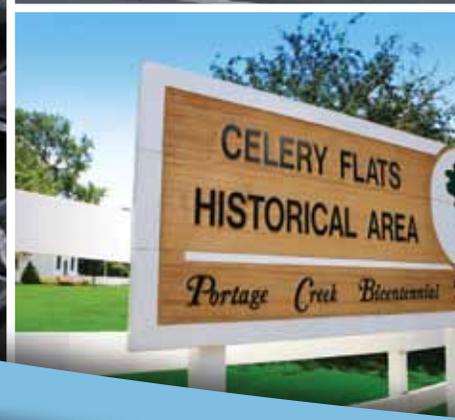


New Resident Guide to City Services





Dear New Portage Resident:

Welcome! On behalf of the City of Portage, we would like to extend a cordial greeting to you as a new member of our community. Portage residents have access to a variety of outstanding cultural, educational and recreational opportunities, and enjoy excellent roads, services and utilities. These qualities, along with one of the lowest property tax rates in Michigan, combine to make Portage a great place to live, work and learn. We think you will agree.

Inside this New Resident Guide to City Services you will find information about city services and a directory of city departments. Also enclosed in the welcome package are other materials to help you and your family become familiar with Portage. For even more information, go to the city website at www.portagemi.gov.

Once again, welcome to the City of Portage!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maurice S. Evans".

Maurice S. Evans
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter J. Strazdas".

Peter J. Strazdas
Mayor

City of Portage Profile

The City of Portage is rich with opportunities – a family-oriented area with a high quality of life, a strong economy and outstanding educational choices for lifelong learning. Four public school districts offer education to Portage students – Portage Public Schools (www.portageps.org) for most families and for a few areas of the city, Vicksburg Community Schools (www.vicksburgcommunityschools.org), Schoolcraft Community Schools (www.schoolcraftschools.org) and Comstock Public Schools (www.comstockpublicschools.org). Portage has bountiful natural resources, including seven lakes, state game areas, significant open spaces and wetlands. The community provides 17 parks, including three dedicated to nature preservation, and more than 57 miles of bikeways and multi-use trails, making the City of Portage a *Natural Place to Move*. Portage combines the convenience of an urban lifestyle with that of a close-knit, friendly community.

Location: Approximately mid-way between Chicago and Detroit along Interstate 94, Portage is within 300 miles of Cleveland, Indianapolis and Milwaukee and 50 miles from Grand Rapids and South Bend.

Population: 46,262 (2010 US Census)

Area: 35.2 square miles

Incorporated: December 1963

Motto: “A Natural Place to Move”



History: Long before the earliest settlers arrived in the early 1800s, Potawatami Indians inhabited the area. The Indians hunted, fished, grew corn, dwelt in conical shaped wigwams and greeted the early settlers in peace.

Settlers discovered the rich soil made a perfect growing environment for celery. By the 1880s, Portage had earned the distinction of being the “Celery City” of the nation. The area remained prolific in celery production until the middle of

the twentieth century. The City of Portage began its rapid transformation to its modern form during the post World War II era. The first major employer, The Upjohn Company, opened a manufacturing plant here in 1948 to produce antibiotics and adrenal cortex drugs. As a result of continued growth and prosperity, Portage was incorporated as a city in 1963.

Today, Portage remains a growing and thriving community, offering distinctive advantages in living, working and learning that area residents and businesses have discovered make Portage, “A Natural Place to Move.”

Books and other materials on the complete history of Portage can be found at the Portage District Library. “This Place Called Portage: Its Past and Present” and a guidebook of the Portage Historic District are also available for purchase at the Treasury Office located within City Hall.

Government in Portage

Government in Portage serves residents in many ways – police and fire protection, water and sewer systems, street maintenance, cultural events, park and recreation activities and much more. Portage city government plays a major role in daily life, but how is this accomplished? Who is responsible? How is the local government set up? Why is it important to know the answers to these questions? Informed citizens have a better understanding of how government works and can take advantage of opportunities available in the community as well as play an active role in making the community a pleasant place to live. Government in Portage works for the people and through the people.

Form of Government

The City of Portage operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The Mayor and City Councilmembers are the elected officials who preside over the city. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council to handle administrative duties at the city on a day-to-day basis. The City Manager makes recommendations to the City Council as a group and the Council acts on business at regularly scheduled meetings.

City Council

The Portage City Council consists of a Mayor and six Councilmembers. Councilmembers are elected to four-year terms, staggered every two years (three Councilmembers elected every two years). The Mayor is elected every two years and is the presiding officer of the Council. The Council is responsible for adopting and amending city ordinances, determining city policies and authorizing the annual city budget. The Council also determines the city tax millage and utility rates and approves contracts for the city.

The Council meets twice monthly (usually the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month) at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at Portage City Hall. Meetings are also broadcast live on cable access channel 98 (channel 99 on U-Verse) and on the internet at www.portagemi.gov. Meeting dates are published in the *Portager* newsletter and at www.portagemi.gov. Meeting agendas can be found on the city website, at City Hall and at the Portage District Library.

The City Manager

The City Manager advises the Council and makes recommendations on matters related to the operation of the city, including the responsibility for overseeing all departments and staff. The annual budget is prepared and presented to the City Council by the City Manager, as well as the Capital Improvement Program, which provides the city with direction for the future. The City Manager prepares the agenda for each City Council meeting and provides the City Council with all necessary documentation regarding each order of business.

Citizen Participation

The City of Portage relies on citizen participation on Council Advisory Boards and Commissions. The advice received from these groups assists the Council and the City Administration in making Portage a better place to live. Citizens can provide the special talents and experience needed to meet the diversity of challenges facing the community today and in the future. If you are interested in becoming involved in city Boards and Commissions, a volunteer resume form is available at www.portagemi.gov > *Boards & Commissions* or can be picked up at the Office of the City Clerk.

Customer Service Mission Statement

We, the employees of the City of Portage, are committed to delivering superior customer service that meets the needs of the citizens, business owners and others in a consistent manner unsurpassed in professionalism, politeness and promptness.

Our Commitments:

***S*elfless**: We will be attentive to customer requests, regardless of other priorities. We will demonstrate our abilities through our appearance, conduct, conversation and results.

***E*thical**: We will act with integrity and a sense of duty and obligation to our customers and will always be accountable for our actions.

***R*espectful**: We will treat our customers as we wish to be treated and ensure that every interaction is conducted in a pleasant and professional manner

***V*ersatile**: We will be resourceful and capable of performing a variety of tasks in order to get the job done, regardless of our job description.

***I*nnovative**: We will identify ways to continuously improve our processes and policies to meet the ever-changing needs of the community and our customers. We will welcome customer feedback as a means to improve the services we provide.

***C*ommunication**: We will actively listen to our customers and respond in a clear and concise manner. We will communicate through available resources, providing accurate information in a manner that is easy to understand.

***E*ncouraging**: We will support employee creativity and teamwork to promote an open and collaborative work environment that encourages employees to excel in every aspect of their job – including customer service.

An Award-Winning Community

Year after year, the City of Portage 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.

Recent Awards and Recognition

- ◆ Promoting Active Communities - Gold Recognition
- ◆ Arbor Day Foundation – Tree City USA
- ◆ Bicycle Friendly Community – League of American Bicyclists
- ◆ Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies – Continued Accreditation
- ◆ National Association of School Resource Officers Exceptional Service Awards
- ◆ Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety – Office of Highway Safety & AAA Michigan
- ◆ National Weather Service – “StormReady” Community
- ◆ Government Finance Officers Association - Distinguished Budget Presentation
- ◆ Government Finance Officers Association - Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- ◆ Southwest Michigan Chapter of the American Public Works Association/American Society of Civil Engineers Project of the Year For Transportation Projects Less Than \$1 million – Romence Road/ Moorsbridge Road Reconstruction Project
- ◆ Astrid Bronze Award – “Portager” Newsletter
- ◆ Sunshine Review Transparency in Government Award



Resources for New Residents

Better Business Bureau

(800) 684-3222

<http://westernmichigan.bbb.org>

Cable TV

Charter Communications

(877) 581-3485

www.charter.com

AT&T U-Verse

(800) ATT-2020

uverse.att.com

Child Care Resources

Child Care Resources

(269) 349-3296

www.ccr4kids.org

Curbside Recycling Service

City of Portage

(269) 329-4416

Garbage Service

In the Yellow Pages under

"Rubbish & Garbage Removal"

Gas and Electric Service

Consumers Energy

(800) 477-5050

www.consumersenergy.com

Hospitals

Borgess Health Alliance

(269) 226-7000

www.borgess.com

Bronson Healthcare Group

(269) 341-7654

www.bronsonhealth.com

Kalamazoo County 8th District Court

(269) 383-6460

Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport

(269) 388-3668

www.azoairport.com

Kalamazoo County Animal Control

(269) 383-8775

www.kalcounty.com/ac

Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center

(269) 373-5211

www.kalcounty.com/hhw

Kalamazoo Metro Transit

(269) 337-8222

www.kmetro.org

Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce

(269) 381-4000

www.kazoochamber.com

Poison Control Center

800-222-1222

Police/Fire Emergency Dial 9•1•1

Portage District Library

(269) 329-4544

www.portagelibrary.info

Portage Public Schools

Administration Building

(269) 323-5000

www.portageps.org

Realtors

Greater Kalamazoo Association of Realtors

(269) 382-1597

www.gkar.com

Secretary of State

(888) 767-6424

www.michigan.gov/sos

Telephone Service

In the Yellow Pages under

"Telephone Companies"

U.S. Post Office

(269) 327-7441

www.usps.com

Water Service

City of Portage Treasury Office

(269) 329-4455

www.portagemi.gov

Portage Area Newcomers Club

portagenewcomers.webs.com

Portage Area Newcomers is a social organization that helps families find their place in the community. They provide a venue for you to make social connections, business contacts, create a support network and contribute to community service. Club members include anyone who is new to the area looking for the support they need to build a new life in the Portage community.

City Services

City government is here to serve you, and the Portage City Administration is committed to making it as easy as possible for you to obtain the city services you need. The City of Portage curbside collection services include quarterly curbside brush collection, spring cleanup, fall leaf pickup and weekly curbside recycling. These programs are provided to single-family residential properties on public roadways only.

Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection

This program includes the quarterly collection of brush in January, April, July and October. Christmas trees are collected in January and **bagged** leaves are collected in April. For collection purposes, the city has been divided into quadrants and each quadrant has been assigned a week of the month when brush collection will take place. Visit www.portagemi.gov > *Departments > Streets Maintenance Division > Brush Pickup* to view a printable map that indicates the week designated for pickup in your neighborhood. Residents are asked to have brush at the curbside by 7 a.m. on the Monday of the designated week. Branches and brush of any length will be collected but must be no greater than 3 inches in diameter and stacked in neat piles along the street. Branches or brush in excess of 3 inches in diameter, lumber, timbers, ornamental shrubs, roots, railroad ties, firewood, brush generated from large tree removal, building material or tree stumps will not be collected.

Spring Cleanup

Each spring the City of Portage conducts the Spring Cleanup Program, giving residents the opportunity to reduce household clutter and dispose of unwanted materials by placing them along the street for collection. A detailed program

guide is provided along with the March edition of the *Portager* newsletter each year. You can also determine when the cleanup will occur in your area by visiting the "News" section on the city website home page beginning in March.

Fall Leaf Pickup

Each fall, the City of Portage conducts the popular Fall Leaf Program, which includes three curbside collections of leaves. A detailed program guide is provided along with the September edition of the *Portager* newsletter each year. You can also determine when the leaf collection will occur in your area by visiting the "News" section on the city website home page beginning in September.

Curbside Recycling Program

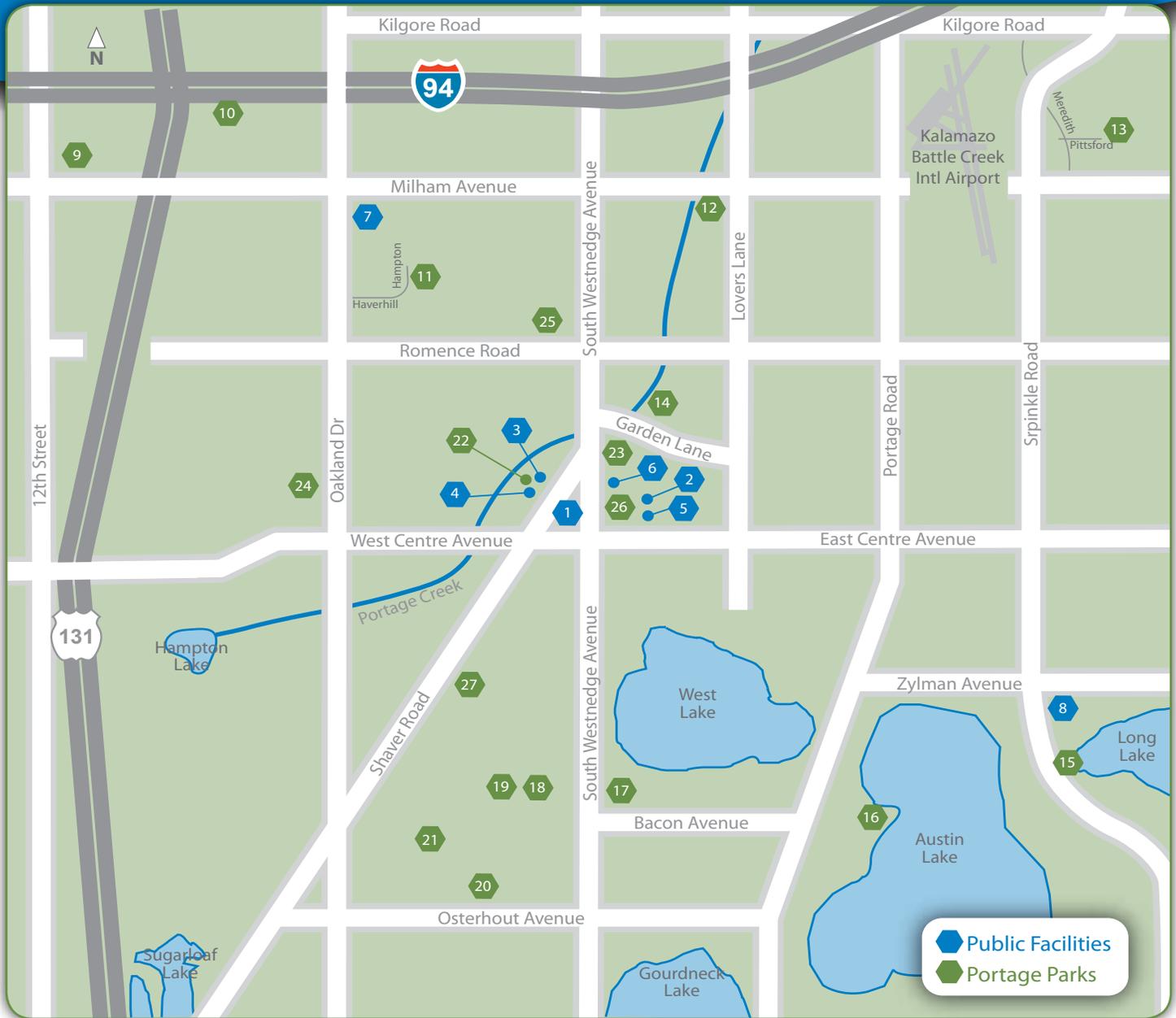


The City of Portage supports the goal to reduce and recycle waste by making it possible for residents to recycle at the curbside every week or drop material off

at the Republic Services drop-off facility. Locate our printable Curbside Recycling Guide at www.portagemi.gov > *Departments > Recycling Program*, which provides full details on this popular program. For more information you may call the Republic Services customer service center at 1-888-248-5112 or the City of Portage recycling hotline at 329-4416.

For additional information on any of these services, contact the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Services at 329-4444.

Public Facilities and Parks



- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Portage City Hall | 10. Harbors West Park | 19. South Westnedge Skate Park |
| 2. Portage District Library | 11. Haverhill Park | 20. Schrier Park |
| 3. Police/Court Building | 12. Portage Creek Bicentennial Park | 21. Bishop's Bog Preserve |
| 4. Fire Station #1 | 13. Lexington Green Park | 22. Central Park/Overlander Bandshell |
| 5. Portage Senior Center | 14. Celery Flats Historical Area | 23. Liberty Park |
| 6. Public Services Building | 15. Ramona Park | 24. Oakland Drive Park |
| 7. Fire Station #2 | 16. Lakeview Park | 25. Millennium Park |
| 8. Fire Station #3 | 17. West Lake Nature Preserve | 26. Veteran's Memorial Park |
| 9. Westfield Park | 18. South Westnedge Park | 27. Eliason Nature Reserve |

Department Directory

7900 South Westnedge Avenue • Portage, MI 49002

City Offices are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Important Phone Numbers	Area Code (269)	Telephone
Benefit Services.....		324-9208
City Assessor		329-4433
City Clerk		329-4511
City Manager.....		329-4400
Citizen Complaint Line		329-4404
Community Development.....		329-4477
Emergency		9•1•1
Employee Development.....		329-4533
Finance.....		329-4451
Technology Services		324-9269
Parks, Recreation & Public Services		
Parks & Recreation Division - <i>7719 South Westnedge Avenue</i>		329-4522
Public Services Division - <i>7719 South Westnedge Avenue</i>		329-4444
Senior Citizen Services - <i>320 Library Lane</i>		329-4555
Department of Public Safety		
Fire Division - <i>7830 Shaver Road</i>		329-4487
Police Division - <i>7810 Shaver Road</i>		329-4567
Purchasing		329-4534
Recycling Hotline		329-4416
Transportation & Utilities - <i>7719 South Westnedge Avenue</i>		329-4422
Treasurer (Water and Sewer Billing, Tax Billing)		329-4455
Water and Sewer (provided by United Water).....		324-9235

Department Listing

City Manager

Contact us for:

- ◆ New Resident / Relocation Information
- ◆ City Administration Information
- ◆ Cable TV / Cable Access
- ◆ *Portager* Community Newsletter
- ◆ Public Information (publications, tours)
- ◆ City Web Site
- ◆ City Hall Artwork Displays

329-4400

City Assessor

Contact us for:

- ◆ Change in Mailing Address
- ◆ Homestead Property Tax Affidavit Filing
- ◆ Board of Review
- ◆ Property Deeds
- ◆ Property Transfer Affidavit Filing
- ◆ Real Property Information (land / building sizes, values, State Equalized Value, home sale prices)
- ◆ Special Assessment Rolls

329-4433



City Clerk

Contact us for:

- ◆ Elections
- ◆ Absentee Ballots
- ◆ Voter Registration
- ◆ City Council Correspondence
- ◆ City Council Agendas and Meeting Minutes
- ◆ Volunteer Board & Commission Appointments
- ◆ Cemetery Information
- ◆ Freedom of Information Act Requests
- ◆ City Ordinance Information
- ◆ Block Party Permits
- ◆ Liquor Licenses

329-4511





Community Development

Contact us for:

- ◆ Construction Permits and Inspections:
 - Building
 - Electrical
 - Mechanical
 - Plumbing
 - Sign
 - Soil Erosion
 - New Water / Sewer Installation
- ◆ Code Requirements
- ◆ City Planning and Zoning
- ◆ Community Development Block Grant / Housing Rehabilitation Programs
- ◆ Aerial Photographs of the City
- ◆ Census Information
- ◆ GIS Mapping
- ◆ Flood Zones / Maps
- ◆ Land Division / Lot Splits
- ◆ Ordinance Enforcement
- ◆ Property Dimensions and Copies of Maps
- ◆ Street Address Assignments
- ◆ Water / Sewer Availability

329-4477

Employee Development

Contact us for:

- ◆ Professional Employment Opportunities
- ◆ Employment Applications
- ◆ Seasonal and Recreation Program Employment
- ◆ On-Call Firefighter Opportunities
- ◆ Volunteer Opportunities

329-4533

Finance / Treasury

Contact us for:

- ◆ Water and Sewer Billing Questions
- ◆ Water and Sewer Payments
- ◆ Tax Payments
- ◆ Special Assessment Payments
- ◆ Water Service Turn On / Transfer
- ◆ Auto Payment / Direct Debit Payment
- ◆ Name Change on Utilities Account
- ◆ Final Water Meter Reading
- ◆ City Budget Questions

329-4455

Parks, Recreation and Public Services



Parks & Recreation Division

Contact us for:

- ◆ Summer Entertainment Series
- ◆ Bikeway System / Trail Facilities
- ◆ Recreation Programs (including Softball Leagues)
- ◆ Celery Flats Historical Area
- ◆ Park Locations (see page 7) and Rules
- ◆ The Ice Rink at Millennium Park
- ◆ South Westnedge Skatepark
- ◆ Facility Rentals
- ◆ Park Maintenance
- ◆ Park Shelter Reservations
- ◆ Street Tree Trimming / Removal / Replacement
- ◆ Cemetery Maintenance

329-4522

Public Services Division

Contact us for:

- ◆ Spring Cleanup Program
- ◆ Fall Leaf Pickup Program
- ◆ Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection
- ◆ Weekly Curbside Recycling Program
- ◆ Household Hazardous Waste Disposal
- ◆ Public Street Snow Plowing
- ◆ Trees or Limbs Fallen in the Roadway
- ◆ Road Repairs (potholes, flooding, signs)
- ◆ Road Hazards
- ◆ Sidewalk Repairs
- ◆ Sign Issues (Traffic Control and Street Signs)

329-4444



Department of Public Safety



Fire Division

Contact us for:

- ◆ Fire Code Information
- ◆ Recreational Fire Permits
- ◆ No Burning Ordinance
- ◆ Fire Extinguisher Service Questions
- ◆ Fire Safety Presentations
- ◆ Smoke Detector Installation Program
- ◆ Infant / Child Car Seat Program

EMERGENCY 9•1•1

Non-emergency 329-4487

Police Division

Contact us for:

- ◆ Patrol and Detective Divisions
- ◆ Police or Accident Report Copies
- ◆ Non-Emergency Calls
- ◆ Alarm / Security Systems
- ◆ Crime Prevention
- ◆ School Liaison Program
- ◆ Neighborhood Watch Program
- ◆ Fingerprinting
- ◆ Gun Permits

EMERGENCY 9•1•1

Non-emergency 329-4567



Senior Citizen Services Portage Senior Center

Contact us for:

- ◆ Membership Information
- ◆ Programs / Events
- ◆ Support Groups
- ◆ Volunteer Services
- ◆ Information on Aging Issues
- ◆ Lifelong Learning Opportunities
- ◆ Transportation for Seniors
- ◆ Trips and Special Events
- ◆ Senior Wellness Program
- ◆ Health & Fitness Classes
- ◆ Flu Shots
- ◆ Senior Lunch Program

329-4555



Transportation & Utilities

Contact us for:

- ◆ Utility Project Requests & Petitions
- ◆ Environmental Questions
- ◆ Sewer and Water Connection Questions
- ◆ Storm Basin Maintenance / Questions
- ◆ Report a Streetlight Out
- ◆ Traffic Signals
- ◆ Traffic Counts and Questions
- ◆ Water / Sewer Construction Projects
- ◆ Road Closings / Construction Zones
- ◆ Motorist's Vision Obstructions
- ◆ Right-of-Way Permits
- ◆ Sewer and Water Maintenance Questions

329-4422

United Water

Contact us for:

- ◆ Water Service Repair Requests
- ◆ Water Main Breaks
- ◆ Street Sweeping Questions
- ◆ Hydrant Flushing
- ◆ High Water Usage Concerns
- ◆ Rusty Water
- ◆ No Water / Low Water Pressure
- ◆ Water / Sewer Location - MIS Dig

324-9235

