

Freeport Downtown Momentum Grant Program

Momentum deploys grant funds to empower residents and local organizations to execute high-visibility projects that enhance the experience of residents and visitors and add vitality to the Downtown.



Momentum Activates Public Spaces

Momentum unleashes the creativity of residents and community organizations to help design the future of Freeport's Downtown with new amenities and installations that add beauty and fun activities.

Available Funding



Typical grants are \$2,500 to \$5,000



\$40,000 total is available



Matching contributions encouraged



Eligible Projects

Public art installations, pocket parks, equipment for public games and activities, planters and furniture in the public realm, and lighting and accessibility upgrades to bring new spaces to life.



Program Goals

- ➔ *Activate public space & streetscapes*
- ➔ *Expand experiential uses*
- ➔ *Beautify high-visibility areas*
- ➔ *Encourage community engagement*



Apply for Fit-Up Funds

*Apply between November 15 and December 31, 2023.
Awards announced in early 2024
Access Application Below:*

Contact: [Brett Richardson, Freeport Economic Development Corporation](mailto:bbrichardson@freeportmaine.com)



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GUIDELINES

FREEPORT DOWNTOWN MOMENTUM GRANT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The Freeport *Downtown Momentum Grant Program* deploys grant funds to empower residents and local organizations to execute high-visibility projects that enhance the experience of residents and visitors and add vitality to the Downtown.

FUNDING & ADMINISTRATION

The *Downtown Momentum Grant Program* leverages Town of Freeport funding allocated for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The program advances implementation of the *Freeport Downtown Vision Plan*. The Freeport community developed the *Vision* with robust community input during 2021 and 2022. Currently, \$40,000 is available for locally driven projects in publicly accessible areas to advance implementation of the *Vision*.

Momentum is coordinated by the Downtown Vision Task Force in partnership with the Town of Freeport Finance Department. A *Momentum* Committee of the Task Force reviews grant applications and identifies qualified projects to receive grant funds from the program.

PURPOSE

Momentum offers residents the opportunity to help design the future of Downtown Freeport and advance the goals of the *Downtown Vision Plan*. The *Vision* calls on the community to foster a village center that is:

- an inclusive and diverse “Downtown for All.”
- a “New England Village Center” with places to gather for people of all ages.
- a “Walkable and Bikeable” hub that offers safe and accessible pathways for people of all abilities,
- a place to “Embrace the Outdoors” and encourage community gathering and physical activities year-round.
- supports local Arts and Cultural initiatives to attract artists and activate the downtown with events.

GOALS

Momentum provides funding to unleash the creative spirit of Freeport residents and organizations to actively participate in creating the future of Freeport’s Downtown. *Momentum* grants will help to activate and beautify public spaces, provide amenities that encourage residents and visitors to linger Downtown, test new initiatives and offerings in order to gather community feedback, engage local youth, and create opportunities for residents who typically do not participate in Town budgeting processes to help implement the *Downtown Vision Plan*.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Available Funding. Funding levels for *Momentum* projects are determined at the discretion of the *Momentum* Committee. Typical *Momentum* projects will be between \$2,500 to \$5,000 in *Momentum* funding. A total of \$40,000 is available.

Application Timeline. *Momentum* grants will be distributed on a quarterly cycle, with an average of \$10,000 available per quarter. The first *Momentum* funding cycle will offer up to \$20,000 total and will include an application period between November 15 and December 31, 2023, with awards announced in early 2024.

Matching Contributions. No matching funds are required but donations and in-kind contributions are encouraged.

Eligibility.

Location & Geography. Freeport's Village Commercial 1 zone.

Qualified Activities. *Momentum* projects must comply with all local regulations and be publicly accessible to all. Projects on private property must be highly visible and accessible to the public.

Eligible projects will advance the goals and spirit of the Downtown Vision, including the following examples:

- Public art installations
- Pocket park development and equipment for all ages to linger.
- Lighting to illuminate and activate public spaces.
- Planters that soften and beautify public spaces and streetscapes.
- Accessibility upgrades for public spaces
- Equipment or space upgrades that encourage physical activities, community interaction, and gatherings.

Disbursement of Funds. The Town will disburse *Momentum* funds for approved projects following the completion and submission of a Downtown Vision Project Charter combined with supporting documentation, including:

For project proposed by a resident. ~ A quote, W9, and proof of insurance from a qualified and licensed contractor who will complete the work. The Town will pay the contractor directly.

For a project proposed by a non-profit organization. ~ A detailed scope of work with itemized costs, a W9, and proof of insurance for all contractors and volunteers who will contribute labor on Town property. The Town will disburse funds to organizations that have insurance and federal tax standing.

If appropriate and beneficial to the completion and administration of a *Momentum* project, the Town will consider serving as a purchasing agent or other reasonable role. Please discuss any administrative support with the Town *Momentum* coordinator (see the bottom of page 3) as you develop your project in advance of applying.

PROJECT REVIEW & SELECTION

Momentum applications will be reviewed by a Town Council-appointed *Momentum* Committee based on a clear project selection criterion informed by goals and priorities identified by the Freeport community in *Downtown Vision Plan*. For projects funded at \$10,000 or less, the Committee awards grants for qualified projects. For projects that exceed \$10,000, the Committee makes recommendations to the Town Council and the Council awards *Momentum* funds.

Grant Committee. The Committee will consist of the Town Manager, one Complete Streets Committee member, two Downtown Task Force members, and one Freeport High School student. The Committee will be staffed by the FEDC Executive Director or alternative member of the Downtown Vision Strategy Team. The *Momentum* Committee reviews projects and awards grants at or below \$10,000 at the Committee's discretion.

Project selection criteria include:

Activates an Underutilized Public Space

Projects that add new vitality, amenities, or experiential offerings in dormant, low-traffic areas are examples that activate underutilized public spaces.

Expands Experiential Use of Public Areas

Projects that illuminate public spaces and expand use to the evening hours, projects that improve accessibility for people of all abilities, and projects that add physical activities or creature comforts that encourage people to linger are examples that expand the use of public areas.

Beautifies Streetscapes and High Visibility Areas

Projects that install public art, planters, and other visual improvements that engage passersby are examples that beautify streetscapes and high visibility areas.

Engages Underrepresented Residents

Projects initiated by or designed for local youth, young adults, and other residents who are underrepresented in Town activities and budgeting processes are examples of projects that engage underrepresented residents.

Project Selection.

The *Momentum* Committee reviews projects and awards grants until funding is exhausted.

The first *Momentum* funding cycle will include an initial application period between November 15 and December 31, 2023, with awards announced in early 2024. Subsequent cycles will occur quarterly until funds are expended.

QUESTIONS?

For assistance with your application, please contact:

Brett Richardson

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