



NEWS RELEASE

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Engage. Empower. Enrich. Reaches Fundraising Goal

Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed the Fiscal Year 2022 budget into law. The \$70 billion budget includes \$1.5 million to support the construction of the Charles & Lynn Zhang Portage Community Senior Center at 203 East Centre Avenue.

The City of Portage thanks Representative Christine Morse from the 61st House District and Senator Sean McCann of 20th Senate District for their efforts to bring the funding to Portage. Matt Hall of 63rd House District was also instrumental in getting the funds approved.

“The future Portage Community Senior Center will be a resource for our entire community, and I am thrilled that the State of Michigan will be supporting this vital project with an allocation of \$1.5 million from the State Budget,” said Representative Christine Morse.

“The new Portage Community Senior Center is an exciting development for the City of Portage and area seniors. This \$1.5 million investment by the State of Michigan, partnered with local and private contributions, recognizes that 40% of those who use the current Portage Senior Center live in the surrounding area, making the center a valuable health, wellness, and recreation resource for seniors throughout Kalamazoo County,” said Senator Sean McCann. “Mayor Patricia Randall, Representative Christine Morse, and many others advocated strongly for this project to receive state support and I am proud of the results we achieved together for our community.”

“Thank you to our local Legislative Delegation for helping a dedicated group of volunteers exceed our fundraising goal,” said Portage Mayor Patricia Randall. “Thanks to the Legislators serving our area, we have made our vision a reality, despite the pandemic. This new center underscores our city's commitment to our seniors. Portage is a great place to live!”

On September 17, 2019, Portage city leaders announced **Engage. Empower. Enrich. A Campaign for the Portage Community Senior Center**, an effort to build a new Portage Community Senior Center at 203 East Centre Avenue at a construction cost of \$10.8 million. A group of dedicated community leaders has been working to raise \$5.5 million in charitable gifts as part of this unique public/private partnership. The City of Portage committed to a dollar-for-dollar match of donations, up to \$5.5 million.

With the allocation of this \$1.5 million, the campaign has raised nearly \$5.7 million. The effort received broad support from local foundations, area businesses, and generous community donors, including a \$2 million donation from Charles & Lynn Zhang. More than 325 community donors, local businesses, and area foundations have supported the campaign.

The new center will replace the existing Portage Senior Center at 320 Library Lane. Kalamazoo County has a senior population of 35,000 and the American Association of Retired Persons estimates that 10,000 baby boomers reach retirement age every day. This trend will continue into 2030 and beyond.

Construction of the Charles & Lynn Zhang Portage Community Senior Center began in December 2020 and should be complete within budget in the first quarter of 2022. To learn more about the project, visit e3.portagemi.gov.

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