



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

Support Your Local Airport; It's Just Good Business

Jobs, jobs, jobs. It is no secret that an airport is a major component of a community's economic engine. It provides connection to the rest of the world; a means in which people and goods can be brought in and out of a region for either business or leisure.

As companies evaluate new or current locations, they often look for this infrastructure component. Southwest Michigan is fortunate to have a number of airports within a two-hour drive, but as we all know time is money! Accessible and convenient transportation is a major asset that community leaders tout when attempting to attract and retain major business.

The Kalamazoo / Battle Creek International Airport (a division of Kalamazoo County Government) and its tenants directly employ more than 300 workers. In addition to airline personnel and airport operations staff, employees of Jaqua Realtors, Duncan Aviation, the Kalamazoo Aviation Museum and numerous rental car companies make their living at the airport.

There are a number of indirect economic benefits to the area as well; money flowing into the local economy from business travelers, leisure passengers, students and other visitors to the community. These travelers spend money at local hotels, restaurants and with

numerous other service providers. In a 2008 study, the W.E. Upjohn Institute determined the overall (direct and indirect) economic impact of the Kalamazoo Airport to be \$175 million in regional output, \$46.2 million in personal income and over 1,300 jobs.



In addition to the economic impact, the presence of an airport improves the community's quality of life for ease of leisure travel. The 'time is money' saying is not only applicable to the business community. Most of us value our time and spending it driving hours to other Michigan airports is costly in more ways than one.

Airline route planners look for strong and increasing airport usage when deciding on adding new routes to an airport. In other words, the more people that use the facility the better the chances are of attracting new routes, higher frequencies and lower fares. The addition of new flights this year, with enplanements up nearly 30 percent year-to-date, has resulted in a positive trend of lower fares. "The staff is dedicated to improving air service to meet the needs of both business and leisure travelers, but we need your help," said David Reid, director at the Kalamazoo / Battle Creek International Airport. "Whether it's for business or leisure, supporting your local airport just makes good sense."

Experts Say Don't Feed Deer

For several months, the City of Portage Environmental Board has been studying the different methods for managing the deer population here in Portage. While the board and the City Council haven't reached a determination as to the appropriate strategies to manage the Portage deer herd, experts agree that feeding deer can actually do more harm than good to the health of the deer and their habitat.

People often establish a feeding site out of concern that deer are not getting enough to eat (especially during a hard winter) or for the simple joy of seeing deer up close. "Though feeding is a highly enjoyable activity, allowing people to observe deer up close, it actually can be detrimental to their overall health," said Chad Stewart, Deer, Moose and Elk Management Specialist for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

The MDNR says that deer naturally adapt to winter to help them survive by growing a winter coat, storing fat and reducing their activity. This means deer need less food during the winter than in summer. Even so, if a deer is presented with supplemental food handouts, it will happily eat until its four-part stomach is full! It's that four-part stomach, however, that makes it difficult for deer to digest food presented by humans. In fact, a deer may actually starve to death with a stomach full of indigestible food. "The bacteria in a deer's stomach changes to digest specific foods, and in the winter time, it relies heavily on woody stems as part of its main diet," said Stewart. "When rich carbohydrates like corn or apples are introduced in high quantities, the deer's stomach bacteria can't change fast enough to digest the food."

The presence of a feeding site not only increases the likelihood of disease transmission among the wildlife, it



also draws more deer into residential areas, resulting in conflicts with humans and vehicles. Additionally, deer tend to eat all the vegetation in the area of the feeding site, which other wildlife depend on for their nourishment.

The City of Portage urges Portagers not to provide supplemental food to deer. It's the best thing you can do for the health and welfare of the Portage deer herd, their habitat and other wildlife.

December Board of Review

The December Board of Review will meet Tuesday, December 13, 2016 at 10 a.m. to address clerical errors and mutual mistakes of fact related to real and personal property assessments. Poverty exemption and veteran exemption requests may also be heard at the December Board of Review meeting. Property owners who qualify for these two exemptions must complete and submit the appropriate application to the Office of the City Assessor by December 1, 2016. Applications can be found at the Office of the City Assessor (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) or online at www.portagemi.gov > Departments > City Assessor > Property Tax Forms & Information. Exemption requests previously denied by the March or July Board of Review cannot be heard by the December Board of Review.

As a reminder, December Boards of Review are prohibited from hearing disputes related to property valuation. Appeals related to property valuation are reserved for the March Board of Review, which meets annually beginning the second Monday in March. Please call the Office of the City Assessor at 329-4433 with any questions.

Expanded Bus Service Begins in Portage

Following the passage of the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) millage in August 2015, CCTA (also known as Kalamazoo Metro Transit) officials have responded to the requests of the community to bring about service enhancements. Sunday service, later-night service and increased frequencies during busy times on heavily frequented routes have all been implemented system wide. Several additions and changes that affect Portage bus service began on September 6.

Sunday Service from 8:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

- ◆ Route 1 - Westnedge
- ◆ Route 2 - Portage
- ◆ Route 4 - Oakland
- ◆ Route 26 - West Centre
- ◆ Route 27 - Romence

Later Night Service until 12:15 a.m., Monday - Friday

- ◆ Route 1 - Westnedge
- ◆ Route 2 - Portage

Later Night Service until 11:15 p.m., Monday - Friday

- ◆ Route 4 - Oakland

Later Night Service, Monday - Friday

- ◆ Route 26 - West Centre (until 10:33 p.m.)
- ◆ Route 27 - Romence (until 10:20 p.m.)

Route Enhancements

- ◆ Route 1 - Westnedge: Bus added from 2 to 6 p.m., Monday - Friday
- ◆ Route 2 - Portage: Bus added from 7:45 to 9:45 a.m. and 2:45 to 6:45 p.m., Monday - Friday
- ◆ Route 27 - Romence: Service was added to the Shaver Road corridor, with stops at Meijer and Walmart, while service was eliminated along N Avenue from Sprinkle Road to Pavilion Estates.

To view all of the details about these and other CCTA service changes, please visit

www.kmetro.com/about-metro/news-events.



Portage Snowplow Operators Ready for Anything 'Old Man Winter' Brings!



Michigan winter weather can be brutal, especially out on the roadways. The City of Portage provides a comprehensive snow removal program along the 220 miles of city streets to provide the maximum degree of safety to the motoring public. As early as 3:30 a.m., snowplow operators are out plowing, sanding and salting city streets. In order to maximize the benefit to Portage citizens, streets are prioritized for snowplowing operations according to how heavily the streets are traveled:

Priority I: All major streets (examples include South Westnedge Avenue, Oakland Drive, Milham Avenue, Kilgore Road, Shaver Road, Lovers Lane, etc.)

Priority II: All primary "feeder" streets leading into various residential neighborhoods, including access streets to all schools

Priority III: All interior neighborhood streets

Priority IV: Clean-up of cul-de-sacs and dead end streets

When a snowstorm is in progress, every effort is made to keep Priority I and II streets clear. Typically, snowplow drivers can clear all Priority I and II streets in 4 to 8 hours. Once the major roads are clear, drivers begin working on

Priority III and IV streets, usually requiring 24 to 48 hours to clear. De-icing materials are applied as needed throughout the duration of a storm, with major streets, bridges, intersections, hills and curves receiving priority attention.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of snowplowing operations, residents are asked to abide by these city ordinances and state laws:

- ◆ The Portage Code of Ordinances prohibits residents from having basketball stands in the city right-of-way.
- ◆ The Code of Ordinances prohibits vehicle parking on the streets between the hours of 2 and 6 a.m., from November 1 through April 15.
- ◆ On trash and recycling collection days, please keep containers on the curb rather than in the actual roadway.
- ◆ Michigan law prohibits residents and private snowplow operators from depositing snow from private driveways, parking lots and sidewalks onto any public roadway.

The City of Portage snow removal program is designed to keep city streets clear and safe in the most efficient manner possible. "The snowplowing crews are dedicated to clearing the streets of snow and ice as quickly as possible," said Rod Russell, Director of Public Services. "Your safety and convenience continue to be our number one priority."

Questions about snow removal operations may be directed to the Department of Public Services at 329-4444. Updates to snowplowing progress during heavy snow events can be viewed at www.portagemi.gov > Departments > Public Services > Snow Removal.

Mailbox Replacement Program



City snowplow operators make every attempt to minimize damage to mailboxes, but at times, due to the weight of the snow coming off the plow blade, this damage is beyond the control of the operator. The City of Portage offers repair or replacement of damaged mailboxes due to snowplow operations. If a mailbox is damaged and cannot be repaired by the city, the mailbox and/or post will be replaced with a standard mailbox and/or post meeting U.S. Postal Service specifications. The standard replacement mailbox is white or black, measures 6.5" x 19" x 8.5" with a hinged door and flag. Damaged posts will be replaced with a standard 4" x 4" wooden post meeting U.S. Postal Service specifications. Those residents desiring replacement of a specialty mailbox and/or post may choose to be reimbursed \$44 for the cost of the standard style mailbox/post offered as part of the City of Portage Mailbox Repair Program. By choosing this option, the resident will be responsible for any cost difference and the installation of the specialty equipment.

Visit www.portagemi.gov/ReportIt.aspx to report a damaged mailbox. Questions about the Mailbox Repair Program may be directed to the Department of Public Services at 329-4444.

Street Tree Trimming Work

Trees are a valued resource, increasing property values and contributing many environmental benefits to the community. It is the city's goal to maintain the health of our urban forest and assure the safety of our citizens and drivers along the roadway, as well as city equipment. By identifying hazardous trees in the right-of-way that require pruning, the city is able to achieve this goal.



Beginning in October, the City of Portage began pruning trees throughout the entire city identified as a safety risk. Work will continue, as time and weather permit, through March 2017. All trimmings and limbs will be removed by city crews as work is completed at each location. If you have any questions about this action, or trees in general, please contact the Department of Public Services at 329-4444.

Home Buyer Assistance Available

Have you been pre-approved for a mortgage and are looking to buy a home in the City of Portage? If so, and you fall within the income guidelines listed on the table below, you may be eligible for down payment assistance. Qualified applicants (purchasing homes in specific Portage neighborhoods) may receive a deferred loan, at 0% interest, up to \$3,000 that will cover 50% of the required down payment plus eligible closing costs. Up to \$5,000 may be available for the purchase of bank-owned foreclosed properties or vacant properties that were previously renter-occupied homes.

Household Size	Maximum Annual Income*	Minimum Annual Income*
1 Person	\$35,350	\$17,675
2 Person	\$40,400	\$20,200
3 Person	\$45,450	\$22,725
4 Person	\$50,500	\$25,250
5 Person	\$54,550	\$27,275
6 Person	\$58,600	\$29,300
7 Person	\$62,650	\$31,325
8 Person	\$66,700	\$33,350

* Income requirements established annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For more detailed information, a map of eligible neighborhoods, or for an application package, please call the City of Portage Community Development Department at 329-4477.

Grants Available to Human Service Agencies That Provide Assistance to Portage Residents in Need

The City of Portage awards grants each year from the General Fund and Community Development Block Grant Program to non-profit entities that provide housing, food, clothing and other critical assistance to Portage citizens in need. For fiscal year 2017-2018, Human Services funding will be available July 1, 2017. During the current fiscal year, the city allocated \$131,941 from the General Fund and \$41,928 from the CDBG Program towards human services. The exact amount of funding available for 2017-2018 is unknown at this time.

"The Human Services Board encourages all service agencies to submit proposals for consideration," said Amanda Woodin, Chair of the Human Services Board. "The board is amazed at the amount of great work being done by our charitable organizations." Interested agencies within the greater Kalamazoo area are encouraged to submit grant applications to the Department of Community

Development. The following qualifying criteria will be considered in the evaluation of funding requests:

- ◆ Extent to which the program services meet a basic human need (e.g. provision of housing, food, health and safety services, job training, transportation and quality of life enhancements)
- ◆ Extent to which program services are accessible to Portage residents
- ◆ Extent to which clientele are economically or socially deprived, senior citizens or persons with disabilities
- ◆ The number of Portage residents to be served
- ◆ Outreach efforts to Portage residents to be served
- ◆ For new programs/agencies in the community, the ability of the agency to receive other funding. For programs in existence in the community for five or more years, the ability of the agency to leverage other funding.

To qualify for funding from the CDBG Program, the applicant must deliver a service with direct benefit to low income persons within the City of Portage. Further, the applicant must be able to provide more detailed information on the income and demographics of the clientele served.

The Human Services Funding Grant Application form is available at www.portagemi.gov > Boards & Commissions > Human Services Board. To be considered for funding during the 2017-2018 funding round, **completed applications must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2016**, in the Department of Community Development at City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002). To obtain additional information, please contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477.

2016 Traditional Holiday & Tree Lighting Celebration



Set your sights on holiday lights, caroling and holiday treats! Make plans to enjoy an evening of fun at the City of Portage annual Traditional Holiday and Tree Lighting Celebration. The fun kicks off at the City Centre, near

the Portage District Library on Saturday, December 3 at 7 p.m. where thousands of lights will be illuminated in celebration of the holiday season. Then follow a horse-drawn wagon, complete with jingle bells and Christmas carolers, on a short walk down the Portage Creek Bicentennial Trail to the Celery Flats Historical Area, where the holiday celebration will take place.

- ◆ Festive music will be provided by local brass ensemble, *Proclamation Brass* and the Portage Central Choir.
- ◆ Santa and Mrs. Claus will greet visitors at the historic schoolhouse.

- ◆ New for this year's celebration, children can pet and have a picture taken with Santa's reindeer, courtesy of Osborne & Klein.
 - ◆ Refreshments available, including hot cider and cocoa.
- "I love seeing the joy on the children's faces as the holiday tree is lit," said Kendall Klingelsmith, Director of Parks & Recreation. "I look forward to seeing you at this fun holiday celebration."

Admission is free; however, donations of nonperishable food, toys and outerwear will be accepted for the Portage Community Center to help those in need. Please call 329-4522 with any questions about the event.

The Ice Rink at Millennium Park

Entering its 17th season, the Ice Rink at Millennium Park will open on Thursday, December 8, 2016 and remain open through March 5, 2017, weather permitting. This large outdoor refrigerated ice rink features skate rental, skate sharpening, concessions, restrooms, a warming house, lockers and well-maintained skating surface! Ice resurfacing occurs from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on weekends and daily during Holiday Hours (December 22 - January 8).

December 8 to December 21 & January 8 to March 5

Sunday	12 - 9 p.m.
Monday - Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	3 - 9 p.m.
Friday	3 - 10 p.m.
Saturday	11 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Holiday Hours - December 22 to January 7

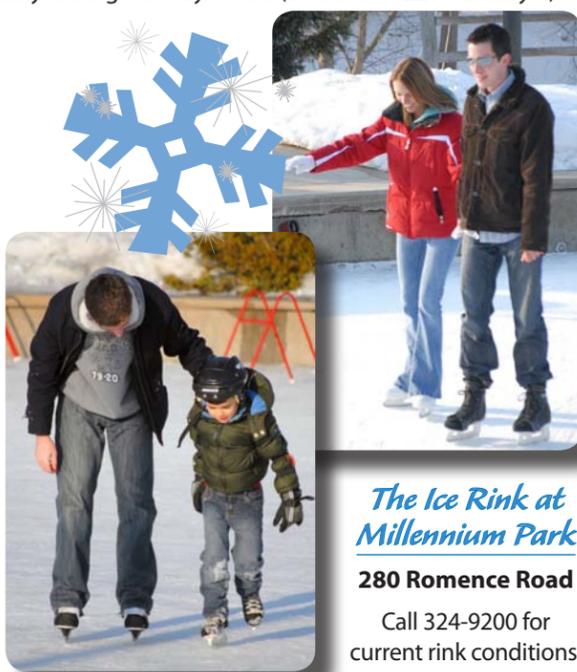
Daily	11 a.m. - 10 p.m.
December 24 & January 1	11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Christmas Day	Closed

Winter School Holidays

January 27 & February 24	2 - 10 p.m.
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Fees

Open Skating	\$4
Skate Rental	\$3
Skate Sharpening (Thursdays 5-7 p.m. & Sundays 12-1 p.m.)	\$3
10-Punch Skate Card	\$25



The Ice Rink at Millennium Park
280 Romence Road
Call 324-9200 for current rink conditions.

The Ice Rink at Millennium Park Special Events

New Year's Eve Skate

Saturday, December 31, 5-10 p.m.

Fee: \$5 skating & rental package
\$3 skating only

Get ready to ring in 2017 with an exciting night at the rink! Join us for an evening of upbeat music, provided by a local DJ, party lighting after dark and a special countdown at 9 p.m. This is a great spot for teens and families to celebrate New Year's Eve in a safe and fun environment!
No registration required.



Valentine's Skate Date

Tuesday, February 14, 6-9 p.m.

Fee: \$17 per person

Private skate, live music and dinner on the ice! Bring your partner or kids for this unique Valentine's Day experience. The evening will begin with dinner on the ice, servers on skates and a meal from Grampa's - Great American Pasty & Pie Co. Following dinner, the rink will open up for skating to participants of this event only.
Pre-register by February 11 at the rink.

A Sneak Peek at This Year's Winter Recreation Activities

The 2016-2017 Winter Recreation Programs brochure will be delivered in your December Portager. In the meantime, here is a sneak peek of what's to come this winter season.

December

- 3 Traditional Holiday, City Centre and Celery Flats
- 3 Unity in Diversity, Portage Senior Center
- 8 The Ice Rink at Millennium Park Opens
- 31 New Year's Eve Skate, Ice Rink at Millennium Park

January

- 10 Indoor Walking at The Stable at Portage Central High School begins and runs through March 31
- 16 Prof Talk, Portage Senior Center
- 21 Winter Wellness Nature Hike, Schrier Park
- 21 Ice Skating Lessons, Ice Rink at Millennium Park (continuing on January 28)
- 22 Ski & Snowboard Lessons, Timber Ridge Ski Area (continuing on January 29 and February 5)
- 28 Cross Country Ski Class, Milham Park Golf Club
- 28 Winter Jamboree, Milham Park Golf Club

February

- 4 Winter Snow Party, Oakland Drive Park
- 14 Valentine's Skate Date, Ice Rink at Millennium Park
- 21 Adult Softball Meetings, Portage Senior Center
- 25 Snowshoe Nature Hike, West Lake Nature Preserve
- 26 Winter Blast Half Marathon, 10k & 5k, Portage Central High School

March

- 11 Spring Carnival, Portage Senior Center
- 20 Prof Talk, Portage Senior Center

Don't forget - the Portage Creek Bicentennial Trail is groomed all winter long for year-round enjoyment!

Indoor Farmers Market Coming to Portage!

The City of Portage and the People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo are proud to announce the extension of the popular Sunday Farmer's



Market throughout the winter months! Beginning in November and running through April, the farmer's market will be held indoors at the Portage Senior Center (300 Library Lane). Patrons can expect to find up to 20 vendors ranging from farmers, meat producers, baked goods vendors, artisans and sellers of prepared foods.

The market will be open **every 2nd Sunday** of the month from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m., beginning November 13, 2016.** Vendors wishing to participate can contact the People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo at 329-6727 or by email at market@peoplesfoodco-op.org.

Winter is coming... time to clean out the old before the holidays!



household hazardous WASTE

HOURS:
Tues. & Fri. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wednesday Noon - 6 p.m.
2nd Sat. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
(closed in Aug. & Sept. on Sat.)

MATERIAL ACCEPTED
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GASOLINE • MERCURY • OIL-BASED PAINTS
PESTICIDES • USED MOTOR OIL • TELEVISIONS
BUSINESS WASTE *for a FEE*
NOT ACCEPTED - LATEX PAINT

CALL 373-5211 OR VISIT
www.kalcounty.com/hhw

TO SEE IF YOUR AREA QUALIFIES FOR FREE RECYCLING
1301 Lamont Ave. • Next to Fairgrounds



Stay Safe in the Kitchen: Holiday Cooking Safety Tips

The holiday season brings family and friends together to celebrate, often with a large meal. Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries and Thanksgiving is the busiest time of the year for cooking fires, with Christmas close behind. The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.



The Portage Fire Division offers the following cooking safety tips to stay safe in the kitchen this holiday season:

- ◆ Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, don't use the oven or stove top.
- ◆ Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, boiling or broiling food.
- ◆ If you are simmering, baking or roasting food, check it regularly and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- ◆ Keep anything that can catch fire – oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains – away from your stove top.

If you have a cooking fire:

- ◆ Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- ◆ Call 9-1-1 after you leave.
- ◆ If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and that you have a clear way out.
- ◆ Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stove top. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- ◆ For an oven fire turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

Keep these tips in mind so that your holiday season can be safe and enjoyable for you and the ones you love. For more information about cooking fire safety from the National Fire Protection Association, visit www.nfpa.org.

Change Your Clocks, Change Your Batteries



According to the National Fire Protection Association, three out of five home fire deaths result from fires in properties without working smoke alarms. More than one-third (38 percent) of home fire deaths result from fires in which no smoke alarms are present. Importantly, the risk of dying in a home fire is cut in half in homes with working smoke alarms.

The Portage Fire Division reminds residents to test your smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years or if they don't sound when tested. Finally, on Sunday, November 6, when you change your clocks for Daylight Saving Time, change the batteries in every smoke detector in your home. It could mean the difference between life and death.

Questions concerning fire safety and smoke alarms may be directed to the City of Portage Fire Marshal at 329-4486.

Sign up for PORTAGEALERT

You know that **PORTAGEALERT** allows the city to automatically send emergency messages to publicly available primary residential and business phones. But do you know that **PORTAGEALERT** is also used to distribute non-emergency service reminders such as snowplowing progress updates during major snow events, Spring Cleanup Program dates, Quarterly Brush Collection dates and more. Residents interested in receiving these "outreach" alerts must sign up on **PORTAGEALERT**. Provide the City of Portage with contact information, including cell phone numbers and email addresses. Users can also manage message preferences by indicating the preferred mode of contact (phone, text, email, etc.), language and message topics.

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.



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City Closings

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

Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 24
Friday, November 25

Christmas

Monday, December 26

The next edition of the **Portager** will be published in December 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!



Mayor Peter J. Strazdas
327-4478
peter.strazdas@portagemi.gov



Mayor Pro Tem Nasim Ansari
327-0016
nasim.ansari@portagemi.gov



Richard Ford
616-560-8328
richard.ford@portagemi.gov



Jim Pearson
303-5459
jim.pearson@portagemi.gov



Patricia M. Randall
324-7779
patricia.randall@portagemi.gov



Claudette Reid
491-9725
claudette.reid@portagemi.gov



Terry R. Urban
323-8160
terry.urban@portagemi.gov



Laurence Shaffer, City Manager
329-4400
shafferl@portagemi.gov

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.



November

- 1 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 3 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 14 7:00 p.m. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 15 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 17 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting

Portager Editor: Mary Beth Block – blockm@portagemi.gov