2025 Business Attraction Grant Program

Lisbon Village District, Lisbon, Maine

Sponsored by

Town of Lisbon

&

Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union

Grant Application Dates

February 15, 2025 – March 15 2025

FMI Contact

Ross Cunningham

Economic and Community Development Director

Rcunningham@lisbonme.org

207-353-3000 x122

Town of Lisbon

Ross Cunningham
Economic and Community Development Director

Town Council
Fern Larochelle, Chair
Chris Camire, Vice Chair
Mark Lunt
Jeremy Barnard
JoJean Keller
Normand Albert
Nicholas Craig

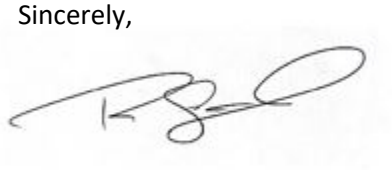
Greetings!

Thank you so much for your interest in our great community. Lisbon is a community of approximately 10,000 residents nestled conveniently in central Maine, roughly 30 minutes from four major metropolitan areas (Portland, Augusta, Lewiston/Auburn & Bath/Brunswick). Over the last 20 years, Lisbon has experienced a rebirth and has become a vibrant community with a diverse mix of local businesses and a wide variety of year round activities and festivals. With an energetic and supportive Economic and Community Development office and a newly reenergized "Main Street" program in "Discover Lisbon" (part of the statewide Main Street network), your business can receive support and guidance from this extremely active business community. With a median household income over $70,000, the local businesses receive strong support from the residents and there is significant "Buy Local" messaging happening here from multiple sources.

Over the years, the once bustling "Village District" of Lisbon has become less vibrant and we are actively seeking to bring back the glory of this historical and crucial area of town. By being part of this renewed growth, your business will have access to over 15,000 cars per day traveling along Route 196, the busiest east/west highway in the state.

We appreciate your interest in this program and look forward to seeing your application. For additional information about Lisbon, please see Enclosure B or contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Ross H Cunningham

Economic and Community Development Director

Town of Lisbon

Rcunningham@lisbonme.org

207-353-3000 x122

Program Overview

The 2025 Business Attraction Grant Program is a joint public/private program between the Town of Lisbon and the Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union designed to encourage the relocation and expansion of established businesses from outside of Lisbon to establish operations within the Village District of Lisbon, Maine (see enclosure A). This program aims to stimulate economic growth, enhance community vibrancy, and create job opportunities.

Objectives

1. Support Local Economic Development: Attract established businesses to enhance the local economy.

2. Create Jobs: Foster job creation in the Village District.

3. Promote Community Engagement: Encourage businesses to actively participate in local events and initiatives.

Eligibility Criteria

Established Business: Applicants must own a "for profit business" and must have a proven track record of at least three years of year round operation in another location. Must provide a business plan forecasting the next 3 years.

Relocation/Expansion: Must provide documentation of relocation or expansion plans, to include site location if available, from outside of Lisbon to establish operations within the Village District (see appendix A). For available locations, please contact the Lisbon ECD office at rcunningham@lisbonme.org

Financial Stability: Applicants must demonstrate financial health and sustainability.

Business Type: Priority will be given to businesses that align with the community's economic development goals and provide essential services or unique offerings. See Appendix C for Town Vision

All applicants must comply with local ordinances and codes requirements throughout the process.

Grant Details

This grant total ($45,000) is funded by a contribution from the Town of Lisbon Revolving Loan Fund of $30,000 and a contribution from Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union of $15,000

This is, assuming conditions are met, a zero match/no repayment grant program. The funds will be distributed to selected businesses until expended, based on the grading matrix attached.

The grading matrix will be applied by a selection committee that is comprised of the following contributors:

Lisbon Economic and Community Development Director

Lisbon Finance Director

Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union Representative

Lisbon Development Committee Representative

The top candidates will be forwarded to the Lisbon Revolving Loan committee for further financial analysis and recommendation to Council.

Categories

There shall be two categories available.

Large Business Category -

Grant Amount: Up to $20,000

Eligibility: Established companies that are relocating or expanding into the Village District of Lisbon from outside of Lisbon. Businesses in the Large Business Category must employ 11 or more full time employees.

Commitment: Recipients must commit to remaining in the Village District for a minimum of five years if granted the full amount. Commitments for lesser grant amounts will be prorated at 1 year for every $4,000 granted. Downsizing staff after opening may result in a reduction of grant funding.

Small Business Category -

Grant Amount: Up to $12,000

Eligibility: Established companies that are relocating or expanding into the Village District of Lisbon from outside of Lisbon. Businesses in the Small Business Category shall employ 10 or fewer full time employees

Commitment: Recipients must commit to remaining in the Village District for a minimum of three years from date of opening if granted the full amount. Commitments for lesser grant amounts will be prorated at 1 year for every $4,000 granted

Commitment Exemption – Any business that fails to meet the time commitment due to acts of god or other unforeseen external circumstances may file a repayment appeal to the Lisbon Revolving Loan Committee by contacting the Lisbon ECD director. Recommendations of the RLF Committee will be forwarded to Lisbon Town Council for final decision.

Application Process

1. Application Form: Applicants must fully complete a detailed application form including:

- Business name and contact information
- Description of the business and its services/products
- Proposed location of new business
- Plans for relocation or expansion
- Financial statements for the past three years
- Expected economic impact (jobs created, investment amount, etc.)
- Community engagement plan (how the business will endeavor to become part of the community)
- Tax identification information (EIN, Owner SS if DBA)

2. Submission: Applications must be submitted electronically or by mail to the Lisbon Economic Development Office. **Applications open on Feb 15 2025 - and close on March 15 2025**

Ross Cunningham
Attn: Village Grant program
300 Lisbon St,
Lisbon, Maine 04250
rcunningham@lisbonme.org

3. Review Process:

- Applications will be reviewed by the selection committee
- The committee will evaluate applications based on eligibility criteria, economic impact, community benefits, and alignment with local development goals.
- Grants may be awarded until the funds have been exhausted for the 2025 grant program.
- Final approval remains with the Town Council and is subject to execution of a grant agreement documenting the conditions of the award.
- Grant applications with be evaluated based on the grading rubric; however, the selection committee has discretion to recommend awards based upon full consideration of all factors, including but not limited to the committee's determination of the most impactful way to allocate limited grant funds. Partial awards may be offered.

4. Award Announcement: Successful applicants will be notified within 30 days of the submission deadline. It is expected that the business will be open within 12 months of receiving their award notice.

Grant Disbursement

- Award recipients will receive ½ of their grant monies in a single payment upon signing a grant agreement that includes the appropriate time commitment to operate in the Village District. Balance of grant dollars to be paid at opening of business.

- Funds must be used for eligible business expenses related to the relocation or expansion, such as:

  - Leasehold improvements

  - Equipment purchases

  - Marketing and promotional activities

  - Hiring and training staff

Reporting and Compliance

- Progress Reports: Grant recipients must submit a 6 month status report detailing progress if not yet open. After opening, an initial report followed by an annual report must be submitted describing business performance, job creation, any support needed to improve and community engagement activities.

- Site Visits: The ECD office may conduct periodic site visits to monitor progress and ensure compliance with grant terms.

-Consequences for Non-Compliance: If a business fails open within 12 month from grant acceptance or fails to meet the applicable period of commitment to remain in business in Lisbon, they will be required to repay a portion of the grant based on the time remaining in the commitment period.

Promotion of the Program

- The program will be promoted through local media, the town’s website, social media channels, and business networks to ensure maximum visibility and outreach.

Conclusion

The Business Attraction Grant Program aims to foster a thriving business environment in Lisbon’s Village District. By providing financial support and encouraging established companies to relocate or expand, this initiative will contribute to the town's economic vitality and community development.

Appendix A

Graphic representation of grant area – *see written description for details.*



Village Grant Program District Boundaries

The following properties will be considered eligible for the 2025 Lisbon Village Grant Program.

- All properties with road frontage along Route 196 Between the intersection (southern end) of 196 and Crest Ave and Gartley Street and the intersection (Northern end) of Route 196 and Premier Drive.

- All properties with road frontage on Village St from the intersection (West end) of Route 196 and Village St and the intersection (East End) of Village St and Gartley St

- All properties with road frontage on Memorial Drive from the intersection (West end) of Route 196 and Memorial Drive and the intersection (East End) of Memorial Drive and Spring St. *Property with road frontage on Spring St. is excluded.*

Appendix B

Town of Lisbon

A gem in the heart of Maine



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOWN OF LISBON

Above: Jenny and Josh, owners of J. Plum Home celebrate the opening of their new location on Union St in Lisbon Falls

Lisbon is celebrating its 225th year

A Maine Downtown Affiliate Community

Welcome to Lisbon, a growing community with vibrant businesses, recreational activities and quality entertainment. With approximately 10,000 residents and access to a workforce of over 74,000 within 15 miles, we have customers and workers available to support your business.

Open your business here!

Strategic Location: Lisbon is strategically located 30 minutes from four major metropolitan areas: Lewiston/Auburn, Portland, Augusta and Bath/Brunswick. This proximity provides access to larger markets while maintaining the charm and benefits of a smaller town.

Transportation Access: Lisbon is well-connected by Route 196 with over 15,000 vehicles per day. Proximity to both the Maine Turnpike (four miles) and I -295 (eight miles) facilitates easy transportation of goods and services.

Lower Cost of Living: Lisbon has a lower cost of living compared to neighboring communities, which translates directly into lower operational costs for businesses.

Local Government Support: Lisbon's Municipal government is highly supportive of new businesses, providing resources, guidance and often financial assistance to help with the establishment and growth of both new and existing businesses.

Community Engagement: Lisbon's strong sense of community is highly beneficial for businesses that rely on local customers. The community supports local businesses, builds meaningful connections, and creates a loyal customer base.

Town of Lisbon
300 Lisbon St, Lisbon Maine 04250
Ross H. Cunningham, Director, Economic and Community Development
207-353-3000 x122
Rcunningham@lisbonme.org
Lisbonme.org / Discoverlisbonme.org
Facebook / Lisbon economic and community development

Educated Workforce: Proximity to colleges and universities in nearby cities means access to a skilled and educated workforce. World-renowned institutions like Bates College, Bowdoin College and the University of Southern Maine are sources of young, talented workers. Additionally, the various workforce training programs available in the region help businesses train their employees and equip them with the necessary and relevant skills.

Come join us, move to Lisbon!

Teeming with small-town charm, Lisbon offers a close-knit community feel with friendly neighbors and a strong sense of local pride.

Safe and Affordable, Family Focused: Lisbon's lower cost of living makes it an attractive location for families and individuals seeking more affordable housing and living options. Lisbon is known for its low crime rate, contributing to a safe and secure environment for residents. The town has well-regarded schools, a vibrant parks and recreation department and access to continuing education opportunities — it is the ideal town for families with children.

Outdoor Activities: Surrounded by scenic landscapes, including forests, rivers, and its own 300-acre park, Lisbon offers ample opportunities for a range of outdoor activities that include hiking, fishing, bicycling, ATV riding, snowmobiling and kayaking.

Fairs, Festivals and More: The Town of Lisbon, in partnership with community groups such as Discover Lisbon, hosts various community events throughout the year. They include the Maine Blues Festival, Moxie Festival, Food Truck Rallies, a weekly farmers market, and a free outdoor Summer Concert series. These events foster a sense of belonging and vibrant community spirit.

So Close to so Much More: While enjoying the tranquility of small-town life with unique shopping and dining experiences, residents are still within a reasonable driving distance to larger cities like Portland, Bath/Brunswick, Lewiston/Auburn and Augusta, offering access to more extensive amenities, cultural events and job opportunities. ●

Outdoor Event Center in Central Maine!

In Lisbon, at the former site of the Worumbo Mill on the Androscoggin River, The Worumbo Riverfront Event Center (The WREC) is being developed. Managed by the not-for-profit group, the Friends of Worumbo (a committee of Discover Lisbon) the goal is to create a community gathering space and premier event venue in the heart of Maine. The group is working to preserve this beautiful riverfront space and bring economic growth to the community by turning it into an outdoor venue for music festivals, farmers' markets, food truck rallies and more. Motivated by the core values of connection, community growth, and the preservation of scenic natural resources, they are creating a treasure for the community, local businesses, and the great State of Maine to enjoy. **PROMOTERS!** If you are looking for an affordable place to hold your next outdoor concert or event, please email **friendsofworumbo@gmail.com**.



PHOTO BY JOSHUA TABOR

Appendix C

Vision for Lisbon as stated in the Comprehensive Plan

Our Vision for Lisbon

A vision statement is a community's aspirational look into the future and describes the Lisbon we all hope to see. It is the goalpost in the distance that the town officials, staff and volunteers are all working toward. One great way to think of a vision statement is to imagine what someone might say about Lisbon if they visit for the first time 20-30 years from now.

With these concepts in mind, and with information collected through the Public Participation process, the Board offers the following Vision Statement for Lisbon:

> Lisbon is the premier community for families in Androscoggin County. Lisbon's parks and recreational services, access to the Androscoggin River and waterfront amenities and quality schools, along with the variety of businesses, services and activities in the village areas make Lisbon a great place to grow up, raise a family or retire to. This focus on quality of place, combined with a location in the middle of three major job markets, make Lisbon a great choice for a hometown. It is a fun and energetic place, a healthy and active place. Key to this growth and energy is that Lisbon offers a range of housing options to accommodate a range of housing needs.
>
> Lisbon is a proud town that ensures its public spaces and public assets like roads, parks and public buildings are maintained and improved over time. Lisbon Falls and Lisbon Village retain their unique roles as activity centers for the region and town respectively. These areas are where you meet friends and neighbors throughout the day and offer a range of local experiences and services that make the town great.