

The Lancaster Villager

STAY INFORMED AND BECOME
INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY!



A Message from the Mayor

The approach of spring always brings a renewed sense of hope and appreciation for warmer weather, more sunlight, and more time spent outdoors. After a winter that surprised us with some challenging storms, I think that we are all ready for the approaching spring. This year, there is even more excitement and anticipation in the Village of Lancaster, due to the receipt of millions of dollars in grant funding. This \$4.5 million in NY Forward funding will put the Village of Lancaster on the path to a long awaited economic recovery and will give our residents and our businesses a newfound sense of hope for brighter days ahead. We are so grateful to Governor Hochul for recognizing the unique set of challenges in small, historic communities and dedicating funding that will help us preserve our past, yet sustain us into the future. We are determined to be a success story for the State of New York, proving that their economic development programs and initiatives work to transform communities. I look forward to working through the NY Forward process with New York State and the Local Planning Committee, with input and feedback from our community. We are ready to take the next steps in establishing the community of our dreams and ensuring that it is sustainable for generations to come.

- Mayor Lynne Ruda-

The Village of Lancaster receives multiple grant funding awards

\$4.5 Million in NY Forward funding from NYS

\$150,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funding from Erie County

\$100,000 in Climate Smart Communities funding from the NYS DEC

Find out more about these grants throughout this newsletter. Keep up to date with the projects by frequenting the Village Website and following our social media accounts.



Check us out on Social Media:
Facebook - Village of Lancaster
Instagram - LancasterVillageNY
Twitter - @LancasterVill

The Village of Lancaster received their Bronze Certification as a part of the Climate Smart Communities program

The Village of Lancaster underwent a rigorous application process to receive the Climate Smart Communities Bronze designation. After taking the Climate Smart Communities pledge in 2016, the Village has strategically undertaken numerous Climate Smart Actions that are outlined in the table below. These actions are a part of the Village of Lancaster's commitment to creating a healthy and sustainable community for future generations. The Village of Lancaster is the first Village to receive this designation in all of Erie County.

Climate Smart Actions	Year Completed
PE1 Action: CSC Pledge	2016
PE1 Action: CSC Task Force	2019
PE1 Action: CSC Coordinator	2019
PE1 Action: National/Regional Climate Program	2021
PE1 Action: Partnerships with Other Entities	2022
PE2 Action: Government Operations GHG Inventory	2021
PE3 Action: Government Building Energy Audits	2017
PE3 Action: Interior Lighting Upgrades	2019-2022
PE3 Action: HVAC Upgrades	2019
PE3 Action: Benchmarking - Municipal Buildings	2021
PE3 Action: LED Street Lights	2021
PE3 Action: Energy Code Enforcement Training	2021
PE6 Action: Complete Streets Policy	2022
PE6 Action: Infrastructure for Biking & Walking	2021
PE6 Action: Traffic Calming	2021
PE6 Action: Local Forestry Program	2019-2022
PE7 Action: Climate Vulnerability Assessment	2021
PE7 Action: Climate-resilient Hazard Mitigation Plan	2021
PE7 Action: Shade Structures Policy	2022
PE9 Action: Social Media	2021-2022



Taking Local Action to Combat Climate Change

THE VILLAGE OF
Lancaster
 IS A
Bronze Certified
CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY
2022



\$150,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding will improve pedestrian safety on Aurora St.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon mid block crossing will be added on Aurora St. at Artel Metz Drive and Richmond Ave. Additionally, grass will be added between the sidewalk and shoulder of the road on Aurora St. to create a visual barrier between vehicular and pedestrian paths.

The arrow indicates where the paved surface will be replaced with grass to enhance pedestrian safety.



This is one of the two locations that will have a mid block crossing with a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon

\$100,000 in Climate Smart Communities funding will support local Climate Action initiatives

The Village of Lancaster received funding in a joint application with the Town of Lancaster. This funding was awarded by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The plan for the funding is to hire a Community Climate Energy Coordinator to complete a Local Government Climate Action Plan for the Village as well as a Community GHG Inventory with the Town of Lancaster. The result will be documents for planning and implementation of the specific goals, projects and strategies for reduction of GHG emissions, as well as increased community awareness and involvement in climate-related actions and activities.



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER RECEIVES \$4.5 MILLION NY FORWARD FUNDING AWARD

How did the Village of Lancaster receive this award?

The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council conducted a thorough and competitive review process of proposals submitted from communities throughout the region and considered the criteria below before recommending the awarded communities : The Downtown is compact with well-defined boundaries; Downtown can capitalize on prior, or catalyze future private and public investment. Recent or impending job growth within, or in close proximity to the downtown that can attract workers, support redevelopment and make growth sustainable; Downtown is an attractive and livable community for diverse populations; Municipality embraces, or has the ability to create and implement policies that increase livability and quality of life; Municipality has conducted open and robust community engagement to develop a preliminary list of projects and initiatives for downtown revitalization that may be included in a Strategic Investment Plan; Municipality has identified transformative projects ready for near-term implementation with an infusion of NY Forward funds; and Municipality has the local capacity to manage the planning and implementation of projects, including the ability to oversee contracts for awarded municipal projects.

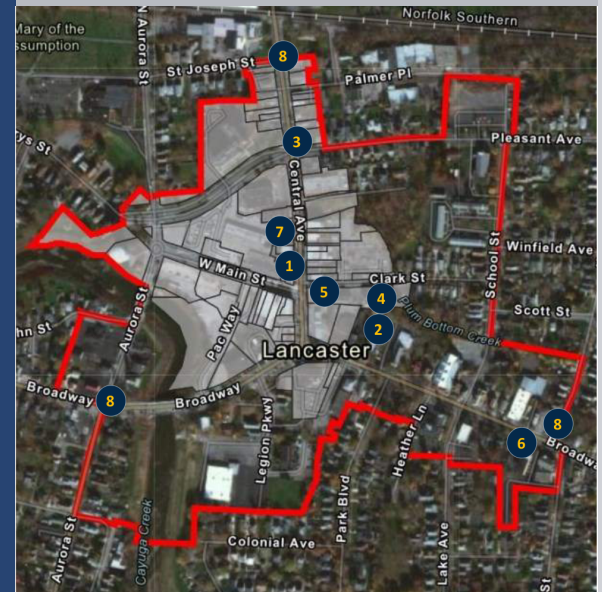
What are the next steps?

Lancaster will now begin the process of developing a Strategic Investment Plan to revitalize their downtowns. A Local Planning Committee made up of municipal representatives, community leaders and other stakeholders will lead the effort, supported by a team of private sector experts and state planners. The Strategic Investment Plan will examine local assets and opportunities to identify projects that align with each community's vision and that are poised for implementation. Funding will be awarded for selected projects from the Strategic Investment Plan that have the greatest potential to jumpstart revitalization and generate new opportunities for long-term growth.



Where can this funding be used?

The NY Forward funding is specifically earmarked for projects that fall within the Downtown Boundary of the Village of Lancaster. See the map below. The portion outlined with the bold line is considered the Downtown Boundary and all of the projects must fall within that boundary to be considered for funding.



The municipal projects that were submitted for this grant application included the **extension of the Central Avenue streetscape**, north from Pleasant Ave. to St. John St. Additionally, a **Mobility Hub** was proposed within the Village of Lancaster Downtown core as well as a **Wayfinding System** of signage for the Central Business District. These projects will be proposed to the Local Planning Committee. The public will have the opportunity to give their opinions on the project proposals and information about the project proposals and the meeting schedule will be available on Village of Lancaster website. Additionally, we encourage you to follow our social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on the NY Forward project award process.

NY Forward Process

Pre-Application

- Submit Letter of Intent
- Participate in Capacity Building workshops
- Receive Technical assistance

Apply

- Communities prepare and submit applications
- REDCs nominate downtowns

Plan

- Local Planning Committees created
- State and consultant teams work with the community on Strategic Investment Plan
- Community engagement

Implement

- Strategic Investment Plan submitted
- Projects evaluated for readiness and catalytic potential
- Selected projects awarded funding

Code Enforcement

If you are facing Foreclosure, please make sure you know your rights! Information and potential assistance is available at: Stay In Your Home (stayingyourhomewny.com) or Western New York Law Center (wnylc@wnylc.com)

Everyone falls on hard times at some time in their life; don't panic! There is free help out there. But you can't ignore the problem. Work with a not-for-profit HUD approved housing counseling agency, who can help with advice, paperwork, review of options, and help with negotiations with your mortgage company. Be sure to call your mortgage company; there may be Workout options you qualify for.

Again, we want homeowners to know they have the right to stay in their homes throughout the foreclosure process.

Free Legal Services:

WNY Stay in Your Home Program

HOTLINE: 716-828-8429

<https://stayingyourhomewny.com/>

Center for Elder Law & Justice

<https://www.elderjusticeny.org/>

Email: helpline@elderjusticeny.org

Any New Yorker age 55+ can call our Free Legal Advice Helpline to speak with an attorney at 1-844-481-0973. We provide free legal help to older, disabled, and low-income adults in Western New York.

You can also file a complaint to:

NYS Department of Financial Services (DFS); Website: <https://www.dfs.ny.gov/complaint> Call: 1-800-342-3736

Erie County Clerks Zombie Initiative: Call 716-828-8438; Email: zombiecomplaints@wnylc.com;

Web: www.eriecountyclerkzombies.com

Code Enforcement – smarshall@lancastervillage.org or 716-683-1028 x306

Western New York Law Center

37 Franklin Street, 2nd Floor, Suite 210,

Buffalo, NY 14202

716.855.0203 x118

Office Hours: 9:00am - 5:00pm Or by

Appointment

assistance@wnylc.net

<https://wnylc.com/>

Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.

If you need assistance, contact our office to find out if you qualify for our services at 716-853-9555.

Department of Public Works

After two very harsh winter storms and the appearance of an early spring it is time to assess the post storm damage. Many streets without curbing suffered plow ruts, some street corner lawns were cut short, grass was peeled back in some instances from the sidewalk plow and curbing damaged and broken. As the weather allows the DPW will begin repairing all the village wide damage.

If your property suffered any of the damage listed above please contact the Department of Public Works so that we can schedule your repairs. At this time of year we do go street by street to topsoil where necessary and add grass seed. Once this has been done it is the homeowner's responsibility to water and maintain your property. We do not return to water grass or planted trees. Residents may contact the DPW at 716-683-1028 for assistance.



Lancaster Fire Department: Is There a Fire in You?

***** New Recruits Wanted *****

Since 1874 your Lancaster Fire Department has been providing fire, rescue and emergency services for The Village of Lancaster and surrounding mutual aid jurisdictions. Our community is protected by dedicated and committed volunteers who respond to emergencies at all times of the day and night. Saving lives and protecting property is not an easy task yet we do it willingly and often without recognition.

As our community grows, our emergency calls for help increase. Today we respond to far more than fires. We answer calls for anything from vehicle accidents to hazardous materials incidents to first aid. **We are now reaching out and asking for your help. Simply put, we need more volunteer members to help our community.**

Volunteer firefighters and emergency medical service providers are a special kind of people and right now we are in need for members to help us answer the call of duty. We are looking for passionate individuals who are willing to commit to serving their community and providing compassion and care to those individuals who are in need. Whether you are potentially interested in being a Firefighter (18+ yrs old) or a Junior Firefighter (14-18yrs old), you will find that there are many benefits to joining the fire department. Some of the benefits include a retirement programs, free annual physicals, college tuition assistance and many more!

Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer member of The Lancaster Fire Department can visit us at either one of our fire stations within the village on

- Thursday, April 13, 2023 between the hours of 6:00pm – 8:00pm or
- Saturday, April 15th 2023 between the hours of 10am – 12pm.
 - Station 1 is located at 5423 Broadway Lancaster, NY 14086
 - Station 2 is located at 24 West Drullard Avenue Lancaster, NY 14086

You can also fill out an "Apply Today" form via our website

<https://www.lancasterfd.org/>

A member of our team will contact you with more information.





LANCASTER BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE:

Think Spring!!



Do the thoughts of Spring time give you something to look forward to? Are you starting to get the itch to spend time in your garden and be outside in nature without all your snow gear on? If you are interested in any of the above and also want to make a difference in your community, would you consider being part of the Lancaster Beautification Committee? This is a group of Lancaster residents, both village and town, who help with the beautiful area gardens and vibrant blooming potted gardens you see driving through the village. There is no commitment or any meetings to attend. You don't need to be a master gardener. Just having an appreciation of the beauty of flowers is all that is needed. You can work by yourself or participate with other volunteers. You decide how much you can help and where you would like to help out.

Visit our Facebook page at Lancaster Beautification Committee. For more detailed information and for any questions you might have, please contact Julie Curtis (716) 572-6124.

Historic Preservation Commission

In December 2022, the Village Board approved code changes for Chapter 184 of the Village Code which were suggested by the Historic Preservation Commission. The previous code, which guided the HPC's work had not been updated since 1986. The adopted code includes several improvements that will benefit both the HPC and property owners within the historic district. The changes represent a modernization and necessary update to the existing code. It strengthens the role of the HPC, reinforces the importance of historic preservation in the Village of Lancaster and provides a clear way forward for the future. Several improvements include:

- Overall better fit to Lancaster's needs. It updates and clarifies many of the sections and provides a clearer outline of the responsibilities of the HPC and sets standards for evaluation.
- Clarification of the advisory role of the HPC and the relationship to the Village Board. The code now makes clear the responsibilities of the HPC in relation to the Village Board and more accurately reflects the way the two boards have traditionally operated.
- Addition of training requirement.
- Outlines the process for review of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA): The expansion and explanation of the COA process helps property owners to understand what is required of them and will facilitate compliance. We often have applicants who come to us with incomplete or unclear COAs that could benefit from a clearer procedure. In addition, this provides guidance for the HPC members to ensure we are evaluating in a fair and methodical way.
- Procedure for demolition
- Hardship procedures

The new code is a revised version of a model law provided by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SHPO recommends that municipalities update their code to consider the most recent best practices in preservation. The model law, on which the revised code is based was developed by Preservation League of NYS in 2014. The HPC has been working with Village Attorney Art Herdzik for several years to review and revise this Model Code to make it fit with the Village of Lancaster.

For more information about the HPC and our Historic District, visit the HPC's website at villageoflancafterhpc.com.

2023 VILLAGE EVENTS



Village-Wide Garage Sale

May 19-21

8:00am-5:00pm



Fourth of July Event

TBA



Garden Walk

July 21 8:45pm-11:00pm

July 22- 23 10:00am- 4:30pm



Fall Fest

TBA



NYE Event

December 31

Visit lancastervillageny.gov for more information regarding these events.



THE VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

GARDEN WALK

2023

20TH ANNIVERSARY

Friday, July 21 - 8:45pm to 11:00pm
 Saturday, July 22 - 10:00am to 4:30pm
 Sunday, July 23 - 10:00am to 4:30pm

Come Join us for the 20th Anniversary of the Village of Lancaster's Garden Walk!

You can find more information, as well as the sign-up sheet for this event at lancastervillageny.gov
 You may also pick up a sign-up sheet at the Clerk's Office at 5243 Broadway.

Village Board Meeting Dates

The Village Board meets on the 2nd & 4th Monday of the month at 7pm on the 2nd floor of the Municipal Building at 5423 Broadway.

- Monday, March 27th
- Monday, April 10th
- Monday, April 24th
- Monday, May 8th
- Monday, May 22nd
- Monday, June 12th
- Monday, June 26th
- Monday, July 10th

Clerk-Treasurer Office & Main Village Contact

Michael E. Stegmeier
 5423 Broadway
 Lancaster, NY 14086
 (716) 683-2105
mstegmeier@lancastervillage.org

Important Contact Information

Mayor Lynne T. Ruda	lroda@lancastervillage.org
Trustee Cynthia A. Maciejewski	cmaciejewski@lancastervillage.org
Trustee Joseph E Quinn	jquinn@lancastervillage.org
Trustee Paul H. Rudz	prudz@lancastervillage.org
Trustee Tyler D. Sojka	tsojka@lancastervillage.org
DPW Superintendent William Cansdale	wcansdale@lancastervillage.org
Code Enforcement – Shawn Marshall	smarshall@lancastervillage.org
Fire Inspector and OEM – Scott Kuhlmeier	skuhlmeier@lancastervillage.org
Fire Chief - Paul Stencel	PStencel@lancasterfd.org
Events Coordinator- Tammie Malone Schaefer	events@lancastervillage.org
Village of Lancaster Justice Court	716-683-6780