

### What are the GATHER Grants?

Gathering Area and Town Hub Enhancement and Revitalization (GATHER) Grants support local governments and First Nations communities to revitalize or enhance outdoor community gathering places for Basin residents, including downtown areas, town squares, and outdoor event areas designed for social connection.

GATHER Grants support the Trust's 2024-2034 Columbia Basin Management Plan focus on healthy and resilient communities, helping Basin communities take action to continue to be incredible and vibrant places.

### Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include local governments and First Nations communities in the Columbia Basin Trust region ([ourtrust.org/map](https://ourtrust.org/map)).

### When is the application deadline?

October 15, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. PT / 3:00 p.m. MT.

### What is the application process?

Applications will be reviewed and accepted on an ongoing basis until the application deadline or until all available funds have been committed.

### What types of project costs are eligible?

In larger communities, projects will likely take place in central commercial districts. In more rural communities, where a central commercial district may not exist, projects will likely occur in other areas regularly used by the public.

Eligible projects should meet the following criteria:

- located outdoors;
- promote opportunities for community gathering; and
- be accessible to all members of the community.

Eligible costs include the following:

Category	Examples
1. Project Planning and Design (maximum of \$25,000)	Contracted services, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• architectural and landscape concept designs, cost estimates, and/or construction drawings;</li><li>• engineering assessments and/or design; and</li><li>• accessibility, geotechnical, archeological, and/or environmental assessments.</li></ul>
2. Outdoor Improvements (Physical Works)	Outdoor improvements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the addition of gathering amenities (e.g., gazebos, performance stages, furniture, etc.);</li><li>• incorporation of universal design principles (e.g., seating areas, picnic tables, bike racks and repair stations, drinking fountains, waste bins, etc.);</li></ul>

Category	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accessibility improvements (e.g., wheelchair-accessible washrooms, resurfacing with accessible materials, ramps and handrails, etc.);</li> <li>• enhanced navigation (e.g., wayfinding, interpretive signage, energy-efficient lighting etc.);</li> <li>• interactive amenities that support community well-being and social interaction (e.g., community library boxes, outdoor chess boards, musical instruments, table tennis, etc.); and</li> <li>• aesthetics improvements (e.g., native plant/perennial landscaping, solar-powered pathway lights, archways, sculptures/statues, fountains, etc.).</li> </ul>

### What types of projects and costs are not eligible?

Costs that are not eligible include the following, but are not limited to those that:

- are improvements typically considered the responsibility of government, including upgrades to infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, street lights, etc.;
- core operational expenses, including staff salaries;
- routine maintenance of existing assets, or storage or maintenance buildings;
- are incurred prior to receiving project approval;
- involve facilities that are primarily intended for outdoor recreation;
- take place outside the Columbia Basin region or on privately-owned land;
- undertake activities of political parties, advocacy or lobby groups, or organizations that are exclusive or discriminatory in nature; and
- primarily benefit the applicant itself or the members of a membership-based organization.

### How much will the Trust fund?

Up to **90 per cent of total project costs** can be requested from the Trust from local governments representing small communities (population typically less than 2,500) and First Nation Communities.

Up to **75 per cent of the total project costs** can be requested from the Trust from local governments representing large communities (population typically more than 2,500).

The maximum amount of Trust funding for any one project is \$650,000.

### How does the Trust select projects for funding?

The Trust uses the following selection criteria to prioritize funding:

- the project demonstrates it meets the program eligibility listed above;
- the project demonstrates community support;
- the project shows it is ready to move forward in the stated timelines;
- project benefits will be available for broad public/community use; and

- there is a commitment to incorporate the project into the local government's/First Nations Asset Management Plan.

Additional consideration may be given to projects that:

- incorporate partnerships with Indigenous Peoples or Indigenous perspectives;
- address climate resilience; and/or
- increase local employment.

### When will organizations hear the results?

The review process usually takes up to four weeks, during which Trust staff may request additional information. Organizations will be contacted by email at the address provided on the application form to confirm if the project application has been approved for funding.

To finalize funding, both parties will sign a Contribution Agreement. Funds will be received after both parties sign the Contribution Agreement.

### When can a project begin?

Funds can only be used for approved project expenses incurred after the Contribution Agreement has been signed.

### What else to keep in mind?

Meeting the Program eligibility criteria does not guarantee selection for funding, as the Trust often receives more funding requests than is available. The Trust retains the right to determine project eligibility and the amount of funding allocated to each project; this may be all or part of what was requested.

Depending on the nature of the project, applicants may have to obtain specific permits and approvals prior to receiving Trust funds.

### Ready to apply?

1. Review the Program Guide.
2. If you would like to work offline, download the application worksheet [here](#). The worksheet contains direction and advice on how to complete the application.
3. Complete the online application form at [GATHER Grants](#).