

VILLAGE OF GROTON, NEW YORK

NY Forward Small Project Fund

Program Guidelines • Applicant Information Session

PROGRAM LAUNCHES

Monday, August 3, 2026

SMALL PROJECT FUND

\$334,000 available

ADMINISTERED BY

CMD Group

Funded through New York State's NY Forward program, administered by Empire State Development (ESD) in partnership with the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC).

What Is the Small Project Fund?

A matching grant program

The NY Forward Small Project Fund helps downtown property and business owners renovate commercial and mixed-use buildings in the Village of Groton.

Grants support the Village's unmet needs for housing, ground-floor retail, and commercial business space — advancing the goals of Groton's NY Forward Strategic Investment Plan.

Funds may be used for facade renovations, context-sensitive signage, interior commercial renovations, and rehabilitation of upper-story residential units.

The Fund provides matching grants for:

- 1 Building facade renovations
- 2 Context-sensitive signage
- 3 Interior commercial renovations
- 4 Upper-story residential units

The Program Partners



ESD / OCR

Empire State Development's Office of Community Renewal oversees the NY Forward program statewide.



HTFC

The NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation holds the grant agreement and issues environmental clearances.



Village of Groton

The Local Program Administrator (LPA) and grantee, with final say on project selection through its Review Committee and Board.



CMD Group

Retained by the Village to administer the Program day-to-day — your main point of contact for questions and applications.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Anticipated Program Timeline



THE NUMBERS

The Fund at a Glance

\$334,000

Total Small
Project Fund

4

Buildings to be
rehabilitated

2

Businesses to be
assisted

How the \$334,000 is allocated

Activity	Amount Not to Exceed
Building Renovation & Business Assistance	\$283,900
Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Testing (Soft Costs)	\$16,700
Administration (max. 10% of Program)	\$33,400
Small Project Fund Total	\$334,000

Purpose & Where It Applies

Program Purpose

Renovate downtown buildings to support the goals of the Village's NY Forward Strategic Investment Plan.

Help owners meet Groton's unmet needs for:

- Housing
- Ground-floor retail
- Commercial business space

Where It Applies

The Target Area

Eligible properties are downtown commercial and mixed-use buildings located within the Village of Groton's NY Forward Study Area, as identified in the Strategic Investment Plan.

A boundary map of the eligible focus area will be provided.

Award Categories & Ranges

Building Renovation	Minor Exterior Projects	Small Business Assistance
\$25,000 – \$150,000 <i>per building</i> Facades, storefronts & commercial interiors. + \$25,000 per residential unit (up to \$200,000 per building).	\$10,000 – \$25,000 <i>per project</i> Signage, awnings & painting. Program funds capped at \$100,000.	\$5,000 – \$50,000 <i>per project</i> Permanent commercial machinery & equipment integral to the business.

Every category: awards may not exceed 75% of total eligible project cost. Total awards are limited by the net fund budget (\$283,900 renovation + \$16,700 soft costs).

The 75 / 25 Match

75%

Maximum grant assistance
of total eligible project costs

25%

Minimum owner match
cash or a secured loan • in-kind labor is NOT eligible

- 1 Reimbursable grant: you pay project costs, then are reimbursed up to 75% at completion.
- 2 You must prove matching funds are available before final grant selection.
- 3 The match may include other sources, but at least 25% must be your own funds.
- 4 Costs incurred before your grant agreement's effective date are not eligible.

Reimbursement & Documentation

1

Grant, not up-front cash

All assistance is a reimbursable grant. You fund the work and are reimbursed after project costs are paid and documented.

2

Prove your match first

Participants must show matching funds are available prior to final grant selection.

3

Invoices + canceled checks

Submit invoices showing the contractor, work completed, and amount — plus corresponding canceled checks. Cash payments are not reimbursable.

4

Soft costs are capped

Architecture, engineering & environmental testing may not exceed 18% of the award, must fit within the per-building limit, and require a (non in-kind) match.

5

Declaration Form at close

Reimbursement requires executing a Declaration Form, filed with the Tompkins County Clerk.

5-Year Compliance Period

If you sell within 5 years...

All assistance carries a five-year compliance period.

If the assisted building is sold within five years, the owner must repay a portion of the grant, on a declining scale.

A Declaration Form is filed with the Tompkins County Clerk to secure this obligation.

Period	Repayment Due
Months 0–12	100%
Months 13–24	80%
Months 25–36	60%
Months 37–48	40%
Months 49–60	20%
Month 60 and beyond	0%

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Business & property owners that are:

- Individuals
- For-profit entities
- Not-for-profit corporations — only where the project commits to renovating buildings for the Village's unmet housing, retail, and commercial needs

Every applicant must also be:

- 1 The owner of the property being renovated.
- 2 Current on all Village, County & school taxes for every property owned in the Village.
- 3 Able to secure matching funds — with proof they are available.
- 4 Not a Village of Groton elected official or employee (per Article 18, NYS General Municipal Law).

Property Eligibility



Inside the boundary

Located within the NY Forward Boundary & Focus Area in the Strategic Investment Plan.



Commercial or mixed-use

Mixed-use is a high priority. Solely residential is low priority; single-family homes are not eligible.



No open code violations

Any existing violations must be corrected under this Program.



Properly insured

Liability and hazard insurance sufficient to cover outstanding loans and Program funds invested.



Not religious or municipal

Improvements to religious-owned or municipally owned & operated buildings are not eligible.

WHAT GRANT FUNDS COVER

Eligible Uses of Funds

- ✓ Interior renovation — walls, floors, stairs, ceilings, roofs & accessibility; plumbing, electrical, HVAC & fire suppression. Health, safety & code deficiencies must be addressed.
- ✓ Facade & exterior repairs — painting, signage, awnings, carpentry, masonry & repointing, storefront & cornice restoration, window repairs.
- ✓ Energy efficiency upgrades and alternative energy projects.
- ✓ Architectural services for project design and construction management.
- ✓ Permanent commercial machinery & equipment integral to the business (useful life > 1 year; \$2,000+ per unit).
- ✓ Public art installations that enhance the visual character of the focus area.

Ineligible Uses of Funds

- ✕ Property acquisition
- ✕ New construction
- ✕ Demolition of an entire structure
- ✕ Refinancing debt or interim-financing interest
- ✕ Participant, family, or staff labor
- ✕ Non-permanent fixtures, furnishings, electronics, tools, disposable supplies
- ✕ Free-standing or interior-lit signs
- ✕ Site work — septic, grading, parking, sidewalks, patios, decks, garages, sheds, landscaping, fences
- ✕ Working capital, inventory, rent/lease, undefined expenses
- ✕ Work inconsistent with or detracting from downtown Groton's character
- ✕ Projects that don't further the Strategic Investment Plan

Commitment Fee & Conflict of Interest

Commitment Fee

After award, each participant pays a non-refundable commitment fee with their signed commitment letter.

The fee covers the environmental review required by ESD/HTFC and varies by project type and scope.

It counts as an eligible source of match — but is neither refundable nor reimbursable if the project does not reach completion.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict may exist if you are related to a Village employee, officer, or elected official — or could gain financial benefit or inside information.

All applicants complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

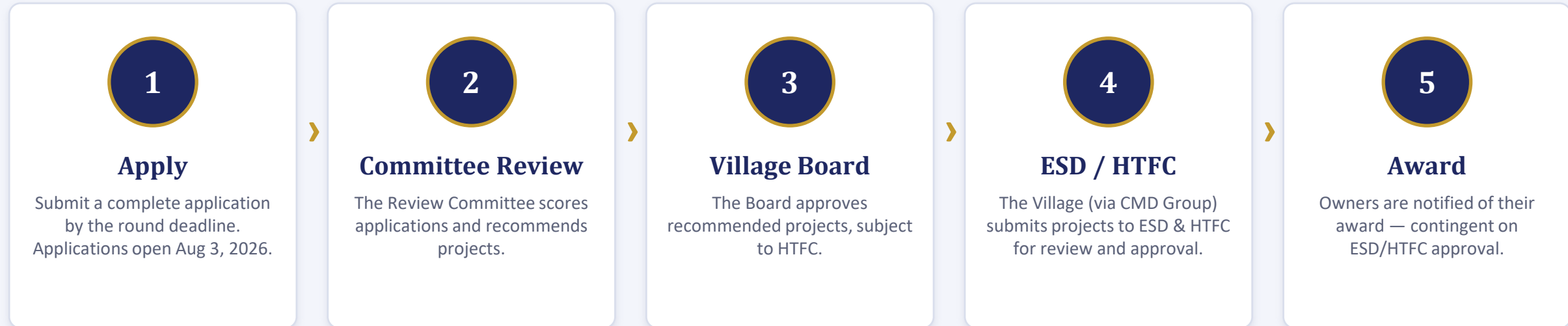
CMD Group submits any identified conflict to ESD/HTFC; the Village Attorney makes the final local determination under Article 18 of the NYS General Municipal Law.

Project Scoring — 100 Points

A Village Review Committee scores each application on the impact it will have in the focus area (CMD Group advises, non-voting).

Criterion	What it rewards	Points
Readiness	Signed lease / proof of ownership and documentation that 100% financing is in place	15
Physical Impact	Highly visible transformation; prominent building; residential units created or rehabilitated	25
Economic Impact	More than 25% owner leverage; brings a property back online, fills a vacancy, or stabilizes/expands a business & creates jobs	25
Quality of Life	Historically appropriate renovations with energy-efficiency or accessibility improvements	15
Village Priorities	Retail/business hours outside 9–5, or jobs for low-to-moderate income residents	20
Total	Maximum possible score	100

From Application to Award



What the Village submits to ESD / HTFC

Property location • Business information • Scope of work & cost estimates
Award amount & total project cost • Proposed payment structure • Projected outcomes (units, jobs)

Scope, Design & Contractors

Scope of Work

- CMD Group meets with you and your design professional to develop the formal scope.
- Signage-only projects use a simplified package.
- Submitted to SHPO where applicable; you and CMD Group sign off before bidding.

Design Standards

- Facades must follow the Strategic Investment Plan's design guidelines.
- A licensed design professional is required.
- Historic properties follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
- New residential & retail must be superior quality.

Contractor Selection

- CMD Group maintains a qualified contractor list (\$1M+ liability, workers' comp).
- At least two bids per project.
- Choosing above the lowest responsible bid caps reimbursement at that bid.
- Good-faith MWBE / SDVOB outreach.

Environmental Review, Monitoring & Final Inspection

1

Environmental Review First

Every project is assessed under SEQRA and the HTFC Environmental Compliance Handbook. HTFC issues a Notice to Proceed — no construction may begin before CMD Group receives it.

2

Construction Monitoring

The Village, through CMD Group, may inspect or audit work at any time. Periodic inspections track Program compliance, environmental hazards, and progress — documented in the project file.

3

Final Inspection

Before final payment, the design professional, code enforcement officer, and owner verify the work matches the contracted scope. A final report is submitted to ESD/HTFC to document completion.

QUESTIONS?

Let's Build a Stronger Downtown Groton

Applications open

August 3, 2026

Grants cover up to

75% of eligible costs

You provide at least

25% owner match

First round closes

September 2026

Fund & application questions? Contact CMD Group

Community & Municipal Development Group, Inc. (CMD Group)

70 York Avenue, Elmira, NY 14905

(607) 483-0734

info@cmdgroup-usa.com

Applications available from CMD Group and the Village of Groton beginning August 3, 2026. Watch the Village website for the informational session and application-round dates.