

City Profile

How does a city get its citizens to fall in love and stay in love with their city? Is it affordable homes in safe neighborhoods? Portage has beautiful, stable neighborhoods and one of the lowest tax rates in the region. Is it bustling commerce or the serenity of nature? Portage has learned to harmonize them both. Is it by providing great schools for the city's children? Portage has the best in the region.

By remaining vital and resilient, the City of Portage has become an ideal place to call home, whether you are raising a family or starting a business. The city offers distinct advantages in living, working and learning that area residents and businesses have discovered make Portage “**a place for opportunities to grow.**”

- [2007 Census Information](#)

Quick Facts

- Incorporated as a municipality in 1963
- 35.2 square miles in area
- Located approximately 150 miles from Chicago and Detroit
- Close proximity to two major highways – Interstate 94 and US 131
- Convenient access to an international airport
- Strong regional healthcare system with two major area hospitals
- Largest retail center in southwest Michigan
- Largest economy in Kalamazoo County
- Headquarters to Pfizer Inc., and Stryker Corporation
- Extensive parks and recreation facilities available
- Award-winning public schools and nearby colleges and universities
- Diverse range of housing options
- Financially strong and balanced economy
- Consistent high marks from annual Community Survey for overall quality of life



Education

If you value education, you can't help but be impressed by the City of Portage resume. Residents of Portage enjoy four excellent school systems, numerous colleges and universities and other life-long learning opportunities.

Age 25+	High School Graduate	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Portage	94.2	37.7
Kalamazoo County	91.6	34.0
United States	89.0	27.0

Source: 2007 US Census

Public Schools

- [Portage](#)
- [Comstock](#)
- [Vicksburg](#)
- [Schoolcraft](#)

Extension Campuses

- [Spring Arbor University](#)
- [Davenport University](#)
- [University of Phoenix](#)

Colleges and Universities

- [Western Michigan University](#)
- [Kalamazoo College](#)
- [Kalamazoo Valley Community College](#)

Community Learning Resources

- [Portage District Library](#)
- [Portage Senior Center](#)
- [Portage Cable Access](#)
- [Portage Community Center](#)

Public Safety

Providing highly trained and professional police and fire resources is one of the ways the city can insure the continued safety of its citizens. The city government also maintains an Emergency Coordination Center which is activated during emergency situations. The Portage Police Department is [CALEA](#) Certified – the primary nationally recognized law enforcement accreditation program. The City of Portage is also one of less than ten Michigan communities that has received certification from the National Weather Service in 2003 as a "[StormReady](#)" Community.



Housing

The city of Portage is a great place to buy or build a home. Comparative to other cities, Portage offers great property values, low taxes, safe and well maintained neighborhoods and a diverse range of available housing options.

Property Information

The property data hosted on the BS&A Software website is a static representation of the City of Portage assessment records. This information is updated regularly by the City Assessor.

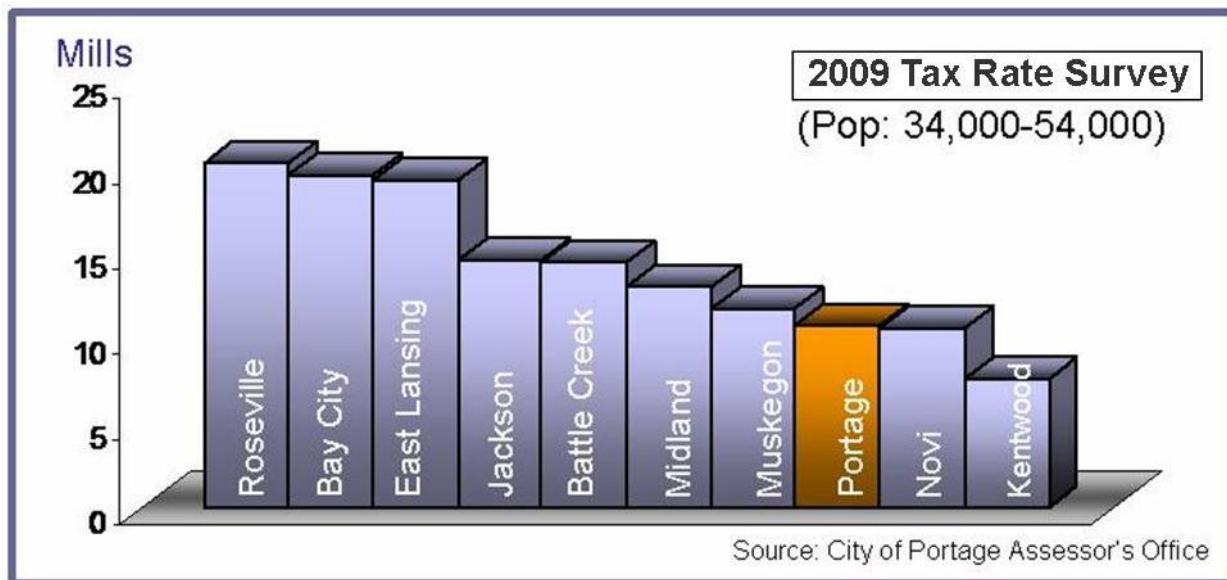
- [Parcel Information](#)

The Geographic Information System (GIS) is a computer system used for the storage, retrieval, analysis, and display of geographic information. This information includes things or places within the city that have a location/geographic component such as addresses, buildings, parcels, roads, or natural features like wetlands or woodlands.

- [Geographic Information System](#)

Many resources are available to assist you in learning more about the City of Portage community and housing options.

- [Home Builders Association of Greater Kalamazoo](#)
- [Greater Kalamazoo Association of Realtors](#)
- [Property Management Association of West Michigan](#)
- [Condominium and Apartment Guide by Kazoorent.com](#)
- [Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan](#)



Major Employers

Portage is a thriving city that has attracted a diverse and stable business base. It has resources to help businesses prosper and an employment environment rich in opportunities for its citizens. Available land, significant tax advantages, and business parks with an infrastructure in place are just a few of the reasons that businesses love Portage.

- [Major Employers](#)
- [Largest Employers](#)

Workforce Training and Labor Information

The Portage area boasts several workforce training programs that allow local businesses to keep their employees at the forefront of new information, methods, skills and techniques.

- [Southwest Michigan First - Workforce Training](#)
- [City of Portage Work Force Profile](#)
- [Michigan Works!](#)
- [Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth](#)
- [W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research](#)

Healthcare

Regional health care providers [Bronson](#) and [Borgess](#) have distinguished themselves on a national level in both quality of care and pioneering innovations that have been adopted nationwide.

The City of Portage historic connection to pharmaceuticals and medical devices is an important reason the area has attracted some of the best and brightest in the health care industry. Major national health care leaders [Pfizer](#) and [Stryker](#) and several distinguished biomedical companies have a presence in the region.

Shopping

The city of Portage is the largest retail center in southwest Michigan. Local, regional and national retailers all find Portage an excellent location to do business which means more choices for shoppers. The South Westnedge Avenue Commercial Corridor is the retail heart of Portage and the location of the areas only regional mall - [Crossroads Mall](#). A continuous influx of new retail businesses make Portage an ever-changing, invigorating retail landscape.

- [Yellow Pages Switchboard Digital Directory](#)
- [Google Maps - Portage Retail](#)
- [Areaguides.net - Portage Shopping](#)

Parks and Recreation

The award-winning Portage park system offers an abundance of diverse recreational opportunities and green space:

- 7 lakes providing 1,732 acres of water for lakefront, water sports, fishing and other activities
- 9 miles of Portage Creek (a rare urban cold water trout habitat)
- 60+ linear trail miles (bikeways, hiking and pedestrian trails)
- 800 acres of protected land for public use
- Over 2,000 acres of park and recreational space in the community
- Numerous and diverse recreational facilities located throughout the city
- Annual “Summer Entertainment Series” at all city park venues

City Parks and Recreation Resources

- [Portage Parks Map](#)
- [Park System and Bikeways/Trails](#)
- [Bikeway Brochure](#)
- [Portage Creek Bicentennial Park Guide and Map](#)
- [Celery Flats Interpretive Center & Historical Area Brochure](#)
- [Wander The Wetlands – West Lake Nature Preserve Guide](#)
- [Watching For Wildlife At Bishop’s Bog Brochure](#)
- [Portage South/Centre Greenway Guide](#)

Additional Recreational Opportunities

In addition to the Portage park system, this area offers a variety of year-round recreational and sports opportunities:

- Numerous public and private golf courses
- Indoor/outdoor sports facilities for soccer, basketball, softball, hockey and more
- Thousands of acres of county and state parks and nature preserves
- Plentiful lakes and rivers for boating, fishing, swimming, canoeing, camping and more
- Linear parks including the 35-mile Kal-Haven trail linking Kalamazoo to Lake Michigan
- Spectator sports including professional baseball, and hockey teams and Division One athletics at Western Michigan University.



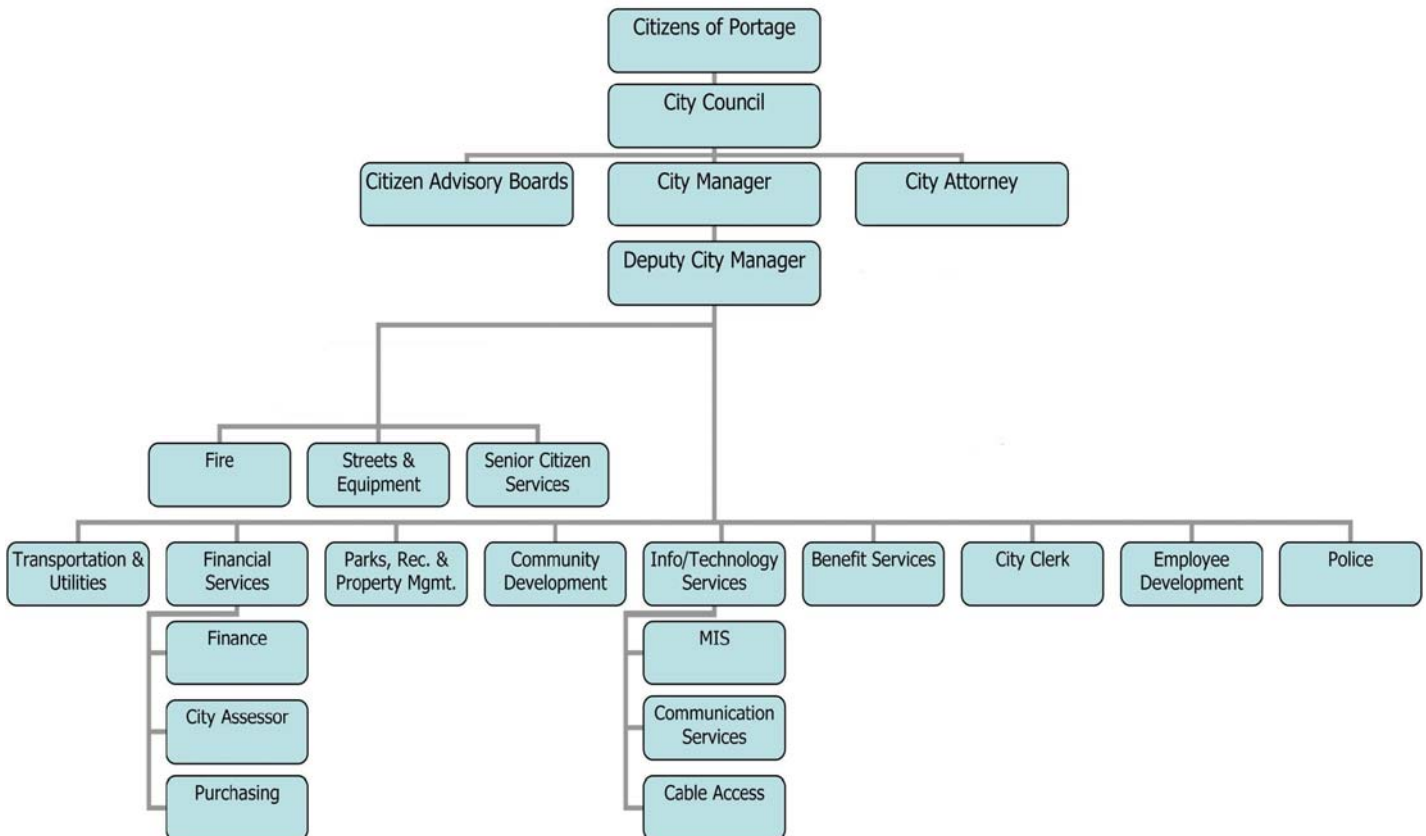
Senior Center

Established in 1979, the Portage Senior Center is the first Michigan nationally accredited senior center. It is a vital, busy place offering a variety of services and activities that change with the needs and desires of its members. The mission of the Portage Senior Center is to provide, with the help of its members, information and a range of services, activities and volunteer opportunities that promote personal growth, health, friendship and independence for area persons over the age of 50.

City Government

City Charter established:

- *Council / Manager form of government*
- Mayor elected every two years for a two-year term
- Six Councilmembers elected at-large for four-year terms in staggered elections every two years
- City Manager serves as Chief Administrative Officer - appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the City Council



The City of Portage – An Award-Winning Community

Thanks to a dedicated city staff and the continued efforts of an engaged Council, the City of Portage has a long history of excellence. Year after year the city government is recognized for excellence in areas such as public safety, innovative use of technology, financial planning and budgeting, public works projects, parks and recreation programs, public communications and other areas of public service. In addition, the City Administration is committed to providing outstanding customer service to its citizens and businesses. The City Administration encourages citizens to get involved and keep our city great. And we will keep Portage an easy place to live, and **a place for opportunities to grow.**



- Kalamazoo Citizens For Responsible Government Online Transparency Scorecard — 4 Out Of 4 Stars
- Herme's Award Honorable Mention — City Logo Redesign
- Videographer Award of Distinction — Road Works Video
- Communicator Award of Distinction — City Branding/Identity Campaign
- Magnus Opus Award Honorable Mention — Senior Center Travel Guide
- Apex Award of Excellence — Portage Folder Redesign
- Office of Highway Safety & AAA Of Michigan — Award For Excellence In Traffic Safety
- CALEA — Law Enforcement Re-Accreditation
- National Weather Service — StormReady Certification
- The Arbor Day Foundation — Tree City USA
- Keep Michigan Beautiful Award President's Plaque — South Central Greenway Project
- Government Finance Officers Association — Distinguished Budget Presentation
- Government Finance Officers Association — Certificate of Achievement For Financial Reporting Excellence



the videographer awards

