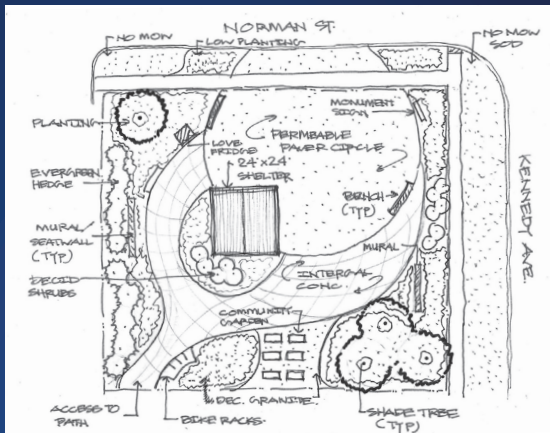


JULY 4TH FESTIVAL SPECIAL SECTION INSIDE

GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • JUNE 2026



Kennedy Commons is envisioned as a vibrant green space that cultivates community connection, sustainability, the arts and education. As shown in renderings from Sawdust and TL Design, the area provides spaces for gathering, dining, recreation and community events.

ENHANCING SHARED SPACES

Highland sets its sights on Legacy Foundation's 'Love Where You Live' grant to transform property

The Redevelopment Commission's plan to create a shared community space on Kennedy Avenue near LaPorte where a Speedway Gas Station once stood dovetails perfectly with the specs of a Legacy Foundation grant.

The foundation has \$4 million to award to projects in Lake County that meet the goals.

The first round of qualifiers will be notified in early July. The second round will include

a full proposal that must be submitted by Sept. 5 with finalists announced Oct. 20.

Redevelopment Commission President Alex Robertson believes Highland is in a great position.

"Our location is ideally situated near bike paths, a mile from downtown, the Little Calumet River and Heron Rookery," he said. "These first renderings reflect our community identity and diversity."

JULY 4TH FESTIVAL

Highland's Fourth of July Festival, hosted by the Council of Community Events, kicks off Wednesday, **July 1** and continues through Sunday, **July 5**. "We look forward to celebrating 250 years of freedom together as a community," Recreation Director Alyce VanDrunen said.

WHAT'S NEW?

Self-service kiosks with unlimited ride wristbands and reusable ride cards are new to the festival this year. Wristbands are \$33 when paying with a credit card/Apple Pay and \$32 when paying with cash.

SENSORY-FRIENDLY CARNIVAL



Join us for a special event designed to create a comfortable, inclusive experience for individuals of all abilities. Enjoy carnival rides in a sensory-friendly, low-stimulation environment — with reduced noise, fewer crowds and extra support. Scan the QR code to register.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!



Be part of the fun and help make this year's celebration a success! Scan the QR code to volunteer.

Turn the page to get all the details on this year's July 4th Festival including festival hours, details on the beer garden, entertainment lineup, parades and more!

Dates & Times

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

FESTIVAL HOURS: 5-10:30 p.m.

CARNIVAL: 5-10 p.m.

UNLIMITED RIDE WRISTBANDS: 5-10 p.m.

BEER GARDEN: 5-10:30 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT: 5-10:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 2

FESTIVAL HOURS: 2-10:30 p.m.

CARNIVAL: 2-10 p.m.

UNLIMITED RIDE WRISTBANDS: 2-6 p.m.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: 2-3 p.m.

Petting Zoo

BEER GARDEN: 2-10:30 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT: 3:30-10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 3

FESTIVAL HOURS: 2-10:30 p.m.

CARNIVAL: 2-10 p.m.

UNLIMITED RIDE WRISTBANDS: 2-6 p.m.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: 2-3 p.m.

Bubble Show and Activities

BEER GARDEN: 2-10:30 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT: 3-10:30 p.m.

ALL-AMERICAN MILE: 6:30 p.m.

TWILIGHT PARADE: 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 4

FESTIVAL HOURS: 2-10:30 p.m.

KIDDIE PARADE: 2 p.m.

CARNIVAL: 2-10 p.m.

UNLIMITED RIDE WRISTBANDS: 2-6 p.m.

BEER GARDEN: 2-10:30 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT: 2-10:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

FESTIVAL HOURS: 2-9 p.m.

SENSORY-FRIENDLY CARNIVAL: 1-3 p.m.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES: 2-3 p.m.

Balloon Twisting

CARNIVAL: 2-8 p.m.

UNLIMITED RIDE WRISTBANDS: 2-6 p.m.

BEER GARDEN: 2-9 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT: 3-9 p.m.

FIREWORKS SHOW: 9 p.m. (Homestead)

Please note: Unlimited Ride Wristbands are \$33 when paying with a credit card/Apple Pay or \$32 when paying with cash.

2026 4th of July FESTIVAL

★ Beer Garden ★



Enjoy beer, wine and ready-to-drink cocktail cans in our expanded venue. Patrons must be at least 21 to purchase alcohol. ID is required. Final call to purchase drink tickets is 30 minutes before the end of the festival each night.

★ Food & Craft Vendors ★

Check out this year's food and craft booths. Foodies can get their fill on everything from Wisconsin cheese and pierogies to funnel cakes and elephant ears. Craft and business vendors featuring jewelry and clothing as well as items for your home will be part of the mix.



★ Kiddie Parade ★



The Kiddie Parade begins at **2 P.M. SATURDAY, JULY 4** at the Highland Municipal Parking Lot on Highway and Kennedy avenues. The parade route continues east on Highway and ends at Main Square Park. A special gift is provided for each child who participates, with some lucky winners finding **GOLDEN TICKETS** for free wristbands. Scan QR code to register.



★ Entertainment ★

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

- 5-6 p.m. **CREATURES OF HABIT** – 90s Grunge/
Post 2000s rock
- 6:30-7:45 p.m. **TITUS RODES BAND** – Covers/Originals
- 8:30-10:30 p.m. **THE 1985** – Totally 80s Mixtape LIVE!

THURSDAY, JULY 2

- 3:30-5:30 p.m. **THE SHARKS** – New Wave/Classic Rock
- 6-8 p.m. **TOGETHER** – Classic Rock/Funk/Soul
- 8:30-10:30 p.m. **NAWTY** – Motown

FRIDAY, JULY 3

- 3-4 p.m. **JOHN METZGER** – Acoustic Rock/Blues
featuring **RAY STOLL & FRIENDS**
- 4:30-6 p.m. **CHRIS PETERS** – Feel-good Pop with Heart
- 6:30-8 p.m. **I'M WITH FRANK** – All Genres, new and old
- 8:30-10:30 p.m. **AMERICAN ENGLISH** – Beatles Tribute

SATURDAY, JULY 4

- 2-4 p.m. **CAUGHT ON CLINE** – Soul/Funk/Jazz/R&B
- 4:30-6 p.m. **DAVE & DAVE** – British Invasion /Punk/
New Wave/Pop/Classic/Alternative
- 6:30-8 p.m. **MR. FUNNYMAN** – Ultimate Variety Band
- 8:30-10:30 p.m. **ECHOES OF POMPEII** – Pink Floyd Tribute

SUNDAY, JULY 5

- 3-4:30 p.m. **MORNING GLORIES** – Modern Folk Trio
- 5-6:30 p.m. **ASHLYN** – Country
- 7-9 p.m. **TRITT MCGRAW** – Travis Tritt and
Tim McGraw Tribute



★ Twilight Parade ★



The Twilight Parade steps off at **6:30 P.M. FRIDAY, JULY 3** at 45th and Kennedy/St. James Church. Marching bands, military, veterans, scouts, police and fire groups are free. Scan QR code to register.



★ All-American Mile ★



The 42nd annual All-American Mile Run kicks off the Twilight Independence Day Parade. It is part of the Calumet Striders 2026 Gold Cup Series! Register early to receive a T-shirt. Open to all age groups, the race begins at **6:30 P.M. FRIDAY, JULY 3** at 40th Street and Kennedy Avenue. The fee is \$15 through July 2 only at runsignup.com or register race day for \$20 from 5-6:15 p.m. at the school administration building. **TOP PRIZES:** Awards for Top 3 in each age division plus overall male/female winners, masters male/female winners and Clydesdale/Athena finishers. Males with the fastest sub 4-min mile and females with the fastest sub 4:50-min mile win a \$1,000 prize. Scan QR code to register. Race-day registration is cash only.

★ Personal Fireworks ★

Fireworks are allowed between 5 p.m. and two hours after sunset **JUNE 29** through **JULY 9**. The exception is **JULY 4** between 10 a.m. and midnight. "Fireworks can be dangerous," Highland Police Chief Ralph Potesta said. "Take every precaution to stay safe." Personal fireworks are prohibited in all town parks.

★ July 5 Fireworks ★

Celebrate the red, white and blue! Grab a blanket or your favorite lawn chair and join us for Highland's spectacular fireworks display at **9 P.M. SUNDAY, JULY 5** at Homestead Park.

[COMMUNITY POTLUCK]

Join the Highland Neighbors for Sustainability for their June meeting and Community Potluck at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, **June 16** in the Community Garden, located east of the Central Fire Station on Highway Avenue. Admire the garden while sharing food and conversation.

INFO: Email Cathy Perrin at ctperrin@sbcglobal.net.

[ST. JAMES FESTIVAL]

St. James the Less Parish will be hosting its annual parish festival **June 18-21** at 45th and Kennedy. The four-day celebration features food, music, kiddie carnival rides, a family-friendly beer service area and so much more. Admission is free. Live entertainment includes:

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

5:30 p.m. Lukas Dou
7 p.m. Rak Bros

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

6 p.m. Nichalos Kazonis Band
8 p.m. Mr. Funnyman

SATURDAY, JUNE 20

5:30 p.m. Smiley Tilmon
8 p.m. Little Giant

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

2:30 p.m. Thrown Together
6 p.m. Father & Sons

[HIGHLAND SHRED DAY]

Highland will shred confidential documents for free from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, **June 20** at Public Works, 8001 Kennedy. Proof of residency is required.

- ▶ 4 boxes no larger than 12x18x10 or 4 brown paper bags.
- ▶ No plastic covers, binder clips/notebooks or spiral notebooks.



SIDEWALK SALE

Saturday | June 13

Join Highland merchants from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, **June 13** as they offer bargains galore throughout the Highway and Jewett downtown retail hub. The Sidewalk Sale, hosted by Highland Main Street, gives shoppers the opportunity to find some of the best deals in town.

[RESTAURANT CRAWL]

Join us for our Restaurant Crawl from 4-8 p.m. Tuesday, **June 30** in downtown Highland. Participating restaurants feature a special for \$7 or less, so that visitors can eat their way through downtown, stopping at their usual haunts and discovering new favorites along the way.

NEW

[PLAYMAKERS]

This six-week program from 6-7 p.m. Thursdays, **June 11-July 23** (off July 2) is designed for ages 5-12 with disabilities. Participants will build social skills, connect with others, and learn the fundamentals of volleyball in an inclusive and supportive environment.
FEE: \$40 residents | \$45 nonresidents
INFO: highlandparks.org

[TENNIS CAMP]

This action-packed tennis camp is perfect for beginners and intermediate players who want to learn the fundamentals of tennis while building confidence on the court. Participants will develop skills such as serving, forehands, backhands, volleys and scoring.
BEGINNER 6-8: 4:30-5:30 p.m.
INTERMEDIATE: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
WHERE: Brantwood Park courts
FEE: \$40 residents | \$45 nonresidents
INFO: highlandparks.org

[SOCCER SHOTS]

This engaging soccer class focuses on character development. Our caring team impacts lives on and off the field through best-in-class coaching, curriculum and communication.

June 10-August 5 - Wednesday nights

MINI (ages 2-early 3): 4:30-5 p.m.
CLASSIC (ages 3-5): 5:05-5:35 p.m.
PREMIER (ages 5-8): 5:40-6:30 p.m.

June 11-August 8 - Saturday mornings

MINI (ages 2-early 3): 9-9:30 a.m.
CLASSIC (ages 3-5): 9:35-10:05 a.m.
PREMIER (ages 5-8): 10-10:55 a.m.
WHERE: Field outside Lincoln Center
FEE: \$153 for nine-week session, \$30 annual enrollment fee includes jersey
INFO: Enroll online only at soccershots.org/northwestindiana