

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
REQUEST FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACTION
For Inclusion on Board Agenda

Resolution or Ordinance (Blue) _____ *Waiver of First Requested*
 X Recommendations of Boards, Commissions & Committees (Green)
Other Business (Pink)

TO: PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FROM: Scott Niehaus, Village Manager
DATE: February 24, 2026 (B of T) Date: March 5, 2026
TITLE: Local Tourism Grant Recommendation
Lombard Historical Society – 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park
SUBMITTED BY: Nicole Aranas, Deputy Village Manager

BACKGROUND/POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Attached please find information regarding a recommendation from the Community Promotion and Tourism Committee for approval of funding to the Lombard Historical Society toward the 2026 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park. The Committee is recommending approval of a grant in the amount of \$2,500 through the Local Tourism grant program.

Please place this item on the consent agenda for the March 5, 2026, Board of Trustees meeting.

Review (as necessary):

Village Attorney X _____ Date _____
Finance Director X _____ Date _____
Village Manager X _____ Date _____

NOTE: All materials must be submitted to and approved by the Village Manager's Office by 12:00 noon, Wednesday, prior to the Agenda Distribution.



#260048
DISTRICT #1

Memorandum

TO: Scott Niehaus
Village Manager

FROM: Nicole P. Aranas
Deputy Village Manager

DATE: February 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Community Promotion & Tourism Committee Recommendation
Lombard Historical Society – 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park

The following is a recommendation from the Community Promotion & Tourism Committee for funding through the Local Tourism Grant Program for the Lombard Historical Society in an amount not to exceed \$2,500 for the 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park. The event is scheduled to take place June through August 2026.

Grant Request: \$2,500

The Lombard Historical Society has requested a grant in the amount of \$2,500 to be used toward signage and marketing costs associated with the 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park. The event is a community-based outdoor installation titled "Power of Place" to commemorate the United States' 250th anniversary. The exhibition will feature various artwork displayed at Lilacia Park and the Lombard Historical Society.

The grant request from the Lombard Historical Society and event budget are attached for your review.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Promotion & Tourism Committee recommends a grant in an amount up to \$2,500 to the Lombard Historical Society, to be used towards the costs of signage and marketing associated with the 250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park.

Please place this item on the consent agenda of the March 5, 2026, agenda of the Board of Trustees.

**VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
LOCAL TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM 2026 APPLICATION FORM**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization:	Lombard Historical Society		
Name of event:	250 America Art Installation at Lilacia Park		
Date of event:	June-August 2026	Event location:	Lilacia Park & 23 W Maple Street
Contact person:	Alison Costanzo	Title:	Executive Director
Business address:	23 W Maple Street	City & Zip	Lombard
Telephone:	630-629-1885	Email:	

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Total cost of the project:	\$ 6,000
Cost of city services requested in this application (if any):	\$
Grant funding requested in this application (excluding city services)	\$ 2,500
Total funding requested in this application (grant including services):	\$ 2,500
Percent of total project cost being requested:	42%
Anticipated attendance:	1000+
Anticipated number of overnight hotel stays:	

Briefly describe the project for which are funds are being requested:

The Lombard Historical Society, in partnership with the Lombard Park District, is planning a community-based outdoor art installation titled *Power of Place* to commemorate the United States' 250th anniversary in 2026. The exhibition will feature approximately 10–15 juried artworks displayed at Lilacia Park and the Lombard Historical Society site at 23 W. Maple Street.

The project includes four participation categories: Elementary, Middle School, High School, and College/Community Artist—to engage a wide range of local talent. Elementary, Middle school students and Community Artist can paint on Park District–fabricated cutouts of America, while high school, college, and community artists are encouraged to create mixed-media works suitable for outdoor display.

The Tourism grant funds will support **signage and marketing costs**, with coordinated promotion through the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau attract visitors and elevate Lombard's visibility as a cultural destination. An arts grant from Arts DuPage to fund the artist stipends. The project will celebrate Lombard's unique sense of place while driving tourism during America's 250.

ORGANIZATION

Number of years that the organization has been in existence:	55
Number of years that the project or event has been in existence:	0

Number of years the project has been supported by Village of Lombard funds:	0
How many years does the organization anticipate it will request grant funding?	Dependent on success of the event

1) Describe the organization (include brief history, mission, and ability to carry out this project):

The Lombard Historical Society (LHS) was founded in 1969 following Lombard’s centennial celebration and works to preserve, promote, present, and protect the history of the community. LHS shares Lombard’s stories through exhibits, school and public programs, special events, and preservation efforts that connect both residents and visitors to the village’s past and present.

Today, LHS is supported by a team of two full-time and two part-time staff members, along with more than 50 dedicated volunteers who help with everything from collections care to events and outreach. We recently added a staff member focused on education and community engagement, and since her hiring we’ve made strong progress building relationships with local schools, positioning us well to lead a student-centered project like *Power of Place*.

LHS maintains a close working partnership with the Lombard Park District and also partners with the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau and Arts DuPage to promote arts, culture, and tourism throughout the region. With a long track record of exhibitions, community programs, and collaborative projects, LHS has the experience, staffing, and partnerships in place to successfully manage and deliver this public art initiative.

2) Please describe how the program and any proceeds from the event support the goals and objectives of the organization, other local groups or initiatives, and the community at large:

The theme of the art installation: *Power of Place* supports the Lombard Historical Society's mission by directly connecting local history and art in celebration of the United States' 250th anniversary. At its core, this project highlights what art can do for a community. It can spark conversation, build understanding, create pride, and help people see familiar places in new ways. Through the theme of place-based history, students and artists are invited to reflect on what makes Lombard meaningful, from the legacy of Sheldon Peck, artist, abolitionist, and community builder, to Ellen Martin, the first woman to cast a vote in the United States, to the spirit of cooperation and innovation seen in places like the York Center Cooperative.

This project also celebrates the importance of the two exhibition locations. Lilacia Park has long been a central gathering place for Lombard and remains one of the village's most iconic destinations. 23 W. Maple Street, the original home of the Lombard Historical Society, continues to be where we host our exhibitions, including a special 250th anniversary exhibit planned for 2026. Sharing the artwork across both sites brings Lombard's history into the everyday spaces where people naturally gather.

This is a free public experience, open to everyone. While there are no ticket proceeds, the project is intended to have a positive economic impact by encouraging visitors to spend more time in Lombard, explore the downtown area, dine locally, shop at small businesses, and attend related events tied to the 250th anniversary. The installation is designed to be more than a single stop, but rather part of a larger community experience that benefits residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

The project also brings the community together during a major milestone year by engaging students, teachers, artists, families, and visitors in a shared creative experience. Partnerships with the Lombard Park District, local schools, Arts DuPage, and the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau help expand the project's reach while supporting arts education, community pride, and local tourism.

3) What is the organization's plan to make the project self-sustaining?

Power of Place is something we're creating especially for the 250th anniversary, and while we're not planning for it to automatically repeat every year, its future really depends on how well it's received. If the community loves it, if it brings people together, and if it helps draw visitors into Lombard, then we would absolutely look at art grants and future sponsorships to keep it going in some form.

There are several tourism and arts funding opportunities that could support a project like this, and having strong partners like the Lombard Park District, Arts DuPage, and the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau gives us a good foundation for continuing the work if it proves successful.

Most of all, because this project is free, public, and designed to encourage people to spend more time in Lombard, it has real potential to support local tourism. If we see a positive impact on visitors and local businesses, that will also help make the case for future funding.

So while this is a special project for the 250th, we're setting it up in a way that leaves the door open for future versions if the community response and tourism impact are strong.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Is the event open to the general public?

Yes No

Do you intend to apply for a liquor license for this project?

Yes No

Will any revenues from this event be returned to the community?

Yes No

Have you requested grant funding in the past?

Yes No

If yes, provide grant awards for past 5 years:

The Annie-Versary: 100 Years of Little Orphan Annie
Food Truck Social on Maple Street

1) Provide a full detailed description of the proposed project or event.

Power of Place is a community wide outdoor public art installation developed by the Lombard Historical Society in partnership with the Lombard Park District as part of the United States' 250th anniversary in 2026. The project will be promoted with support from Arts DuPage and the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau and will be displayed at Lilacia Park and 23 W. Maple Street from June through August. This timing is intentional, as it helps boost visitation during a period when tourism typically dips after Lilac Time. Approximately 10 to 15 juried works by students and community artists will be featured.

The Lombard Historical Society will manage all artist and student submissions, the jury process, and interpretation, while the Lombard Park District will handle fabrication of the cutouts, installation of all artwork, and yard sign style signage. Clear and strict guidelines will be in place to ensure that all artwork is appropriate for a public family friendly setting and non-political in nature.

The exhibition invites participants to explore what makes Lombard meaningful through place-based storytelling and visual art. Inspiration may include Sheldon Peck, Ellen Martin, the York Center Cooperative, and everyday places that reflect Lombard's identity and community values.

Three participation categories are offered. Middle school students will paint on Park District fabricated America cutouts. High school students may use the cutout format or create outdoor safe mixed media works. College students and community artists will submit mixed media artwork designed for outdoor display. Selected artists will receive stipends, and category awards will be presented.

The installation is free and open to the public and is designed to bring the community together, connect history and art, and encourage visitors to spend time exploring Lombard's downtown, local businesses, and related 250th anniversary programming. Promotional support through Arts DuPage and the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau will help extend the project's reach throughout the region and draw visitors back to Lombard during the summer months.

2) If your application is accepted, how will the tourism grant funds be used?

Tourism grant funds will support signage and marketing costs, with coordinated promotion through the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau to attract visitors and elevate Lombard's visibility as a cultural destination. Artist stipends will be funded through an Arts DuPage arts grant, ensuring broad participation from students and community artists. Together, this support will allow the project to celebrate Lombard's unique sense of place while driving tourism during America's 250th anniversary.

3) What modifications to the event or other steps will be taken to increase event attendance over previous years (not applicable to first time events)?

LOCATION

Provide the location of the event or project. If a location has not been secured, list the venue(s) being proposed or considered.

The Power of Place outdoor art installation will take place at Lilacia Park and at the Lombard Historical Society campus located at 23 W. Maple Street. Both locations are secured and confirmed for the project.

MILESTONES AND TIMETABLES

Describe the milestones that will mark the progress towards implementing the project and provide a timetable for the completion of each milestone.

January 2026

- Secure funding from Arts DuPage to support artist stipends
- Begin coordination with the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau and Arts DuPage regarding marketing and promotional planning

Mid January to February 2026

- Release project information publicly, including the theme and participation guidelines
- Reach out to local schools, art teachers, and college programs to invite participation
- Issue a press release announcing the project
- Work with Arts DuPage to help reach local and regional artists

March 2026

- The Lombard Park District will have all student cutouts fabricated and ready for distribution to schools and participating artists
- Begin early promotional efforts, including listing the project in the Lilac Time brochure

April 2026

- Submission deadline for all artwork across student and artist categories
- Begin organizing materials for interpretation and signage

May 2026 (Post–Lilac Time)

- Finalize artist writeups, labels, and yard sign content
- Prepare the installation plan with the Lombard Park District

June 2026

- Installation of all artworks by the Lombard Park District at Lilacia Park and 23 W. Maple Street
- Official project launch

July 2026

- Judging of the student and artist submissions
- Share results publicly and highlight winning works

August 2026

- Exhibition remains on display through the end of August
- Work with the Lombard Park District to support visitor tracking and gather attendance insights

End of August 2026

- Exhibition closes
- Begin deinstallation and evaluation of project outcomes

IMPACT

- 1) Please describe how the event or program will promote overnight stays and/or tourism within the Village of Lombard. If a returning event, detail the number of overnight stays generated and share details regarding the tourism impact of the event.

While Power of Place is not expected to generate significant overnight stays, it will still play an important role in supporting tourism and community engagement within the Village of Lombard. The installation will be on display from June through August, a period when visitor numbers traditionally drop after Lilac Time. By offering a free, family friendly outdoor art experience in two highly visible locations, Lilacia Park and 23 W. Maple Street, the project encourages both residents and day visitors to return to Lombard throughout the summer.

Promotion through the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau and Arts DuPage will help raise awareness of the installation across the region. Although the audience will likely be primarily local or regional day visitors rather than overnight travelers, this type of cultural programming still strengthens Lombard's visibility, enhances the visitor experience, and helps support local businesses by encouraging people to stay longer, explore the area, dine locally, and visit nearby attractions.

The project also aligns with the national 250th anniversary, giving visitors an additional reason to stop in Lombard during a milestone year. By adding meaningful cultural experiences during a slower tourism season, Power of Place helps maintain visitor interest and supports the village's broader tourism goals, even without driving overnight stays.

- 2) Please describe the economic benefit to local businesses and the Lombard community. How will your event draw more people from outside the local market (50 miles or more) or attract a new visitor audience?

Power of Place will provide a positive economic boost for Lombard by encouraging people to visit, explore, and spend time in the community during a season that is usually quieter after Lilac Time. Summer visitation tends to slow down outside of Cruise Nights, so offering a free, outdoor art experience at Lilacia Park, one of Lombard's most popular landmarks, gives both residents and day visitors a strong reason to return throughout the summer. Visitors who come to see the artwork are likely to stop at local restaurants, grab coffee, visit downtown shops, or explore nearby attractions including the Historical Society's special 250th anniversary exhibit at 23 W. Maple Street.

The project will be promoted through the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau, Arts DuPage, and the Illinois 250 statewide event list, which will help extend visibility well beyond Lombard. These platforms connect with cultural travelers, families, and visitors from across Illinois and the region, giving Lombard the chance to reach new audiences who may not normally visit the area.

Even though Power of Place is not designed to generate overnight stays, it still contributes to the economic health of the village by bringing more people into Lombard during the summer, supporting local businesses, and strengthening Lombard's identity as a welcoming and creative community. Over time, meaningful cultural programming like this can help build repeat visitation and long term interest in Lombard as a destination.

- 3) Who is the target audience for your event or project? What is your anticipated attendance?

The target audience for Power of Place includes local families, art enthusiasts, visitors from across DuPage County and the greater Chicagoland area. Because the installation is outdoors at Lilacia Park, a highly visited and well loved community space, the project is also expected to attract casual park visitors, walkers, photographers, and people who may discover the installation while spending time in the park.

With added promotion from the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau, Arts DuPage, and the Illinois 250 statewide event list, the project will also reach cultural travelers and visitors interested in history, public art, and 250th anniversary programming statewide.

Since this is a new event, exact attendance is difficult to estimate. However, based on Lilacia Park's regular summer foot traffic and the visibility created through regional promotion, we anticipate a few hundred or more visitors over the course of the June through August installation, including both on purpose visitors and casual passersby who will engage with the artwork.

The project is designed to be accessible, family friendly, and free, making it appealing to a wide and diverse audience.

- 4) Please identify and detail the estimated cost of any Village of Lombard services anticipated as part of the event (e.g., Police, Public Works, Fire, barricades, etc.). For each cost, confirm whether the costs for such services be covered by the host organization and reimbursed to the Village or are whether the services are requested to be covered under this grant. Any services not specifically requested below and approved as part of this grant, will be the responsibility of the applicant organization.

We do not currently foresee a need for Public Works, Police or Fire services, and none are being requested as part of this grant.

- 5) Please describe any collaborative arrangements developed or anticipated with other organizations to fund or otherwise implement the project (including in-kind donations).

Power of Place is a highly collaborative project supported by several community and regional partners. The Lombard Park District is a key partner and will provide significant in-kind support, including fabricating the student cutouts, assisting with installation, and producing yard sign style signage for the artwork at Lilacia Park. Their staff support and materials represent a major contribution to the project's success.

The DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau and Arts DuPage will partner with the Lombard Historical Society on marketing and promotion, helping the project reach a wider regional audience. Their promotional platforms and staff expertise are essential in extending the reach of the installation beyond Lombard.

The Lombard Historical Society is also applying for an Arts DuPage arts grant to fund artist stipends, ensuring that students and community artists can participate without financial barriers.

Local schools will participate by encouraging student submissions, providing classroom support, and helping distribute project information. This partnership helps connect the educational community directly to the project.

Together, these collaborations provide a strong mix of in-kind support, marketing partnerships, and potential grant funding that will help make Power of Place a successful and sustainable community project.

- 6) Please describe your marketing plan. Detail the strategies your organization will use to promote the event or project (e.g., advertising, public relations, marketing, print materials, promotional pieces).

The marketing plan for Power of Place focuses on reaching local residents, students, families, art enthusiasts, and regional visitors through a combination of digital promotion, print materials, and collaborative outreach.

Digital and Online Promotion

- Promotion through the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau and Arts DuPage event calendars, newsletters, and social media platforms to reach regional audiences
- Inclusion on the Illinois 250 statewide event list, expanding visibility to visitors interested in anniversary programming
- Posts and updates on the Lombard Historical Society and Lombard Park District websites and social media channels
- A dedicated event page on the LHS website featuring project details, participating artists, and installation highlights
- We also hope that the Village of Lombard will assist in promoting the project through their communication channels, including e-newsletters, social media, and the Village website

Print and On-Site Materials

- Listing in the Lilac Time brochure, a widely distributed publication that reaches thousands of residents and tourists
- Printed posters and flyers shared with local businesses and Village facilities
- Yard sign style artwork labels installed at Lilacia Park to help guide and inform visitors

Public Relations

- Press releases sent to local newspapers, online news outlets, school districts, and community newsletters.

Community and School Outreach

- Direct communication with local schools, art teachers, and college art programs to encourage participation and spread the word
- Coordination with Arts DuPage to reach practicing artists and art groups throughout DuPage County

This multi-layered approach ensures strong visibility both locally and regionally. Combined with support from the Village of Lombard, the project will help bring residents back to Lilacia Park throughout the summer while also attracting new visitors who may not otherwise travel to Lombard.

- 7) Funding for the Local Tourism Grant Program for 2026 is constrained. What have you done to reduce the amount of funds your organization is requesting under this grant? If you do not receive the

full funding you requested for 2026, how will your organization adjust? What modifications can/will you make to your budget or event if full grant funding is not made available?

We recognize that funding for the 2026 Local Tourism Grant Program is limited, and we have already taken steps to keep our request as modest as possible. The Lombard Historical Society is partnering closely with the Lombard Park District, which is providing significant in-kind support through cutout fabrication, installation assistance, and signage production. We are also seeking an Arts DuPage arts grant to cover artist stipends, reducing the amount requested from the Village.

If we do not receive the full level of funding requested, we will make adjustments to keep the project viable. We can scale back portions of our marketing plan, particularly the paid or expanded promotional efforts coordinated through the DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau. We will also explore additional sponsorships and community partners to help close any gaps.

The core project the outdoor installation at Lilacia Park will still move forward, but some elements such as printed promotional materials, event enhancements, or expanded signage may be reduced to stay within budget. Our goal is to maintain the heart of the project while being flexible and responsible with available resources.

FINANCES

- Please include a detailed itemized budget for your entire event on the attached budget form (2 years of past actuals and estimates for upcoming event).
- Attach a copy of the most recently completed agency audit and Federal Form 990. If these documents are not available, please explain why they are not available.

CHECKLIST

- Completed Local Tourism Grant Program Application Form.
- Completed detailed budget form.
- Promotional materials from past events (not applicable to first time events).
- Post event summary from past event (not applicable to first time events).
- Copy of the most recently completed agency audit or explanation of why it is not available.
- Copy of the most recent Federal Form 990 for the agency or explanation of why it is not available.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Applicant agrees to acknowledge Village of Lombard support in all event materials using required attribution language.
- Applicant agrees to submit a post-event summary within 90 days including attendance, hotel stays, marketing materials, and evaluation.
- Applicant understands that grant awards may be less than the requested amount and agrees to proceed with adjusted funding if awarded.

- Applicant confirms that no elected official, Village employee, immediate family member, or owned business entity will benefit from this grant funding.

Additional Notes, Comments or Explanations:

--

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that data in this application are true and correct, the application has been duly authorized by the organization and any funds received under this grant will be used for the purposes described in this application.

Name:	Alison Costanzo		
Title or office held:	Executive Director	Date:	12/11/2025

Signature:  _____

