



New York State Canal System

Tourism Infrastructure and Events Grants 2026 Awardees

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS

Buffalo Maritime Museum

Seneca Chief Exhibit Enhancements

Develop and enhance historical and educational exhibits for display on and off the replica Erie Canal Boat *Seneca Chief*, specifically designed for young people. These exhibits will be featured during the 2026 BMC Erie Canal Boat "Seneca Chief" Education Tour.

The Canajoharie Library and Art Gallery

Restroom Upgrades and Accessibility Improvements

Renovate and modernize public restrooms at the Canajoharie Library & Arkell Museum, improving accessibility, cleanliness, and visitor experience for tourists, families, and school groups exploring the cultural and historical assets of the Mohawk Valley.

Canal Society of New York State

Lois McClure Interpretive Signage

Install two exterior weather-resistant interpretive signs alongside the full-scale replica canal boat, *Lois McClure*, at its new berth at the Erie Canal Heritage Park in Port Byron to provide background on its history and on the use of the Erie Canal.

Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum

General Store Accessibility and Usage Upgrades

Increase accessibility and functionality in the General Store by installing a chair lift to the second floor and constructing a small kitchen. Improvements will make the upper level fully accessible to all visitors and expand the space for educational programs.

City of Tonawanda

Restroom Renovations at Tonawanda's East Niagara Athletic Field

Renovate the public restrooms at East Niagara Athletic Field in Tonawanda's underserved "Gas Town" neighborhood with ADA-compliant upgrades and new materials, improving accessibility, safety, and comfort for youth sports, families, and Empire State Trail users.

Cycle Schenectady

Color the Canal Rotterdam Junction

As part of a continuing collaboration between two local non-profits, Cycle Schenectady and CREATE Community Studio, will design and install a mural in the tunnel under the railroad tracks where the Empire State Trail intersects in Rotterdam Junction.

Lockport Locks Heritage District Corporation

Locks District Tactile Map and Accessibility Assessment

Design, fabricate, and install a tactile map of the locks area within the Locks District and complete an accessibility assessment of the area.

Town of Montezuma

High Street Trailhead Enhancement Project

Strengthen public access, safety, and visitor experience at the primary entrance to Montezuma Heritage Park, with the installation of a new drinking fountain with a bottle-filling station, bike racks, trash receptacle, bench, and an ADA-accessible picnic table.

Village of Clyde

Signage and Seating Improvements

Install four Adirondack chairs, an accessible picnic table, and signage at the Welcome Center to provide visitors and residents with a comfortable place to rest as they are welcomed to the village.

Village of Holley

Canalway Trail Enhancement Project

Enhance the Canalway Trail with bike racks, a repair and charging station, LED lighting, and an enclosed pavilion to support year-round community use, tourism, and safety.

Village of Watkins Glen

Clute Park Pavilion Update

Enhance Clute Park with the design and construction of a multi-use pavilion, providing a safe, inclusive, and comfortable space for visitors to gather and enjoy the park's offerings.

EVENTS

MARCH

They Built America: The Workers of the Erie Canal, Schenectady

Capital Repertory Theatre

March 11 & 14: Albany, March 18 & 21: Saratoga Springs, March 27 & 28: Schenectady

attherep.org

Join the Capital Repertory Theatre for an unforgettable performance. Drawing on primary sources, historical documents, and period music, this production brings to life the story of the people who built the Erie Canal and how the project shaped their lives and the future of the nation.

MAY

Hero's Path: MCC to Brockport

Brockport Foundation

May 2, Brockport

brockport.edu

Cycle the Canalway Trail from Monroe Community College to SUNY Brockport in support of military and veteran students and their families. The ride will be followed by a celebration at the Bicentennial Bridge in Brockport. Adaptive equipment will be available to rent, and spectators are welcome.

10th Annual Right to Run 5K/19K

Women's Right to Run 19K Inc.

May 8 – 10, Seneca Falls

righttorun.org

Celebrate Mother's Day Weekend with a 5K race in the birthplace of Women's Rights. The course will pass by many landmarks critical to women's suffrage and end with a celebration with vendors, live music, and entertainment. Make a weekend of it with a speech from Tiffany Shlain on Friday night, and brunch on Sunday.

History at the Weighlock

Erie Canal Museum

May 28, July 22, August 19, Syracuse

eriecanalmuseum.org

Learn all about canal history at this series of special after-hours events from the Erie Canal Museum, housed in the canal's last remaining weighlock building. Presentations, live music, and hands-on experiences provide a fun environment to connect with other history lovers.

JUNE

Canal Kids Explore 4!

Feeder Canal Alliance

June 7, Glens Falls, additional event dates to follow

feedercanal.org

Introduce your kids to the wonders and excitement of year-round explorations in nature and history along the trail! Each seasonal event will include an art project or performance, canal history, and an outdoor recreation activity.

2026 Watkins Glen Waterfront Festival & Cardboard Boat Regatta

Watkins Glen Promotions, Inc.

June 20, Watkins Glen

watkinsglen.com

Celebrate community, creativity, and our deep connection to Seneca Lake with a full day of inclusive, lakeside fun. The festival features the whimsical Cardboard Boat Regatta, live music, delicious food, and activities for all ages and abilities.

Thursdays at the Farm

Homesteads for Hope

Thursdays, June 11 – October 15, Rochester

homesteadsforhope.org

Head to Homesteads for Hope's 55-acre canal-side farm for a signature summer series, featuring live local music, food trucks, a farmers' market, and family-friendly activities in an inclusive, welcoming setting.

Seneca River Days

Baldwinsville Rotary

June 12 & 13, Baldwinsville

baldwinsvillerotary.org

Celebrate Baldwinsville's riverfront heritage at Seneca River Days, a two-day festival at Papermill Island that fills the waterfront with live music, food trucks, family activities, and fireworks over the Seneca River.

Semi-quincentennial Building Bricks Event

Village of Medina Tourism

June 13, Medina

villagemedina.gov

Honor our nation's 250th birthday at a one-day, all-ages event where participants build brick creations that represent America's founding. Compete for age-based and creativity awards on the eve of Flag Day, where builders may even recreate the American flag in bricks.

Erie Canal Boat Float and Folk Festival

Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum

June 13, Chittenango

chittenangoland.org/boatfloatnfolk

Join hundreds of paddlers on the Old Erie Canal for a trip through history. After party includes folk music, food trucks, live demonstrations of traditional crafts, and a living history display with interpreters in costume.

Wine, Craft Beverage and Artisans Festival & Music on the Erie

Greater Newark Chamber of Commerce

Fridays, June 26 – August 28, Festival on August 7, Newark

newarknychamber.org

Head to Newark for a fun festival of food trucks, music, and a craft beverage tent during Newark's Music on the Erie summer concert series. Free to attend. Tickets needed for craft beverage tent.

JULY

Seneca Falls Canal Festival

It's A Wonderful Life Seneca Falls Inc.

July 3 – July 5, Seneca Falls

canalfest.senecafallsba.com

Celebrate the rich history of Seneca Falls with a weekend of live music, local vendors, food trucks, fireworks, and family programming.

July 4th Celebration on the Canal

City of North Tonawanda Parks & Recreation

July 4, North Tonawanda

northtonawanda.gov/parks-recreation

Mark Independence Day with a free, family-friendly event featuring face painting, balloon artists, bounce houses, interactive games, crafts, vendor area, and music, culminating in a fireworks display over the canal.

2026 Summer Serenades Opening Celebration

Village of Brockport

July 7, Brockport

brockportny.org

Kick-off a summer of live music in Brockport with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra at a free family-friendly concert at SUNY Brockport's Special Events Recreation Center.

Taste of Wayne County 2026

Village of Newark

July 21, Newark

villageofnewarkny.gov

Eat and drink your way through this fun festival, bringing together the local restaurants, farmers, food stores, and craft beverage producers of Wayne County.

Disability Pride Festival of Western New York

Western New York Independent Living

July 24, Buffalo

wnyil.org

Champion the rights of people with disabilities and commemorate the passage of the American's with Disabilities Act at Riverworks in Buffalo. Participate in a variety of activities including a Unity Walk, live music, children's events, resource market, and a speaker series. Free and accessible.

AUGUST

Brutus Erie Canal Festival

Town of Brutus

August 2, Brutus

townbrutus.digitaltowpath.org

Enjoy a free, family-friendly event to celebrate the traditions of an Erie Canal town with live music, a kids fun run along the canal, old fashioned pie eating contest, educational presentations, local vendors, food trucks, recreational activities, and more.

Sylvan Beach Canal Fest

Oneida Lake East Shore Merchants Association

August 8 – 9, Sylvan Beach

sylvanbeachny.com

Browse local vendors, delight in a water-ski show, witness the blessing of the boats, and participate in a kids fishing derby among many other family-friendly activities happening all weekend long on water and land.

20th Annual Wild Card-board Boat Races

Hudson Crossing Park

August 8, Schuylerville

HudsonCrossingPark.org

Build and race your own cardboard boat in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of this annual community event. Whether you're a participant or a spectator, this event is fun for everyone!

Erie Canal Artisan Festival

Genesee-Orleans Regional Arts Council

August 28 – 30, Holley

goart.org

Enjoy this vibrant celebration of heritage, creativity, and community spirit. Artisan vendors, live performances, cultural demonstrations, children's activities, evening concerts, outdoor movies, and a Saturday 5k/10k canal-side run round out a weekend of fun.

SEPTEMBER

Color Wayne Fun Run, Walk and Roll

Arc Wayne

September 5, Newark

arcwayne.org

Take part in this colorful 2-mile run/walk/roll for people of all abilities. Wear white and travel the 2-mile course along the Erie Canalway Trail and return covered by a rainbow of colors. Registration required. Benefits the Arc of Wayne Foundation.

ROC River Ride 2026

Rotary Club of Rochester Southwest

September 11, Rochester

rochesterswrotary.org

Explore Rochester's history and culture on a guided bicycle ride along the scenic Erie Canalway and Genesee Riverway Trails. Choose from three, seven, or 10-mile options with stops along the way for cultural presentations. All routes are accessible to wheelchairs. Riders ages eight to 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

Tugboat Roundup

Town of Waterford

September 11 – 13, Waterford

tugboatroundup.com

Celebrate maritime history at this annual waterfront festival. Step aboard historic tugboats and browse an eclectic marketplace with crafts, food, and maritime memorabilia. Enjoy family-friendly activities and a spectacular fireworks display.

Utica History and Heritage Festival at Harbor Point

City of Utica

September 12, Utica

cityofutica.com

Honor the canal's rich past and celebrate its future on the water at Utica Harbor. The event includes activities presented by the Oneida County History Center, a canal-era brewery, food trucks, and live music. Check out the brand-new boat launch and improved promenade for walking and biking.

Locktoberfest

Lockport Main Street, Inc.

September 26, Lockport

discoverlockport.com

Explore Lockport during this annual celebration along the canal. The event features an expanded Lockport Community Farmers Market, a Family Fun Zone with free games and activities, food, music, and local brews in the Beer Garden, and the season's final demonstration of the historic Flight of Five Locks.

Fairport Plein Air Festival

Village of Fairport Local Development Corporation

September 26, Fairport

fairportpleinair.org

Spend the morning painting along the historic waterway and Village. Art lovers will observe the artists as they paint "en plein air" (out-of-doors). A public exhibition and art sale follows in the afternoon.

Fairport Oktoberfest

Fairport Perinton Partnership

September 24 – 26, Fairport

fairportpartnership.org

Enjoy the sounds and tastes of traditional German culture with a weekend of festive Canalside fun in the Village of Fairport.

OCTOBER

Route to Reform

National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum

October 9 - 10, Utica

NationalAbolitionHallofFameandMuseum.org

Discover the beginnings of the abolition movement in Central New York along the Oneida County Freedom Trail. Live music and performances provide a commemorative and educational environment. A bus is available for people with disabilities and those who are unable to walk.

Red Flannel Fall Festival

Middleport Beautification Committee

October 10, Middleport

facebook.com/groups/1105904626929523

Convene with canal boaters in Middleport for a traditional fall festival that celebrates autumn on the canal. Family-friendly activities such as pumpkin games and an apple pie contest complement educational programs about the history of Middleport, its canal connections, and America's 250th.

Locktoberfest

Village of Fort Edward Canal Street Marketplace

October 17, Fort Edward

canalstreetmarketplace.org

Celebrate the autumn harvest on the grounds of a renovated nineteenth-century canal barn. The festival features regional farm and artisan products, educational booths, fabulous food, free horse-and-wagon rides, a local beer-tasting tent, and live music.

DECEMBER**WinterFest in Little Falls: Celebration of Lights**

Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts

December, Little Falls

mohawkvalleyarts.org

Gather in Little Falls for festive fun celebrating art, heritage, and community along the Erie Canal. At the heart of WinterFest is the Celebration of Lights, which transforms Canal Place into a glowing winter village. Enjoy live music, extended shopping hours, children's art activities, and a new lighting installation that honors the Erie Canal.