



7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, Michigan 49002
www.portagemi.gov
(269) 329-4400

Youth Advisory Committee Participates in "Project Sticker Shock"

On Saturday, April 16 the City of Portage Youth Advisory Committee participated in the annual "Sticker Shock" campaign. The annual event, organized by the Kalamazoo County Substance Abuse Task Force, brings together close to 100 youth, representing several student organizations including the Youth Advisory Committee, Peer Power, Jeter's Leaders, Hackett Catholic Central High School and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA).

Project Sticker Shock is a campaign that empowers youth in our community to raise public awareness about underage drinking and youth access to alcohol. Local students partner with area alcohol retailers to place underage drinking awareness stickers on multi-packs of alcoholic beverages. Close to 10,000 stickers were placed this year at over 40 participating alcohol vendors.



These young people are involved at each step of this campaign, from the design of the awareness message (printed on stickers, posters, t-shirts and billboards) to the promotion and implementation of the campaign, youth work with vendors to let adults in our community know that it is illegal and unsafe to provide alcohol to minors.



Make a Difference

A great city is built by the sacrifice of volunteers that give it a spirit of community. The City of Portage encourages its citizens to find ways to make a difference in the Portage community.

Do you like to garden? Consider adopting a City Centre flower bed for the season.

Do you have a group of fellow volunteers that can tackle a park cleanup project? Portage is home to 17 individual park properties and over 900 acres of protected land for public use.

Are you interested in serving on a City Council Advisory Board or Commission? The City Council will interview Board and Commission applicants on Tuesday, May 10 at 5:15 p.m.

Visit www.portagemi.gov > About Portage > Community > Volunteering to learn about the many volunteer opportunities the City of Portage offers and how to get connected.

Human Services Board to Hold Public Hearing on Draft Non-Discrimination Ordinance

Over the past few months, the City of Portage has researched best practices among 42 Michigan municipalities with local non-discrimination ordinances. The Human Services Board began its review of this matter during their March 3, 2016 regular meeting, which continues and will culminate with a public hearing on a draft Non-Discrimination Ordinance on Thursday, May 26 at 7 p.m. at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue).

The draft Non-Discrimination Ordinance provides three core protections in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations. The ordinance includes protections for persons covered under state and federal civil rights statutes and additional protections for sexual orientation and gender identity.

A draft of the ordinance and background materials are included in the March 3, April 7 and May 5, 2016 agendas of the Human Services Board. In addition, the final draft ordinance will be available for review prior to and during the May 26 public hearing noted above. To review the specific provisions of the draft Non-Discrimination Ordinance, please visit www.portagemi.gov > Boards & Commissions > Human Services Board.

Portage citizens are encouraged to attend the public hearing and provide input on this matter. For additional information, please contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477.

Department of Public Safety Offers Training for How to Respond to an Active Shooter Event

Schools, businesses and community members often ask the Portage Department of Public Safety (PDPS) for advice about how to react to a potential active shooter event. The PDPS is pleased to announce a new training program – Citizen Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE). CRASE is a nationally recognized training program developed by Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) in partnership with Texas State University that provides strategies and guidance for surviving an active shooter event. ALERRT is funded in part by the United States Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Criminal Justice Division of the Texas Governor's Office.

PDPS staff received training from ALERRT to provide CRASE instruction to the Portage community. Topics include the history and prevalence of active shooter events, the role of professional guardians, civilian response options, medical issues and more. This program can be customized to different sizes and types of organizations, including retail/commercial stores, medical facilities, manufacturing sites, schools and places of worship. The training takes approximately three to four hours and can be held at the organization's location or a City of Portage facility. A safety analysis of the organization's building(s) can also be performed to assess safety risks and areas where improvements can be made. The PDPS offers this training at no cost to the community.

For further information, please contact the PDPS Community Policing Officer, Adam Dmoch, at 324-9255 or at dmocho@portagemi.gov.

PORTAGEALERT Isn't It Time You Signed Up?

Life in Portage is quiet. It's a community that values neighbors and friends. But occasionally the outside world comes crashing in and it is important to be prepared.

On Saturday, February 27, several shootings in the Kalamazoo area took the lives of six of our fellow community members and gravely wounded two others. Although this terrible event did not require the use of PortageAlert, the city's mass notification system, there are certainly instances when it will be important to your wellbeing that you are notified by public safety officials of dangerous circumstances and what the advised course of action might be.

Sign up for PortageAlert today. More than 2,000 of your neighbors have already signed up. During an emergency, those individuals will be notified by phone, email or text message via public safety officials of the recommended

course of action and what to be on the lookout for. "Please sign up for PortageAlert, the mass notification system designed to share real-time information with Portage citizens," said Larry Shaffer, City Manager. "This service will allow the Police and Fire Divisions to provide you with information important to your health and safety."

PortageAlert is provided at no additional cost to Portage residents. Signing up may be the most important thing that you can do to protect you and your family.



Visit www.portagemi.gov or scan the QR Code to register your contact information. Those without internet access are encouraged to call 329-4405 to provide current contact information.

City to Host FREE! Paint Recycling Drop-off Event



FREE Latex Paint Recycling ECO-Party!

Date: Saturday, May 14

Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: Portage Department of Public Services
7719 South Westnedge Avenue

- ◆ Only latex paint will be accepted.
- ◆ Portage residents only – please bring a valid photo I.D.
- ◆ Paint must be in its original container. Paint that has been combined/mixed with other paint will not be accepted.

Join the party to help prevent paint sludge and metal and plastic components from being buried in a landfill. The City of Portage, in cooperation with Paint Recycling Services and ePaint Recycling, is offering Portage residents the opportunity to recycle old latex paint and paint cans for FREE!



Paint Recycling Services in partnership with ePaint Recycling takes in your old latex paint and remanufactures private label paint, in 20 different colors. The paint is sold in Habitat for Humanity ReStores throughout Michigan. This process not only keeps the paint from entering the waste stream, it also recycles the metal and plastic from the cans. And by using recycled - or "upcycled" paint - you help conserve water and other raw materials needed to manufacture new paint.

ePaint Recycling accepts latex paint only due to its non-hazardous classification. Oil-based paint, which is considered a hazardous material, can be dropped off at the Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center. Visit www.kalcounty.com/hhw for more details.

Friendly Reminder Control Tall Grass and Weeds

Portage residents are reminded of the importance of property maintenance activities. Desirable, high-quality neighborhoods are key to Portage remaining A Natural Place to Move!



Please take time to properly maintain your property by controlling weeds and keeping lawns mowed on a regular basis. Growth in excess of eight inches is prohibited by city ordinance. To view the complete City of Portage Code of Ordinances and learn more about these and other community quality matters, visit the Quick Links section of the city website. To report a community quality concern, please contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477 or use the online Report It! tool on the city website at www.portagemi.gov > Quick Links > Report It!

Do You Need a Building Permit for Your Project?

The City of Portage administers and enforces State of Michigan Construction Codes, which serve as safeguards in protecting the health, safety and welfare of Portage residents. In addition to safety, obtaining proper construction permits, inspections and approvals help to protect property values and investments.

The Department of Community Development is ready and able to assist property owners and contractors obtain residential construction permits to make their projects a success. For convenience, applications and informational brochures pertaining to residential construction permits are provided on the City of Portage website at www.portagemi.gov - navigate to the Community Development Permits and Informational Forms page.

Once a construction application is processed and approved, permits can be issued and construction can

commence for the property owner or for a State of Michigan licensed contractor.

The following is a list of some of the more common residential projects for which a building permit is required:

- ◆ New homes
- ◆ Additions or structural alterations to homes
- ◆ Remodel work (including a basement finish)
- ◆ Accessory buildings or structures (garages, sheds, decks, etc.)
- ◆ Swimming pools capable of holding 24-inches or more of water
- ◆ Fences over seven feet in height
- ◆ Trade permits (electrical, plumbing and mechanical) for work such as the installation/replacement of furnaces, air-conditioning units, new electrical wiring and plumbing fixtures



Property owners and contractors who need assistance or have questions about obtaining construction permits may contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477.

Board & Commission Spotlight Historic District Commission



Did you know the City of Portage has a historic district? There are actually 40 properties in the City of Portage Historic District. The Portage Historic District Commission is responsible for maintaining a current listing of the sites in the district and a brief statement of significance for each. This nine-member commission is also charged with reviewing plans and applications for exterior construction, alteration and repair of historic properties. In addition, the HDC may initiate district modification procedures and advises the City Council on matters of historic preservation and architectural history as it relates to the city.

Settlers began to occupy, what was originally Portage Township, in the early 1830s. Initially Portage was a farming community, with corn, wheat and celery being the primary crops. Due to this agricultural beginning, most of the historic sites in Portage are scattered throughout the city and some still host their original barns or outbuildings. You can view various types of architecture throughout the city celebrating the rich heritage and history that is Portage, Michigan. Scan the QR code to the right to view the Portage Historic District site map.



May is National Preservation Month! The national theme for 2016 is "This Place Matters." There are lots of ways to participate with the campaign. Visit savingplaces.org/this-place-matters for ways to show your love for the City of Portage or use #ThisPlaceMatters.

The Historic District Commission meets the first Wednesday of every month at 8:15 a.m. at Portage City Hall. Visit www.portagemi.gov > Boards & Commissions > Historic District Commission for more information.

Portage Road "Road Diet" Study Open House

An open house will be held on Thursday, May 5 at Portage City Hall from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. to solicit public comment regarding a proposal to reduce the number of Portage Road travel lanes from:

- ◆ five to three lanes from Ames Drive to Lakeview Drive, and
- ◆ four to three lanes from Lakeview Drive to East Osterhout Avenue.

The 2014 Lake Center Subarea Plan recommends a "road diet" as one of several strategies to strengthen the character and potential for redevelopment along Portage Road. A road diet can:

- ◆ reduce vehicle speeds;
- ◆ allow for non-motorized amenities such as bike lanes and sidewalks, making travel safer for pedestrians and bicyclists; and
- ◆ enhance streetscape and place making efforts.

An example of a "road diet" reducing four lanes to three.



A traffic engineering consultant conducted a feasibility study on reducing the number of travel lanes from five to three between Ames Drive and Lakeview Drive. The study is available online at www.portagemi.gov or in the Department of Community Development at Portage City Hall.

Interested citizens are encouraged to attend the open house and provide input on this matter. For additional information, please contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477.

Portage Farmers' Market Kicks Off May 1!

Sundays, May 1 through October 30 – 12 noon to 4 p.m.



The City of Portage is excited to partner with the People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo to offer an outdoor weekly farmers' market! The inaugural event will be held on Sunday, May 1 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. at the Portage Senior Center (320 Library Lane) and will operate every Sunday through October 30.

To ensure that everyone is able to eat fresh, healthy food, many vendors at the Portage Farmers' Market will accept SNAP benefits. In addition, many produce vendors will accept Double Up Food Bucks, a program that matches

SNAP Bridge Card purchases of Michigan-grown fruit and vegetables, dollar-for-dollar. This season, vendors will also accept WIC Project FRESH and Market FRESH coupons, a program that makes fresh produce available to low-income, nutritionally-at-risk consumers, through Michigan farmers' markets. These food programs benefit not only at-risk consumers, but local food producers as well.

For additional information about the Portage Farmers' Market, please call the People's Food Co-op at 342-5686 or email market@peoplesfoodco-op.org. Interested vendors may email outreach@peoplesfoodco-op.org.



Free Public WiFi at Celery Flats

As part of Portage Creek Bicentennial Park and the City Centre area, the Celery Flats Historical Area is one of the most utilized public spaces within the city limits. Celery Flats is host to numerous cultural and recreation events. The city is pleased to announce the availability of free public Wi-Fi at Celery Flats for park patrons to enjoy. The service also increases the ability of city staff to conduct various city-related activities. The Wi-Fi footprint is limited to the Celery Flats area on both sides of Garden Lane, but does not extend down the Bicentennial Trail. The total project cost, which utilized funding generated from local cable providers for various city technology improvements, was approximately \$46,000. The city expects this new service to be heavily utilized by park patrons and city staff and hopes that you will take advantage of this new amenity!

Ramona Park Beach Set to Open!

8600 South Sprinkle Road – ½ mile south of Centre

Beach Hours: Open Daily, 10:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Beach Operating Dates: May 27 – 30



June 4 & 5

June 10 – September 5

Ramona Park Beach – with its lifeguarded sandy swim area, picnic areas, fishing dock, beach volleyball, concessions, playgrounds, changing rooms and much more – is a great spot to spend a sunny afternoon with the family right here in Portage! **New this year, rent a canoe, kayak or paddleboard!**

Vehicle permits for entry into Ramona Park can be purchased on site near the park entrance during regular beach hours. Annual passes will be available at the Parks Office (7719 South Westnedge Avenue) from May 2 – 27.

City Resident Daily Permit.....	\$5
Non-Resident Daily Permit.....	\$10
City Resident Annual Permit.....	\$25
Non-Resident Annual Permit.....	\$45
Group Bus Daily Permit.....	\$50

Kayak, Canoe & Paddleboard Rentals

12:30 – 6 p.m. on Beach Operating Dates

1-Hour Rental.....	\$12
Each Additional ½ Hour (up to 4 hours)....	\$5
4 - 6 Hour Rental.....	\$36



Celebrate Kalamazoo Bike Week!

Springtime is here, which means another safe and fun season on the bike trails and roadways! Riders are encouraged to brush up on the basics of bicycle safety. Wear a helmet. Check your bike for proper fit. Make sure the brakes are in proper working order and that the tires are properly inflated. Review the rules of the road. Visit the League of Michigan Bicyclists website at www.lmb.org > Resources > Education for more information.



"Kalamazoo Bike Week" is May 14 to 21, 2016. The purpose of Kalamazoo Bike Week is to raise cycling awareness, promote the use of cycling as a means of transportation and explore the possibilities cycling has to offer in terms of enjoyment, health, fitness, social and environmental benefits. Many fun events are planned this year.

Mayor's City to City Ride

Join Mayors Peter Strazdas of Portage and Bobby Hopewell of Kalamazoo on a 7.5-mile bike ride as they ride from Portage, into Kalamazoo and then back to Portage on Saturday, May 14, 2016. Meet at Portage Creek Bicentennial Park Trail on Milham Avenue (910 East Milham Avenue). Arrive by 8:30 a.m. to register for this free ride. The ride starts promptly at 9:00 a.m.

The ride will lead cyclists along the PCBP Trail and on the Kalamazoo Bike Route system before returning to PCBP, and provides the opportunity for a stop at a beautiful

overlook of Portage Creek. "Connections make great communities," said Mayor Strazdas. "The connection of these Portage and Kalamazoo trail systems help create community."

Participants will be asked to sign a release form and are required to wear a helmet. While a good portion of the route is made up of off-road trails or pathways, some of the route uses paved shoulder bicycle lanes adjacent to city streets and may not be suitable for young children.

Bicycle Safety Camp

The 2016 "Bicycle Safety Camp" will be held at Haverhill Park (6577 Hampton Street) on Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Families are invited to come out and participate in learning bicycle safety and bicycle fun. The first 100 children in need of a helmet will receive one free, as well as a participation T-shirt!

Ride of Silence

On Wednesday, May 18, at 6:30 p.m., come to Millennium Park (280 Romence Road) and participate in the "Ride of Silence," an event to honor all cyclists who have been injured or died while riding.

National Bike to Work Day

Friday, May 20 is "National Bike to Work Day." Plan to start your Friday with a little exercise on your way to work.

For more information about Kalamazoo Bike Week, to view the Mayor's City to City Ride route map and to view information about the many additional events scheduled during Bike Week 2016, visit www.kalamazoobikeweek.com.

Family Fishing Fair



Saturday, May 21 – 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Ramona Park on Long Lake
FREE community event!

Bring the entire family to celebrate the onset of summer with this exciting day at the shoreline! Families of all ages and abilities will experience the

numerous benefits associated with fishing, boating and aquatic conservation. Enjoy activities and instruction from local fishing guides and professional organizations who will share their expertise to help your family start a lifetime of fishing memories. Fishing equipment will be on hand for those hoping to reel in their first (or next) catch of the day!

Volunteers, sponsorships and donations are welcome. Please contact the Parks and Recreation Division at 329-4522.

FREE FISHING RODS FOR 250 KIDS!
Courtesy of Suez Water Environmental Services and the Boy Scouts of America!

Activities:

- ◆ Casting and fishing instruction
- ◆ Try out a kayak or stand-up paddleboard
- ◆ Lure making
- ◆ Knot tying
- ◆ Fly casting
- ◆ Fly tying
- ◆ Rod rigging
- ◆ Boater safety
- ◆ Aquatic habitat
- ◆ Purchase your fishing license
- ◆ Prizes, giveaway's and much more!

Grand Prize!
SOUTH HAVEN SALMON CHARTER
Courtesy of Matthew's Sport Fishing Charter!

Activities presented by the following partners:

- ◆ Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery
- ◆ Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- ◆ Kalamazoo Nature Center
- ◆ Kalamazoo Valley Trout Unlimited
- ◆ Kal-Valley Bass Club
- ◆ Kalamazoo Sail and Power Squadron
- ◆ Grandpa Jim's Fishing Adventures
- ◆ Portage Department of Public Safety
- ◆ Boy Scouts of America
- ◆ Brain Balance of Kalamazoo
- ◆ Portage Department of Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizen Services

Get Involved in Your Community!

This is a big election year and the City of Portage is seeking Portagers with an interest in serving the community! Any registered voter in the State of Michigan with at least basic computer skills is encouraged to apply. Training is provided. Election workers are compensated \$15 for each training session and \$120 for working Election Day. If you have any questions please contact the Department of Human Resources at 329-4533. An election worker application can be downloaded online at www.portagemi.gov > Departments > Human Resources > Election Workers or is available in the Department of Human Resources at City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue).



Let's Pull Together!

The Portage Environmental Board has scheduled two invasive plant specie pulls for Saturday, May 14 at West Lake Nature Preserve and Saturday, June 11 at Schrier Park to help pull the invasive Garlic Mustard plant. The pulls will run from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Information on identification, removal, and disposal will be provided along with any needed supplies. Interested volunteers may contact the Portage Environmental Board at ruth1281@att.net or the Transportation and Utilities Department at 329-4422 to volunteer or to request additional information. Or just show up and pull!



21st Annual Friends of the Portage Senior Center Golf Scramble

Calling all golfers! The 21st Annual Friends of the Portage Senior (PSC) Center Golf Scramble will be held at the beautiful Gull Lake Country Club located in Richland on Monday, May 23. This event is open to all ages and offers 18-hole play for \$95. Corporate sponsorships are also available. After a great day of golf, enjoy lunch and camaraderie in the club house with friends and friendly competitors alike. Prizes are awarded to winning teams in a variety of categories and a 50/50 raffle will also be held. Registration forms are available at the PSC.

Mini Senior Expo

The PSC will host a two-hour Bits of Business Mini Senior Expo on Thursday, May 26 from 9 to 11 a.m. Representatives from local businesses and organizations with products or services of interest to mature adults will be on hand with displays, literature and information. Visit the PSC to learn about all of the vendor offerings, ranging from footwear to hearing services, senior housing options, ambulance & emergency

services, health & human services and much more. The Bits of Business Mini Senior Expo is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served and don't miss the door prizes!

Dinner Series at the Portage Senior Center

Join the Portage Senior Center for the monthly Evening Meal on Tuesday, May 17 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. This month will feature special musical entertainment provided by Mr. Magic and the Watermelon Men (a jazz quartet from Portage Northern High School). The May meal will be Chicken Cordon Bleu, prepared by the culinary team at Heritage Community. Cost is \$10 and will include entrée, sides, dessert and beverage. This event is open to public and meals can be requested "to go." Reservations are requested no later than one day prior to the meal by calling 329-4555.

PSC Spring 2016 Travel Guide Available

The Portage Senior Center (PSC) offers a wide variety of destinations, trip lengths and styles of trips for the mature traveler. Trips range from inexpensive local excursions to one-day cultural events, sports, entertainment, special interest and seasonal outings. Extended trips have

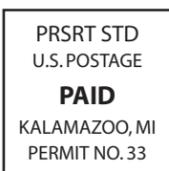
domestic or international destinations.

We invite you to join us on a PSC first – an overnight trip to catch a Cubs game on a Sunday afternoon at Miller Park in Milwaukee! Several trips are planned to theatres, concert halls and museums all over the country! Sightsee in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, before taking in a spectacular presentation of *Samson* at the Sight and Sound Theater, enjoy New York City lights and skyscrapers, or take in Mount Rushmore and the Badlands, including a park crew roundup of a thundering herd of buffalo! Day trips include fine dining aboard *The Old Road Murder Mystery Dinner Train*, a dine and dash excursion to *Das Dutchman Essenhaus*, an authentic circus in Peru, Indiana and a real treat of a spring getaway in Grand Rapids. From Turkeyville to Tanzania – we've got your travel adventures covered.

Copies of travel guide are available at the PSC, the Portage District Library and City Hall or at www.portagemi.gov > Departments > Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizen Services > Senior Citizen Services > Travel. For more information, please call the PSC travel office at 324-9239.



7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160



ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER



City Closings

Non-emergency city offices will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Memorial Day

Monday, May 30

The next edition of the **Portager** will be published in June 2016.

Portage City Council

Portage City Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) in Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. and are always open to the public.

The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city. Citizens are encouraged to contact the City Administration with concerns or complaints about city services by calling Complaint Resolution at (269) 329-4404 or by visiting www.portagemi.gov > Report It!



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Televised City Meetings

City Council and Planning Commission meetings can be viewed live on channel 190 while Zoning Board of Appeals meetings can be viewed live on channel 187. All meetings can be viewed via live streaming at <http://www.publicmedianet.org/watch-live>. AT&T U-Verse customers can access City of Portage government meetings on channel 99 and then follow the prompts to access the various meetings.



May

- 5 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 9 7:00 p.m. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 10 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 19 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 24 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting

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