Spring 2026 Volume 9, Issue 1

The Lancaster Villager

STAY INFORMED AND BECOME INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY!



A Message from the Mayor

After as harsh of a winter that we all have experienced, it is nice to be looking forward to spring!

Our Department of Public Works has worked tirelessly at keeping our roads and parking areas safe for drivers and done what we can to keep sidewalks clear for our area churches and schools. That's some of what we do. As a government, our focus is on providing services like the DPW, Fire Department, and EMS departments. I truly believe that we have the very best in all of those departments for our residents. We are able to maintain our fleets and improve where we can. We have a new pumper on the way to the Fire Department, and we will have a new stage built in Cayuga Creek Park that will allow for better use of the area with concerts and perhaps shows.

These are only a few of the many items on the Village's agenda for 2026. We are in the planning stages for our annual Events Series and hope to do something special in recognition of America's 250th Birthday. It will be another busy year, and we hope that you will join us and enjoy what we have to offer!

-Mayor William Schroeder

From left to right, the above picture shows Legislator Frank Todaro, Trustee O'Brien, Mayor Schroeder, Trustee Malone Schaefer, Trustee Miller, and Trustee Mikoley.

The picture depicts Legislator Todaro commemorating the Village of Lancaster on becoming a Tree City USA for 2025.

In 2025, 251 trees were planted with the support of the Village Board, the Department of Public Works, and the Forestry Advisory Board. The Village was honored as an Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA Community for the seventh year in a row and recently received the Growth Award for the third consecutive year.

A great deal of effort goes into planning and implementing these projects, and we are grateful for the recognition of our work!

Thank you, Legislator Todaro for recognizing the hard work of the Village of Lancaster!

OUR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS



The Village Board appreciates the hardworking men and women from our Department of Public Works ("DPW") who keep our roads well-maintained throughout the year.

While most of us sleep through the cold winter nights, these are the people who leave their warm homes, and make sure our roads are salted and plowed. Thank you all!

SPRING TREE PLANTING

The Village is excited to share that approximately 500 new trees will be planted along streets in the public right-of-way during the 2026 planting season. This effort is part of our long-term commitment to expanding our tree canopy. Over the next several years, our goal is to fill the majority of vacant planting spaces throughout the Village with appropriate street trees.

If your property is near an eligible planting location, you will receive a letter from the Village before planting begins. Residents will have the opportunity to ask questions about the process and choose from a list of tree species selected specifically for the Village of Lancaster. Our tree list includes species that are well suited to neighborhood settings, with consideration for mature size, utility lines, and sidewalks.

Because this is a multi-year effort, not every location will be planted this spring or this year. If your address is not included this spring, it will likely be part of a future planting season.
More information about the community forestry projects can be found at This year, the Village planted 249 new trees with USDA grant support—and more are on the way. In 2026, we expect to plant more trees in the public right-of-way across the Village with help from USDA and DEC grants.

Our approach follows the principle of “the right tree in the right place,” such as planting small trees under powerlines to avoid conflicts. And by prioritizing species diversity, we’re building resilience—creating an urban forest that can better withstand pests, diseases, and changing conditions.

If you have a concern, would like to report an issue with a tree, or are interested in having a tree planted, please let us know at sustainability@lancastervillageny.gov .

CENTRAL AVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Village was awarded $3.4 million through the Transportation Alternatives Program to complete improvements along Central Avenue from Broadway to Walden Avenue. The project is currently in the planning and design phase, with construction anticipated to begin in Summer 2027.

What's Included?

- Full resurfacing of Central Avenue to improve roadway conditions.
- Sidewalk repairs and ADA accessibility upgrades to maintain a walkable corridor.
- Replacement of brick sidewalks with exposed aggregate concrete, creating a more durable and easier-to-maintain downtown streetscape.
- Repainted bike lanes to support safer cycling connections.
- Mobility Hub as a centralized space will make it easier for residents and visitors to walk, bike, drive, or use transit—supporting more convenient travel throughout the Village.

The improvements build on the Village's vision of a vibrant mixed-use Central Business District, with updates not only downtown but continuing along Central Avenue to Walden Avenue. These enhancements will extend the character and walkability of the district while improving safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all residents.

Learn More:
For full project details and updates visit: www.lancastervillageny.gov/centralaveimprovements

ERIE COUNTY HOUSING PROGRAMS

Funded By
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Allows low- to moderate- income homeowners in the Village of Lancaster to make essential repairs now, and at affordable cost.

- May include roofing, energy conservation, siding repairs and/or replacement, handicapped accessibility, and upgrading of mechanical systems such as plumbing, heating, and electric.
- Assistance provided in the form of a deferred loan.

Rental Rehabilitation Program

Available to property owners whose rental units fail to meet one or more standards as required by local, state, and federal housing codes.

- Includes work to correct code violations, replacement of failing building systems, and handicap accessibility.
- Required to rent units to low- or moderate- income tenants for 7 years.
- Provided in the form of a deferred loan with 10% owner contributions.

Lead Paint Remediation Grant Program

Allows low- and moderate-income homeowners who have children under the age of 6 residing in the home to make their home "lead safe".

- Certified lead testing will identify areas in the home where lead paint may be hazardous. A lead certified contractor will make repairs to those areas to remediate the lead paint hazard.
- Assistance provided in the form of a grant, No repayment required.

Housing Accessibility Program

Allows low- and moderate-income individuals, with documented disabilities that significantly impair mobility, to make essential accessibility improvements to their homes.

- Example items include access ramp installation, re-plumbing of kitchen and bath for better access, and hard surface walkway installation.
- Assistance provided in the form of a loan based on household income.

For more information on these and other programs administered by Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, go www3.erie.gov/environment/housing-programs or call 716-858-8390

LANCASTER FIRE DEPARTMENT

While spring cleaning allows you to get your home in order, you should also focus on tasks that improve your home's safety. Fires can occur when you least expect them, but you can prevent them by following these safety guidelines from your Lancaster Fire Department:

- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly and replace batteries at least once a year.
- Ensure alarms are installed in every bedroom and common areas, mounted properly away from stoves, windows, and vents.
- Inspect fire extinguishers and ensure they are up to date and accessible.
- Clear yard debris such as leaves, branches, and dry vegetation to reduce fire hazards.
- Review family emergency plans and ensure everyone knows evacuation routes and procedures
- Maintain an emergency kit with water, food, flashlights, batteries, first aid supplies, and essential medications.
- Inspect home systems: check dryer vents, electrical cords, and heating systems to prevent fire hazards.

By following these tips, you can significantly reduce the risk of fires and enjoy a safe spring season both indoors and outdoors. We look forward to seeing you during our community outreach events this upcoming year!

If you are interested in becoming a Volunteer Firefighter (18+ years old) or a Junior Firefighter (14 – 18 years old) please visit our website at www.lancasterfd.org and click the Join and Apply Today links and a member of our team will contact you with more information.

Are you interested in landmarking your historic property?

You can apply to the HPC to have your property designated as a Local Landmark. Owning a historic property helps preserve Lancaster's unique architecture and history, and many owners consider it an honor. Landmark status recognizes your property as distinctive and ensures it will be valued for generations.

Why Historic Preservation Matters in Lancaster:

Historic preservation strengthens the character and identity of Lancaster. Through Local Landmarks and Historic Districts, the Historic Preservation Commission promotes community pride, attracts residents and businesses, and supports economic reinvestment.

Benefits of Designation:

Landmark or historic district designation:

- Recognizes a property's historic significance
- Protects it from demolition or inappropriate alterations
- Helps stabilize and increase property values
- Preserves neighborhood character
- Encourages reinvestment and sensitive improvements
- Buyers are often drawn to historic districts for their charm and the assurance that neighborhood character will endure.

Owner Responsibilities:

Landmark owners are stewards of their properties. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required before making exterior changes visible from a public street (such as additions, window replacements, siding changes, fences, or demolition). Interior renovations and exterior painting do not require review.

Learn more, access forms, and review design guidelines at:
www.villageoflancasterhpc.com

2026 Village Events

JUN 14	**Legendary Rides Car Show** 10:00-2:00 pm on Central Avenue
JULY 2-4TH	**Independence Day Carnival** Details to Follow
JULY 17-19TH	**Garden Walk** Various Sites. Detailed Map to Follow.
AUG 15TH	**Porchfest** Various Sites. Detailed Map to Follow.
SEPT 19TH	**Fall Festival** 10:00-3:00 pm on WMain St
NOV 27TH	**Light Up Lancaster** 5:00-9:00 pm at GirlScout Garden
DEC 31ST	**Last Night Lancaster** 10:00-12:30 am on Central Ave

More Events to Follow!

@lancasterspecialevents
www.lancastervillageny.gov/events

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER PORCHFEST

The 3rd annual Village of Lancaster Porchfest will take place on August 15th from Noon - 5 PM. Last year, the event saw 78 bands perform at 46 locations throughout the Village.

Registration, for both musicians and hosts, will open mid-April.

Follow LancasterPorchfest on FB for updates, or email John Mikoley jmikoley@lancastervillageny.gov with questions.

VILLAGE HERO

John Burke was recognized at the Village Board Meeting this past Monday. He greatly assisted the Lancaster Police on December 29, 2025, in apprehending a burglary suspect. While snow plowing, John notified the Police Department of a suspicious individual who was running away from the scene. The suspect had burglarized a business in the area and was apprehended shortly after, due to the notification by him. John was hired by the Village of Lancaster in 2007 and promoted to MEO in 2019. He is also a past Fire Chief with the Lancaster Fire Department.
Thank you, John, for all that you do!



Village of Lancaster's Board and Commission Meetings

The Village's Zoning Board of Appeals meets on the first Thursday of the month.

The Village's Historic Preservation Commission meets on the third Wednesday of the month.

The Village's Planning Commission meets on the third Thursday of the month.

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 23rd
Monday , April 13th
Monday, April 27th
Monday, May 11th
Monday, May 25th**
Monday, June 8th
Monday, June 22nd
Monday, July 13th

** May be rescheduled due to holiday

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Deputy Mayor & Trustee Malone Schaefer	Events, Human Resources	tschaefer@lancastervillageny.gov
Trustee Mikoley	Public Works, Sewer, Building, Lights & Codes	jmikoley@lancastervillageny.gov
Trustee O'Brien	Finance & Claims, Climate Smart, Grants	gobrien@lancastervillageny.gov
Trustee Miller	Finance & Claims, Tech & Marketing	dmiller@lancastervillageny.gov
Fire Chief Eric Feldmann	Lancaster Fire Department	efeldmann@lancasterfd.org
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