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SMALL BUSINESS GRANT AVAILABLE

COVID-19 Micro-Enterprise Business Grant



- Grants up to **\$5,000**
- Must demonstrate revenue loss directly due to COVID-19
- For existing businesses of **1-5 employees**, one of whom owns the business.

Income must be below eligibility requirements.



County Income Guidelines	1 Member Household	2 Member Household	3 Member Household	4 Member Household
Androscoggin	\$39,150	\$44,750	\$50,350	\$55,900
Franklin	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850
Oxford	\$37,700	\$43,100	\$48,500	\$53,850



Visit www.AVCOG.org/business-resources

2021 Community Development Block Grant Program

The Maine Office of Community Development, within the Department of Economic & Community Development, has released the Program Statement for the 2021 CDBG program.

The following is a list of the 2021 CDBG application deadlines. All applications and Letters of Intent must be received at the physical location of the Office of Community Development on or before 4:00 PM EST on the dates listed below. Faxed copies will not be accepted.

Program ¹	Letter of Intent Due Date VIA E-MAIL	Application Due Date By Invitation Only
Downtown Revitalization	January 29, 2021	March 26, 2021

Community Enterprise	January 29, 2021	April 9, 2021
Housing Assistance	March 5, 2021	May 7, 2021
Economic Development	March 5, 2021	May 21, 2021
Public Service	March 26, 2021	May 7, 2021
Micro-Enterprise Assistance ²	N/A	N/A
Special Projects/Urgent Need ³	N/A	TBD

1 No Public Infrastructure Letters of Intent or Applications will be accepted for the 2021 Program Year.

2 Small Business Development Center staff will review and approve complete applications to be considered for funding. Contact Raynor Large at rlarge@avcog.org, 207-783-9186 x214 or Lori Allen at lallen@avcog.org, 207-783-9186 x254.

3 Funding for these programs may be available based on redistribution, reallocation and/or additional allocation from HUD.

Click [here](#) for more details or contact Joan Walton at jwalton@avcog.org or 207-783-9186 x223.

AVCOG Distributes CARES Act Support to Local Businesses



Over the past few months, AVCOG distributed a total of of Maine Economic Recovery Grants (MERG) to businesses throughout the tri-county area.

Working in partnership with the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, the MERG program was created with CARES Act relief funds to help Maine's small businesses and nonprofits recover from the economic impact of the pandemic.

"I am so excited that we were selected for this grant. It's such an amazing opportunity as we were truly thinking about closing our doors at the end of December. There are no words to thank you, we are overjoyed."

- Shanna Russell, owner of Moose Hill Diner, Livermore Falls

AVCOG Business Loans

AVCOG offers the following loan programs:

COVID Loan Program

- Borrow up to \$10,000
- 3 years at 3% interest
- Click [here](#) for more details

Micro Loan Program

- Up to \$50,000
- Quick loans available for qualified borrowers
- Click [here](#) for more details

Business Loan Program

- Up to \$150,000
- Click [here](#) for more details

For assistance contact Jane Mickeriz at jmickeriz@avcog.org or 207-783-9186 x220.



Project Canopy Assistance Grants

Project Canopy Assistance Grants are available to state, county, and municipal governments, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations for developing and implementing community forestry projects and programs.

Project Canopy, delivered to you by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry's Maine Forest Service, anticipates that \$100,000 will be available to support community forestry

projects in the following categories:

Planning and Education

\$10,000 maximum award for projects to support sustainable community forestry management, and efforts to increase awareness of the benefits of trees and forests.

Planting and Maintenance

\$8,000 maximum award for projects to increase the health and livability of communities through sound tree planting and maintenance.

To be eligible to apply for 2021 Project Canopy Assistance grants, all applicants must attend a grant workshop prior to submitting an application (excluding previous workshop attendees). The grant workshop is web-based and is scheduled for **February 3, 2021 at 1:00 pm**, and will cover topics including grant writing, project development, sustainable community forestry management, and grant administration.

Grant applications will be due to the Maine Forest Service on **Friday, March 12, 2021 at 5:00 pm**. All grants require a 50% match from the grant recipient in cash or in-kind services.

For complete grant application and workshop information, please visit the Project Canopy [website](#). To learn more about the Project Canopy assistance program contact Jan Ames Santerre at jan.santerre@maine.gov or 207-287-4987.

Maine DEP Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Control Grants Program

In March 2021, DEP plans to issue the following two Requests for Applications (RFAs) for NPS grants. (Target dates subject to change.) The overall goal of the grants program is to restore water bodies impaired by NPS pollution and protect water bodies threatened by NPS pollution. Grant funding is provided to DEP by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.

2021 Requests for Applications

Watershed-based Plan Development (restore impaired waters or protect threatened waters named on DEP's [Nonpoint Priority Watersheds List](#).)

- RFA release date - March 10, 2021
- Application due date - April 28, 2021
- Anticipated funds available - \$75,000
- DEP expects to award 2 to 3 grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$40,000

Implementation of Watershed-based Plans (that are active and accepted by DEP, click [here](#) for more information.)

- RFA release date - March 26, 2021
- Application due date - May 21, 2021
- Anticipated funds available - \$1.2 million
- DEP expects to award 10 to 15 grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000

NPS Grants Workshop

Maine DEP will host a Zoom workshop for prospective applicants about its two upcoming RFAs on **Wednesday, February 10**. To register contact Wendy Garland at wendy.garland@maine.gov or 207-615-2451.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/92334215071?pwd=YjVreElxbHhLemZkUHNQNWVmNFJJZz09>

Meeting ID: 923 3421 5071
Passcode: 5MP268

One tap mobile:
1-646-876-9923 US (New York)
1-301-715-8592 US (Washington D.C.)

Municipal Solar Forum



On Tuesday, January 12, Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) hosted an online forum about municipal solar in Maine.

Panelists Included:

- Chris Byers - Boyle and Associates
- Andrew Kahrl - Revision Energy
- Nick Lund - Maine Audubon
- Todd Martin - Natural Resources Council of Maine
- Joe Roach - Rangeley Town Manager

Click [here](#) to watch a recording of the forum.

GFCLA Announces New Council Members



Shelley Norton, AVCOG's Land Use Planner, was recently appointed as a Council Member of the Good Food Council of Lewiston-Auburn (GFCLA).

Shelley serves on their Policy Committee which is primarily focused on helping integrate local food and agriculture into city planning and economic development strategies.

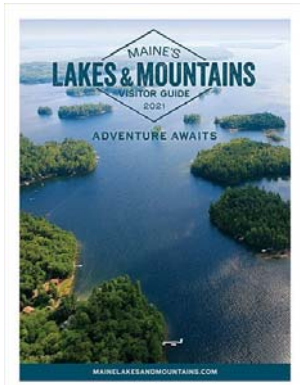
Click [here](#) to read more about GFCLA and all the current council members.

Community Wi-Fi Hotspot Program - projectConnect

In response to COVID-19, the Information Technology Disaster Resource Center established [projectConnect](#) - a nationwide initiative to provide free community Wi-Fi installations to connect students and families to the internet, especially those living in rural and underserved communities.

This program might be helpful for communities that do not have good connections but have an anchor institution that does.

Helpful [FAQs](#) about the program.



2021 Visitors' Guide Now Available

Maine's Lakes & Mountains' 2021 annual visitors' guide is off the presses. Thirty thousand copies of the 54-page travel guide will be distributed at Getaways on Display outlets in Southern PA, Philly/Metro, NJ, VA and MD, MOT travel shows (pending), Maine Information Centers, Chambers of Commerce and to those requesting a copy.

This FREE Visitor's Guide offers a comprehensive overview of things to see and do in Maine's Lakes and Mountains, and calls out the new Plan Your Trip feature recently added to the website to provide visitors with travel inspiration.

Apparel Impact Continues to Grow

Over the past year, member municipalities increased collections by more than 80% (year over year) resulting in 168 tons of textiles being diverted from local landfills.

Towns are reaping the benefits of this free textile recycling program. Currently there are 21 municipalities participating with 23 bin locations (with more in some areas to handle occasional overflow).

Check our [website](#) for a complete list of bin locations in the tri-county region.

To host a textile recycling bin contact Lisa Bonney at lbolley@avcoq.org or 207-783-9186.



[Plan Your Trip to Maine's Lakes & Mountains](#)

A new [Plan Your Trip](#) feature was added to Maine's Lakes & Mountains website to give visitors quick access to helpful information about the region.

Curated content was grouped into themes for ease of use and to entice visitors with exciting trip ideas: Our Best Stuff, Epic Hikes, On the Water, Let's Eat, Road Trips, Wintertime and Videos. The dropdown menu in this section also features Videos, Travel Resources, Weather & Seasons and links to local Chambers of Commerce. It's time to plan a trip!



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