Goals for Fit-Up grant include: promoting a year-round thriving business community; catalyzing investment to fill vacant storefronts; and increasing food options and food service businesses within Bath.

Grant funding can support new utility connections, accessibility improvements, space reconfiguration, building updates for code compliance, and other activities to overcome unique challenges associated with redevelopment of underutilized commercial spaces in Bath.

## Grant Details Summary

- **Grant Amount:** Up to \$12,500 per grant. Funding levels are determined at the discretion of Bath Development Corporation and are aligned with the priorities and availability of funds.
- **Type:** 1-to-1 cash match will be required for all grants.
- **Eligibility:** Businesses opening a new location or expanding an existing location within Bath. Preference will be given to businesses filling vacant storefronts and underutilized spaces.
- **Purpose:** Funding for business improvements, expansions, and other eligible activities. This is the first round of funding provided by Bath Development Corporation. \$50,000 will be released in round 1. Future rounds may occur based on funding availability.
- **Grantee Payment and Close Out Details:** Grant funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement with proper invoice and confirmation of payment documentation. Funds are to be used within 6 months of fit-up grant approval. Funds may not be used for projects other than the project approved by the BDC.

## Program Timeframe

Fit-Up grants are awarded on a rolling, monthly basis for approved projects. The deadline to apply is the 1st day of each month. Bath Development Corporation will review new applications until all available funds are committed to projects.

# GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## **Applicant Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for the Bath Business Fit Up Grant Program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Operate a business located within Bath, or moving to Bath;
- Be in good standing with all local and state regulations;
- Have or be planning to open a brick & mortar location;
- Applicant must have satisfactory right, title and interest. Tenants must document the owner's approval for proposed building improvement;
- Current with City of Bath taxes, utilities, licenses and permits, and compliant with all relevant rules and regulations; and
- Maine-based business.

## **Eligible Projects & Uses of Funds**

Grant funds may be used for, but not limited to, the following purposes:

- Interior renovations, build out, and improvements.
- Equipment purchase.
- Fire suppression upgrades and other projects related to code compliance in underutilized spaces.
- Accessibility upgrades.
- Upgrades that address unique challenges or barriers for commercial projects.

## **What is Not Eligible**

- Home-based business locations.
- Professional services, including but not limited to medical, legal, real estate, accounting, and financial services.
- Adult entertainment businesses.
- Non-profit entities, Churches, Schools, or Religious Organizations.
- Expenses incurred preapplication.
- Permit and License fees.
- Design & Engineering soft costs.

## Application Process

Interested businesses must submit a completed application package, including:

- Application
  - Narrative: Overall Project and specific use of Fit-Up grant funds.
  - Project Budget & Proposed Timeline
  - Source of Cash Match
- A business plan, which should include:
  - Business Description
  - Cash Flow Projection: Projected Revenue and Expenses
    - Sources of income (Revenue)
    - Uses of Income (Expenses)
  - Balance Sheet
- 2 years of business tax returns or personal tax returns for startups.
- Supporting documentation for the 1:1 cash match.
- Interview with Bath Development Corporation.

## Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Positive economic impact.
- Demonstrated need.
- Alignment with program goals.
- Clarity and completeness of the application.
- Alignment with the 2023 Bath Comprehensive Plan [<https://www.cityofbathmaine.gov/Departments/Planning-Development/2023-Comprehensive-Plan>].

***Bath Development Corporation reserves the right to reject any and all applications at their discretion.***

## Post-Grant Reporting

If the business accepts a grant, the business agrees to:

- Open or operate a brick & mortar location within Bath for at least 2 years;
- Retain regular open hours;
- Submit proper invoice and confirmation of payment documentation within 6 months;
- Report progress monthly on use of grant funds until completion; and
- Participate in Bath Development Corporation marketing & promotional materials about the grant funding.

## Resources

Any businesses or individuals who need help with Business Plan or associated financial materials, please see below community resources:

Coastal Enterprises Inc.

- Jennifer Sporzynski
- [Jennifer.Sporzynski@ceimaine.org](mailto:Jennifer.Sporzynski@ceimaine.org)
- 207.535.2905

SCORE Maine

- Jon Anderson
- [jon.anderson@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:jon.anderson@scorevolunteer.org)
- 207.772.1147

City of Bath Department of Economic and Community Development

- Misty Parker
- [mparker@cityofbathmaine.gov](mailto:mparker@cityofbathmaine.gov)
- 207.443.8330

New Ventures Maine

- Alicia LaFosse
- [alicia.lafosse@maine.edu](mailto:alicia.lafosse@maine.edu)
- 207.621.7457

Midcoast Council of Governments (MCOG)

- Kate Tagai
- [ktagai@midcoastcog.com](mailto:ktagai@midcoastcog.com)
- 207.209.4129

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

- Jenn Dobransky
- [jenn.dobransky@maine.edu](mailto:jenn.dobransky@maine.edu)
- 207.780.4908

[By Appointment at Main Street Bath](#)

Small Business Administration (SBA)

- Brad Currie
- [bradley.currie@sba.gov](mailto:bradley.currie@sba.gov)
- 207.248.9040

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Bath Development Corporation**

The Bath Development Corporation is a non-profit corporation tasked with fostering, encouraging and assisting the settlement or resettlement of industrial, manufacturing, fishing, agricultural, recreational and other business and commercial enterprises within the City of Bath.

### **Aligned With City of Bath Comprehensive Plan**

The [Bath Comprehensive Plan](#) adopted by City Council in 2023 provides the City with a roadmap for the next 10 years, incorporating community input and values into common priorities. The Comprehensive Plan encourages the support of small business development and investment, reuse of historic and vacant buildings, and improving the appearance of the downtown.

### **Funding & Administration**

The Business Fit Up Grant Program leverages Bath Development Corporation funding. The program advances implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the Bath Development Corporation bylaws. Currently, approximately \$50,000 in Fit Up funds is available for grants that will be matched by successful applicants at a dollar for dollar, one-to-one level. The Bath Development Corporation will review applications, identify qualified projects, and award funding.

### **Contact Information**

For questions and application inquiries, please contact:

Misty Parker  
Director of Economic & Community Development  
207-443-8330  
[mparker@cityofbathmaine.gov](mailto:mparker@cityofbathmaine.gov)