



News Release

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More information about the Northeast Heritage Economy Program is available here:
<https://www.mainepreservation.org/grant-programs-2020/2019/9/23/northeast-heritage-economic-program-grants-2020>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2020

Maine Preservation Announces Recipients of Northeast Heritage Economy Program Grants – Part of Four-State Economic Development Investment

Yarmouth, ME - Efforts to revitalize five historic buildings and uplift their communities' economies in Dover-Foxcroft, Lille, Thorndike, and Belfast will get a boost thanks to Northeast Heritage Economy Program grants awarded this month by Maine Preservation.

These funds are made possible by an award to Maine Preservation, in partnership with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, the Preservation Trust of Vermont, and the Preservation League of New York State from the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC). The funds for this program, and all NBRC programs, are available thanks to the support of the Congressional Delegations of all four NBRC states: Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont.

The four states have evenly split the award of \$1 million. In total, fifteen projects have been funded by this innovative collaboration. These grants are intended to stimulate economic development and create jobs in areas that are suffering from the decline of the forest products industry.

“For nearly five decades, the volunteers and staff of Maine Preservation have been dedicated to maintaining and restoring historic sites throughout our state. Their hard work has helped to strengthen local economies and promote community spirit,” **said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement.** “We have fought to ensure that funding awarded through the Northern Border Regional Commission supports areas impacted by the decline of the forest products industry and are encouraged by these community-driven preservation projects announced by Maine Preservation. This investment will help make significant improvements in Thorndike, Dover-Foxcroft, Lille, and Belfast.”

Studies show that historic preservation investment supports small business and good-paying labor jobs, improves property values, keeps money circulating in local economies, catalyzes additional investment, and increases community pride. These grants support childcare and senior centers, community-supported

enterprise, workforce development, and visitor destinations in historic locations including museums, theaters, a country store, a barn, and a commercial block where the sugar-coated pill was invented.

“Historic preservation is an effective tool in strengthening both community and economic development. It can help communities achieve their goals whether it be neighborhood stabilization, downtown revitalization, promotion of arts and culture, heritage tourism or job retention and creation,” said Andrea K. Smith, NBRC's Program Manager for Maine.

In Maine the following projects have been awarded Northeast Heritage Economy Program grants:

- ***Timelines Community, Inc.*** (Thorndike), will receive \$80,000 for rehabilitation, including foundation, drainage, sills, joists, subflooring, and chimney work, in order to reopen the Thorndike Village General Store as a multi-use facility.
- ***Center Theatre, Inc.*** (Dover-Foxcroft), will receive \$30,538 to support the creation of a second screen theatre at the Center Theatre for the Performing Arts, substantially increasing its outreach.
- ***Maine Highlands Senior Center*** (Dover-Foxcroft), will receive \$17,582 to assist in its build out of the first floor of the Commons at Central Hall allowing it to expand its services to the senior community.
- ***L'Association Culturelle et Historique du Mont-Carmel*** (Lille), will receive \$78,480 for restoration of frescoed plaster and repairing the roof and sills of the Musée Culturel du Mont-Carmel. The Musée is on Maine Preservation's Most Endangered Historic Places list as an especially important historic building. This work will provide for expanded visitation and use of the building.
- ***Belfast Maskers*** (Belfast) will receive \$23,400 for heating and cooling and bathroom improvements at the former First Universalist Church, which will expand the use of its theatre facility throughout the year.

Projects in the other three states are:

- **New Hampshire:** Canaan, Vermont School District (Canaan, VT) [grant co-supported by VT]; Mill Hollow Heritage Association (Alstead, NH); Sustainable Forest Futures Inc. *in conjunction with Northern Forest Center (Lancaster, NH)*
- **New York:** Oneida Community Mansion House (Oneida, NY); Historic Saranac Lake (Saranac Lake, NY); Adirondack Experience (Blue Mountain Lake, NY); Whallonsburg Grange Hall (Essex, NY)
- **Vermont:** Canaan, Vermont School District (Canaan, VT) [grant co-supported by NH]; Vermont Bridgewater Area Community Foundation, Inc. (Bridgewater Corners, VT); Town of Hardwick; The Space on Main, Inc. (Bradford, VT)

Maine Preservation anticipates that these funds will be put to work immediately and looks forward to sharing progress reports and celebrating ribbon-cuttings through the end of the grant period in September 2021.

“Unlike our partner states, there is limited public funding for historic preservation projects in Maine and this program shows the great demand and the great opportunities for positive economic impacts throughout Maine,” said Greg Paxton, executive director of Maine Preservation.

Additional photos available.

Maine Preservation is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit member-based statewide historic preservation organization, that promotes and preserves historic places, buildings, downtowns and neighborhoods, strengthening the cultural and economic vitality of Maine communities.