

**THE 2009  
PORTAGE COMMUNITY SURVEY**

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## Introduction

The 2009 Portage Community Survey is the twenty-fourth consecutive annual citizen survey carried out by the Kercher Center for Social Research for the City of Portage. This survey attempts to measure citizens' viewpoints on city services and issues. The first survey, in 1986, was administered through the mail. Until 2008, all subsequent surveys utilized a random-digit-dialing telephone approach, as it is faster and generally produces as high a response rate and equally representative data in comparison to mail protocols. Last year, the City Council decided to return to a mail approach for the 2008 survey. Since it proved to be successful, a mail approach was also used for the 2009 survey.

As in previous years, the survey instrument was initially drafted by the staff of the City of Portage, reviewed by a Council committee and the KCSR, and approved by the City Council. Most of the survey items were adapted from previous versions of the instrument in order to permit comparisons over time. Some additional items were also included to address citizens' attitudes toward current issues facing the city. The 2009 survey was reviewed over the summer, and the data collection process began on September 4th with a letter, on City letterhead over the signature of the mayor, to each of the 2000 people in the sample. That letter told them of the nature of the survey and requested their participation. Approximately a week later (September 11th), the survey packets were put in the mail. Each packet contained a cover letter, again on City letterhead and over the mayor's signature, reminding the respondent of the purpose and importance of the survey, plus the survey instrument itself, and a postage paid envelope for return to the Kercher Center at WMU.

Coding of the data began on September 24, shortly after the first responses were received at the KCSR, and continued through October 20. A total of 815 completed surveys were received by the cut-off date of October 14. In addition to the 815 completions, there were 33 mailings returned to the City (due to bad addresses), 6 blank surveys were returned to the KCSR, and 43 surveys were returned after the cut-off date. This produces a response rate of 42.5 percent. As was the case in 2008 (with a response rate of 46.5%), this rate is clearly higher than it was with random digit dialing (36.6% in 2007, 31.4% in 2006, 33.8% in 2005, and 35.8% in 2004), plus it is also based on a substantially larger number of completed cases. These factors add confidence in the results. Moreover, as in past years, response distributions on demographic and substantive indicators have appeared to be highly stable from year to year. It was anticipated that this year's survey would be equally stable.

With a 2000 Census count of nearly 45,000 for the City of Portage, a random sample of 815 respondents is more than sufficient to represent the adult population of the City with the required 95% level of confidence and sampling error of plus or minus 5 percent. Frequency distributions have been run for each item on the survey. In addition, the responses to open-ended items were sorted by question number, then alphabetized and edited for readability. All of these results are presented in the two appendices attached to this report. **Appendix A** contains a copy of the survey instrument with the frequency and percentage distributions for each item, and **Appendix B** contains the responses to the open-ended items.

## Results

### Characteristics of the Sample

It is essential in survey research to collect demographic information about the sample of respondents in order to determine if the sample is indeed representative of the larger population of interest. This year, the sample should be similar to last year's sample, as well as to the target population, given that the data collection approach is the same as last year's. As before, the names and addresses were randomly drawn by a sampling company, and the response rate is high, suggesting that the mail approach again worked well.

Although minor variations in the distribution of demographic characteristics invariably occur from year to year, these variations are generally within the confidence bands associated with samples collected using these kinds of systematic approaches. Thus, even though the numbers of cases are substantially larger, the 2009 and 2008 samples can be expected to be similar to those that were obtained in the previous two years.

Table 1 presents the results concerning the number of years lived in Portage, the type of residence, and the area of the city where respondents live. When comparing the number of years lived in Portage for 2008 and 2009, there are some minor fluctuations in the indicators, with a bit larger proportions that have lived in Portage less than five years, and more than ten years. Nevertheless, as in past years, it is still true that the vast majority of survey respondents lived in their own homes and for more than ten years. The proportion from each area of the city also remained fairly stable. While the largest concentration of respondents continues to come from the northwest quadrant of Portage, in 2009 there was a small decrease from 2008 in the number of respondents from the northeast area of the city and a small increase in the number from the southwest quadrant.

**Table 1. Residential Characteristics of the Sample, 2009-2006**

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
	%	%	%	%
<u>Years Lived in Portage</u>				
Less Than 5 Years	12.1	11.1	21.7	22.8
5 Thru 9 Years	12.8	15.7	16.4	15.7
10 or More Years	75.1	73.1	61.9	61.5
<u>Type of Residence</u>				
Single Family	82.9	85.9	82.7	83.5
Apt/Condo/Mobile/Other	17.1	14.1	17.3	16.5
<u>Area of City</u>				
Northwest	46.6	47.0	38.3	42.9
Northeast	10.9	11.4	10.9	12.1
Southwest	16.0	14.7	18.4	16.7
Southeast	26.5	26.8	32.3	28.3

In a parallel fashion, Table 2 below shows the age, education, family income, and gender distributions for the 2009-2006 surveys. Just over half (52.9%) of the respondents have a

college or graduate degree. The proportion of respondents over the age of 60 is substantially higher than 2007 and previous years, but only slightly higher than 2008. This is accompanied by small declines in the proportions under 40 and 40 thru 59. The vast majority of respondents (88.0%) stated they were 40 years of age or older, up slightly from the 2008 total of 86.1 percent, but also somewhat higher than previous years (79.1% in 2007, 74.8% in 2006). The gender makeup of this sample, with 52.5 percent male and 47.5 percent female, is almost the same as 2008, but continues to be considerably different from that of previous years. Overall, the 2008 survey participants continue to be middle-aged or older, highly educated, and relatively affluent. Indeed, the percent of respondents having a family income of under \$25,000 remained stable and small, and the proportion with incomes over \$100,000 declined somewhat to 20.6 percent, from 24.2 percent in 2008.

**Table 2. Respondent Personal Characteristics, 2009-2006**

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
	%	%	%	%
<u>Age</u>				
Less Than 40 Years	12.0	13.9	20.9	25.1
40 Thru 59 Years	38.3	39.5	42.8	46.4
60 or More Years	49.7	46.6	36.3	28.4
<u>Education</u>				
High School or Less	13.6	16.9	21.5	18.1
Some College/Technical	33.5	32.1	28.6	24.2
College Degree	52.9	51.0	49.8	57.6
<u>Family Income</u>				
Less Than \$25,000	12.1	12.8	9.2	10.6
\$25,000 Thru \$99,999	67.2	63.1	73.6	n/a
\$100,000 or more	20.6	24.2	17.1	n/a
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	52.5	52.0	42.0	39.3
Female	47.5	48.0	58.0	60.2

The vast majority of Portage residents who responded to this survey (94.4% this year, 96.3% in 2008, 91.4% in 2007, and 90.2% in 2006) identified themselves as White/non-Hispanic. Only 1.4 percent identified themselves as Black or African American (0.7% in 2008, 1.9% in 2007 and 2006), and 0.9 percent as Amultiracial@ (0.5% in 2008, 1.7% in 2007, and 1.2% in 2006). Only one respondent (0.1%) self-identified as Native American, another thirteen (1.7%) identified themselves as Asian-American, and three (0.4%) indicated they were Hispanic. These numbers are all comparable to data from 2008 and previous years.

This year, 84.2 percent of the respondents reported that they have Internet access at home. This again represents a small increase in the percentage of residents reporting such access (up from 83.3% in 2008 and 78.7% in 2007). This even holds for the respondents over 60, since

the proportion of those respondents reporting that they do not have access to the internet from home has continued to drop slightly (25.8% this year, 26.7% in 2008, 39.7% in 2007 and 46.7% in 2006). The respondents were also asked what type of internet service they receive. Nearly half (46.2%) get it from cable (up slightly from 2008), and another quarter have DSL (25.5%). Most of the remainder only have dial-up access. Thus, as was the case in 2008, more than 7 out of 10 households that have internet service have high speed access. This translates into about two thirds of the households in Portage.

Because of the decision to shift to a mail survey approach, the respondents were again asked what kind of telephone service they have at home. This year, 83.5 percent indicated that they have both a traditional land line and one or more cell phones (up slightly from 81.1% in 2008). Only 2.3 percent reported that they only have cell phone service, and 14.2 percent indicated that they only have land line service.

### Citizen Perceptions of Problems

In this part of the survey instrument, the respondents were asked if they felt particular issues were a problem in Portage, and if so, whether they perceived the problem to be Aslight, @ Amoderate, @ or Asevere@ (see questions 9, 12, 13, 20 through 22, 27, 30, and 31 - **Appendix A**). For each item, point values were assigned to each of the categories (1 for A no problem, @ 2 for Aslight problem, @ 3 for Amoderate problem, @ and 4 for Asevere problem@). The number of respondents who selected the category was multiplied by the appropriate point value, the products were then totaled, and divided by the number of respondents. This procedure results in a mean score. In Table 3 below, issues are organized from the most problematic at the top, to the least problematic at the bottom.

**Table 3. Perceived Problems in Portage, 2009-2007<sup>1</sup>**

Issue	<u>2009</u>		<u>2008</u>		<u>2007</u>	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Traffic-Westnedge	1 (2.20)	73.6	1 (2.18)	71.9	1 (2.38)	68.4
Street/Road Pavement	2 (2.01)	70.3	2 (2.06)	71.8	3 (1.52)	35.0
Traffic-Oakland	3 (1.76)	52.1	3 (1.78)	52.5	2 (1.55)	32.6
Home/Yard Conditions	4 (1.58)	44.5	4 (1.59)	45.4	4 (1.41)	27.2
Drinking Water Quality	5 (1.44)	27.5	6 (1.45)	27.9	5 (1.39)	23.5
Substance Abuse	6 (1.38)	24.7	5 (1.57)	37.5	7 (1.23)	12.7
Underage Drinking	7 (1.30)	22.3		n/a		n/a
Police Protection	8 (1.24)	17.8	7 (1.25)	18.5	6 (1.23)	14.7
Fire Protection	9 (1.07)	4.9	8 (1.07)	4.7	8 (1.04)	2.6

The rankings are based on the mean responses, which are displayed in parentheses -- the higher the mean score, the more problematic the issue. Also, the percentages in the table include all responses in the "slight" "moderate" and "severe" categories. The rankings of the 2009 mean scores are almost identical to the rankings for the mean scores for 2008 and are only marginally different from those for 2007 (see Table 3). The top four remain at the top, and only Water

Quality and Substance Abuse have exchanged positions. Police and Fire remain at the bottom. Moreover, most of the issues raised in 2009 show similar amounts of concern compared to 2008, although most are again higher than the levels from 2007.

Other than the item on Underage Drinking, which was added this year, and which shows relatively low levels of concern, the only major change has to do with Substance Abuse. That saw a noticeable decline from 2008, indeed, to a level much closer to the 2007 level. The condition of pavement on the City=s streets and roads continues to display the level of concern shown in 2008, and there continues to be substantial concern about the condition of neighborhood homes and yards. The perceptions of traffic on Westnedge are steady but relatively high.

Turning to the respondent's perceptions of the severity of city problems for 2009 (see Table 4 below), the respondents continue to consider the problem of traffic flow on Westnedge to be the most severe (10.6% in 2009, 10.8% in 2008). Nevertheless, like last year, it is down by nearly half from the 2007 level. Moreover, the proportion of respondents who consider the traffic flow on Oakland to be a severe problem continued to decline (to 4.1%, down from 5.1% in 2008, 6.3% in 2007, and 12.2% in 2006). Nevertheless, the perceptions of traffic problems elsewhere in Portage still appear to be a concern (see question 32 in **Appendix A** and in **Appendix B**). As was the case in 2008, more than a third of the respondents in 2009 (36.4%) indicated that traffic flow was also a problem elsewhere in the city. Also, as they did in 2008 and in 2007, Centre, Milham, Portage, and Romence, were most frequently identified by those respondents.

**Table 4. Percent Rating as Severe Problem in Portage: 2009-2006<sup>1</sup>**

Issue	<u>2009</u>		<u>2008</u>		<u>2007</u>		<u>2006</u>	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Traffic - Westnedge	1	10.6	1	10.8	1	20.0	1	23.9
Drinking Water Quality	2	5.7	5	4.8	3	5.2	3	9.4
Traffic - Oakland	3	4.1	4	5.1	2	6.3	2	12.2
Street/Road Pavement	4	4.0	2	6.2	4	3.3	5	3.3
Home/Yard Conditions	5	3.3	6	3.3	6	2.9	7	1.7
Substance Abuse	6	2.9	3	5.3	5	3.0	4	4.7
Underage Drinking	7	1.0	n/a		n/a		n/a	
Police Protection	8	0.9	7	1.4	7	2.6	6	1.9
Fire Protection	9	0.7	8	0.6	8	0.5	8	0.0

<sup>1</sup> Issues in Table 4 are organized from most problematic at the top, to least problematic at the bottom (for the current year).

Concern over the quality of the drinking water continued to be consistent concern, climbing somewhat to 5.7 percent from 4.8 percent in 2008, but also climbing substantially in

rank from 5<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> (90.4% of respondents in 2009 either indicated that they have city water or did not respond to the question). Those who did think there was a severe problem with the water were asked the nature of the problem. Those responses are in **Appendix B** - question 9. As was the case in 2008, in 2009, the perceptions that pavement quality, substance abuse, the condition of homes and yards, police protection, and fire protection were severe problems was minimal. Included with those issues should be the new question on underage drinking.

Even though the condition of neighborhood homes and yards was not perceived to be a severe problem, it is interesting to note that small but significant proportions of respondents apparently feel that the situation has become worse in 2009 than it was in 2008, even though the scores displayed in Table 4 are identical. Two questions specifically asked about the condition of neighborhoods - the respondents own neighborhood and other neighborhoods in the city. In both instances, nearly three quarters of the 2009 respondents indicated that the situation is about the same as it was five years ago (73.0% - your neighborhood, 72.6% - other neighborhoods). However, 16.2 percent of the respondents feel that there own neighborhood has declined, while 17.6 percent feel that other neighborhoods have declined. These proportions are very close to the results from 2008.

### **Citizen Satisfaction with Services and Programs**

This section focuses on the level of satisfaction that Portage residents have expressed with regard to selected city services and programs (see **Appendix A**, Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, and 14-19). In Table 5 on the next page, rank was again calculated using mean responses. For each item, point values were assigned to each of the five categories (1 for Avery satisfied,@ 2 for Asomewhat satisfied,@ 3 for Aneutral,@ 4 for Asomewhat dissatisfied,@ and 5 for Avery dissatisfied@). The number of respondents who selected the category was again multiplied by the appropriate value, the five products were then totaled and divided by the number of respondents to produce the mean for that item. Thus, the lower the mean score, the higher the level of satisfaction.

The first observation about these items is the fact that in several instances a substantial number of respondents had not participated in the program or used the service. This is the case especially for Recreation Programs (76.3% not responding). With the exception of Bikeways/Trailways (32.2% not responding), and Brush Collection (31.9% not responding), which were also definitely higher than is desirable, the non response rates for the remainder of the items were all in the range of about 20 percent or lower. Such levels, especially those above 15 percent, do raise a concern about the generalizability of the results. It also suggests that future questions relating to such programs or services should be considered separately, as they are not directly comparable to items with low levels of non-response.

**Table 5. Satisfaction with City Services and Programs, 2009-2007<sup>1</sup>**

Service/Program	2009		2008		2007	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Bikeways/Trailways	1	(1.36) 93.5	2	(1.36) 94.9	1	(1.21) 97.1
Condition of Parks	2	(1.38) 93.7	3	(1.39) 91.8	5	(1.48) 89.6
Curbside Recycling	3	(1.39) 92.0	1	(1.33) 93.4	2	(1.28) 95.0
Spring Clean Up	4	(1.51) 89.8	4	(1.45) 92.0	7	(1.52) 90.0
Fall Leaf Pickup	5	(1.56) 90.1	6	(1.55) 89.4	5	(1.48) 90.1
Brush Collection	6	(1.69) 86.5	5	(1.51) 87.7	3	(1.39) 93.1
Recreation Programs	7	(1.75) 80.8	7	(1.72) 81.6	4	(1.40) 94.1
Neighborhood Streets	8	(2.17) 71.8	9	(2.26) 71.1	8	(1.90) 83.3
Snow Removal	9	(2.19) 73.5	8	(2.11) 74.9	9	(1.91) 80.5

<sup>1</sup> Issues in Table 5 are organized from the most satisfaction at the top, to the least satisfaction at the bottom for the current year. The ranking is based on the mean response for each issue, which is displayed in parentheses. The percentages who responded either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” are also provided.

Only two services experienced increases in satisfaction scores in 2009 as compared to 2008: Condition of Parks and Neighborhood Streets. Of those, only Condition of Parks was in turn were improved over 2007. All the rest of the services and programs experienced declines in satisfaction from 2009 to 2008, with the exception of Bikeways/Trailways which remained stable. However, it should be noted that all of these changes are relatively small in magnitude, and thus fall within the sampling error. None of them varied more than 2.5 percentage points from the 2008 value. In contrast, the change between 2008 and 2007 was as high as 12 percent for two items, and more than 5 percent for two others.

Bikeways/Trailways regained the top ranking in 2009, edging out Condition of Parks and Curbside Recycling. However, with only some minor reshuffling, the top four remain the top four and the bottom five remain the bottom five. The Spring Clean-Up, Fall Leaf Pickup, and Brush Collection all remained in the middle of the ranking, again with some minor reshuffling in the rankings. As in 2008 and in previous years, respondent satisfaction with almost all city services and programs was high, so that even those services at or near the bottom - the condition of Neighborhood Streets and Snow Removal - were well regarded by nearly three-fourths of the respondents.

Another question of this type in the instrument asked if respondents had attended any of the programs offered at the Bandshell, Celery Flats, the Amphitheatre, or the Hayloft. A total of 47.0 percent indicated that they had. This is down slightly from the 50.7 percent in 2008, but up from 43.7% in 2007. Nevertheless, of those who had attended, fully 90.6 percent were either Avery@ or Asomewhat satisfied.@ In 2008, 89.8 percent of those who attended reported being either Avery@ or Asomewhat satisfied@ with the programs.

As was the case in 2008 and previous years, a substantial proportion of the respondents in 2009 reported that they had direct contact with city employees during the past year (66.1% in 2009 and 67.5% in 2008 in contrast to 46.7% in 2007). Moreover, of those respondents who did report such contact, 57.4 percent reported that they were Avery satisfied@ (up from 52.8% in

2008, but down somewhat from 64.8% in 2007). Another 20.3 percent indicated they were Asomewhat satisfied@ with the quality of service they received, and this was up from 19.2 percent in 2008, but down from 21.8 percent in 2007. Those few (3.2% in 2009) that were Avery dissatisfied@ (4.4% in 2008 and 5.7% in 2007) were also asked why they were dissatisfied. These responses are in **Appendix B**, Question 19.

Only 21.8 percent of the respondents indicated that they had utilized services offered at the Portage Senior Center. This is down slightly from 2008 (22.2%) but up from previous years (15.6% in 2007 and 13.3% in 2006). Nevertheless, of those who have used these services, 83.1 percent reported that they were either Avery satisfied@ or Asomewhat satisfied.@ This is in comparison to 84.6 percent in 2008, 96.9 percent in 2007 and 87.5 percent in 2006.

### Perceptions of the City's Efforts

This year, respondents were once again asked to evaluate the city=s efforts on two specific issues: making cultural opportunities available (Question 5) and encouraging economic development (Question 6). In each case, respondents could indicate that the city was doing AToo Much,@ AJust Enough,@ or AToo Little@ (see Table 6). The results for 2009 are similar to those for 2008, but different from those reported in 2007. This year, 83.3 percent of the respondents felt the city was doing Ajust enough@ for cultural opportunities, and small percentages felt the city was doing either Atoo much@ or Atoo little.@ In contrast, only 65.1 percent felt the city was doing Ajust enough@ for economic development, while a quarter (26.9%) felt the city was doing Atoo little@ and 8.1 percent felt the city was doing Atoo much.@ Moreover, while the results for encouraging economic development fluctuated from year to year, there is a pattern of growing support for further efforts. Moreover, there is also substantial support for the efforts that the City has made with regard to making cultural opportunities available.

**Table 6. Ratings of City Efforts on Key Issues, 2009-2007**

	Too Much		Just Enough		Too Little	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Making Cultural Opportunities Available</b>						
2009	7.9	53	83.3	558	8.8	59
2008	6.9	49	85.0	608	8.1	58
2007	4.3	15	79.5	276	16.1	56
<b>Encouraging Economic Development</b>						
2009	8.1	50	65.1	404	26.9	167
2008	10.1	71	64.2	451	25.7	181
2007	9.3	34	73.1	266	17.6	64

### Environmental Issues

This year, three quarters of the respondents (85.6%) indicated that they have participated in the weekly Curbside Recycling Program. This is up from 2008 (81.5%), and notably higher

than previous years (73.9% in 2007 and 75.6% in 2006). Over two thirds (68.1%) indicated that they had used the monthly curbside brush collection (in comparison to 61.8% in 2008 and 54.0% in 2007). In contrast, with respect to household hazardous waste disposal, only 34.8 percent of the respondents reported that they had used the county hazardous waste center in the last year. While this is up only marginally from 31.9 percent in 2008, it also shows a clear increase from the 26.2 percent in 2007.

**Sources of Information about the City**

This year, an additional set of items were asked of the respondents concerning their sources of information about City government. The respondents were provided with a list of options and asked to choose all that they use. The results are reported below in Table 7.

**Table 7. Information Sources about City Government**

	Percent of Responses	Percent of Cases
City Website	8.7	21.7
<i>Portager</i> Newsletter	35.7	89.1
Cable Access	3.2	8.0
Contact with City Employees	2.8	6.9
Kalamazoo/Portage <i>Gazette</i>	27.5	68.6
Local TV/Radio	20.5	51.2
Other	1.0	2.4
None	0.6	1.5
Total	100.0%	249.4%

It is clear from the table that the *Portager*, the *Gazette*, and local TV/Radio are the major sources of information. Of all the options, those three were the only ones to receive over 10 percent of the responses, with the *Portager* topping them at 35.7 percent. Moreover, when you look at the distribution of cases, it is clear that many respondents have multiple sources of information, and that nearly 90 percent of them selected the *Portager*, nearly 70 percent selected the *Gazette*, and over half selected local television and radio.

The respondents were also asked how important *The Portager* is as a source of information about what is going on in Portage city government. The results are virtually identical to those from 2008 and 2007, plus they are consistent with the results from Table 7. This year, nearly all of the respondents (95.1%) indicated it was either *Avery important* or *Asomewhat important*, and only 4.9 percent indicated that *The Portager* was *Anot important*. These results are slightly higher, but comparable to those of the previous three years. The proportions indicating either *Avery important* or *Asomewhat important* were: 93.7% in 2008, 92.9% in 2007 and 92.9% also in 2006.

With respect to the item regarding the importance of the City of Portage website as a source of information, like last year, a substantial proportion of the respondents were unable to respond (45.4% this year, 45.3% in 2008, and 48.6% in 2007). However, as was the case in

2008 and 2007, those that did respond were largely positive. This year, 80.0 percent indicated that it was A very important@ or A somewhat important@ and 20.0 percent indicated that it was A not important.@ In 2008, the comparable results were 82.7 and 17.3 percent, and in 2007, they were 78.0 percent and 22.0 percent.

### **Perceptions of Economic Growth and Development**

One area of interest relates to the citizens= perceptions of economic growth and development in Portage. As in the past, an overwhelming majority of respondents felt they were getting good services for their tax dollars (85.4% in 2008, 87.7% in 2007, and 84.5% in 2006). This year=s result, at 85.1%, is slightly lower but comparable to previous years. The responses of those who disagreed can be found in **Appendix B**, Question 25. When asked if the city is doing enough to encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial properties, the respondents this year were less positive than they were in 2008. In 2007, they were strongly positive, with nearly three quarters indicating that the city is doing enough (73.5%). In 2008, that proportion had dropped to 57.3 percent. This year, only 54.6 percent of the respondents feel the city is doing enough to encourage such redevelopment. This theme is also apparent from the comments that appear in **Appendix B**, Questions 25, 34 and the final comments at the end of the survey.

### **Prospects and Problems**

Two open-ended questions were included in this year=s survey instrument. The first asked about the best two features of Portage, and the second asked about the most important single problem facing the city. All of the responses to these two questions are in **Appendix B**, Questions 33 and 34. In addition, because it was a mail survey, space was provided for respondents to offer any comments, concerns or suggestion to the city. These are also found in **Appendix B**, at the very end.

It is clear from this year=s responses to the open-ended questions that several themes once again appear. For the positive features of Portage, many of the respondents identified the schools, various city services (pickups, recycling, the Senior Center – and, erroneously, the Library), the parks and the bikeways and trailways. A number noted the variety of services and shopping alternatives that are available. They also focused on other elements of the urban environment such the cleanliness of the city and its appearance, and generally that it is a nice place to live.

With respect to the problems, one of the dominant themes was concern about jobs and economic development. Clearly related to this were the issues of taxes and the ability of the city to continue to provide quality services. Given the national economic context, this is not surprising. Other major concerns include housing, drugs, and traffic.

As the frequently do, the final comments contain an array of concerns, opinions, and personal complaints, along with some interesting suggestions. There is the usual confusion between taxes for the City and the School District, and frequently citizens do not realize how limited the City is with respect to its influence on specific business decisions. Nevertheless, some do echo the above themes. Many others are idiosyncratic and thus do not offer much in the way of useful policy information (although some offer specific actions that could be taken with apparently little cost involved). This is to be expected, since it happens in virtually all surveys of

this kind. Still, there are a couple of themes that appear to follow up on earlier themes. Certain city services (pick ups, snow removal, recycling) were often singled out for attention, usually negative. Although the bulk of the respondents are quite satisfied with the services provided by the city, many of these targeted suggestions lend salience to the perceptions of some citizens. Similarly, specific suggestions were often made regarding the city=s roads and streets and intersections. These tend to reinforce the earlier comments regarding traffic control and the condition of roads and streets within the city.

A final note of caution is warranted with regard to the open-ended responses. First, it is quite common for people to take such opportunities to simply “vent” about a particular issue or matter that is of particular concern to them. This is frequently the origin of the idiosyncratic comments. More importantly, however, the bulk of open-ended responses tend to be at the extremes of opinion – either positive or negative. Relatively few are “middle of the road” in character. Therefore, responses to open-ended questions, while certainly interesting (and sometimes entertaining), are seldom representative of the attitudes or opinions of the majority of people. Consequently, while they can be useful for specific public relations efforts, they should be treated with great caution in the process of making decisions about policy.

## Appendix A

### Research Instrument with Frequency and Percentage Distributions

#### 2009 PORTAGE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Please check the box next to the answer that best represents your opinion or experience. Skip any question you do not want to answer. There is space at the end for comments.

#### LEISURE & CULTURE

##### 1. How satisfied are you with the condition of city parks?

478	70.5%	Very satisfied
157	23.2	Somewhat satisfied
32	4.7	Neutral
6	0.9	Somewhat dissatisfied
5	0.7	Very dissatisfied
[135	16.6%]	Have not visited/Don't know

##### 2. If you have participated in any of the recreation programs offered by the city (such as softball leagues, the Summer Fun Center, Summer Drama Camps, Ramona Park Beach, etc.), how satisfied are you with them?

97	50.3%	Very satisfied
59	30.6	Somewhat satisfied
31	16.1	Neutral
1	0.5	Somewhat dissatisfied
5	2.6	Very dissatisfied
[620	76.3%]	Have not participated/Don't know

##### 3. If you have attended any of the programs offered at the Bandshell, Celery Flats Historical Area, Amphitheatre, or the Hayloft Theater, how satisfied were you with the programs?

247	64.7%	Very satisfied
99	25.9	Somewhat satisfied
22	5.8	Neutral
6	1.6	Somewhat dissatisfied
8	2.1	Very dissatisfied
[431	53.0%]	Have not attended/Don't know

##### 4. If you have used any of the city bikeways or trailways within the last year, how satisfied

**are you with their condition?**

410	74.4%	Very satisfied
105	19.1	Somewhat satisfied
22	4.0	Neutral
8	1.5	Somewhat dissatisfied
6	1.1	Very dissatisfied
[262	32.2%]	Have not used/Don't know

**5. Do you feel that the city is doing too much, just enough or too little in making cultural opportunities available in Portage?**

53	7.9%	Too much
558	83.3	Just enough
59	8.8	Too little
[143	17.6%]	Don't know

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**6. Do you feel that the city is doing too much, just enough or too little to encourage economic development in Portage?**

50	8.1%	Too much
404	65.1	Just enough
167	26.9	Too little
[192	23.6%]	Don't know

**7. Do you think the city is doing enough to encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial properties?**

257	54.6%	Yes
214	45.4	No
[342	42.1%]	Don't know

**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**8. If you have participated in the weekly Portage Curbside Recycling Program in the last year, how satisfied are you with it?**

524	75.3%	Very satisfied
116	16.7	Somewhat satisfied
23	3.3	Neutral
21	3.0	Somewhat dissatisfied
12	1.7	Very dissatisfied
[117	14.4%]	Have not participated/Don't know

**9. If you have city water, is there a problem with the quality of the drinking water?**

533	72.5%	No, it is not a problem
-----	-------	-------------------------

118	16.1	Yes, slight problem	
40	5.4	Yes, moderate problem	
42	5.7	Yes, severe problem (Please specify what)	<b>See Appendix B</b>
[ 80	9.8%]	Don't have city water/Don't know	

**10. Have you utilized the Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center in the last year?**

273	34.8%	Yes
511	65.2	No
[ 29	3.6%]	Don't know

**HUMAN SERVICES**

**11. If you have utilized the services offered at the Portage Senior Center, how satisfied are you with those services?**

109	61.6%	Very satisfied
38	21.5	Somewhat satisfied
21	11.9	Neutral
6	3.4	Somewhat dissatisfied
3	1.7	Very dissatisfied
[636	78.2%]	Have not used/Don't know

**12. Is there a problem with illegal drug use in your neighborhood?**

366	75.3%	No, it is not a problem
68	14.0	Yes, slight problem
38	7.8	Yes, moderate problem
14	2.9	Yes, severe problem
[327	40.2%]	Don't know

**13. Is there a problem with underage drinking in your neighborhood?**

377	77.7%	No, it is not a problem
76	15.7	Yes, slight problem
26	5.4	Yes, moderate problem
5	1.0	Yes, severe problem
[329	40.5%]	Don't know

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

**14. How satisfied are you with the Fall Leaf Pickup Program?**

412	61.8%	Very satisfied
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189	28.3	Somewhat satisfied
26	3.9	Neutral
26	3.9	Somewhat dissatisfied
14	2.1	Very dissatisfied
[146	18.0%]	Have not participated/Don't know

**15. How satisfied are you with the Spring Cleanup Program?**

470	68.4%	Very satisfied
147	21.4	Somewhat satisfied
25	3.6	Neutral
25	3.6	Somewhat dissatisfied
20	2.9	Very dissatisfied
[126	15.5%]	Have not participated/Don't know

**16. How satisfied are you with the street snow removal?**

266	34.1%	Very satisfied
307	39.4	Somewhat satisfied
53	6.8	Neutral
102	13.1	Somewhat dissatisfied
52	6.7	Very dissatisfied
[ 33	4.1%]	Don't know

**17. How satisfied are you with the condition of neighborhood streets?**

255	32.1%	Very satisfied
316	39.7	Somewhat satisfied
90	11.3	Neutral
103	13.0	Somewhat dissatisfied
31	3.9	Very dissatisfied
[ 18	2.2%]	Don't know

**18. If you have utilized the Monthly Curbside Brush Collection Program, how satisfied are you with it?**

316	57.0%	Very satisfied
163	29.4	Somewhat satisfied
22	4.0	Neutral
38	6.9	Somewhat dissatisfied
15	2.7	Very dissatisfied
[259	31.9%]	Have not used/Don't know

**19. If you have had any direct contact with Portage city employees over the past year, how satisfied were you with the quality of service received from the employee?**

308	57.4%	Very satisfied
109	20.3	Somewhat satisfied

84	15.6	Neutral	
19	3.5	Somewhat dissatisfied	
17	3.2	Very dissatisfied (Please specify why)	<b>See Appendix B</b>
[276	33.9%]	Have had no contact/Don't know	

**20. Do you think there is a problem with the level of police protection in Portage?**

522	82.6%	No, it is not a problem
77	12.2	Yes, slight problem
27	4.3	Yes, moderate problem
6	0.9	Yes, severe problem
[181	22.3%]	Don't know

**21. Do you think there is a problem with the level of fire protection in Portage?**

583	95.3%	No, it is not a problem
19	3.1	Yes, slight problem
6	1.0	Yes, moderate problem
4	0.7	Yes, severe problem
[201	24.7%]	Don't know

**22. Is there a problem with the condition of pavement on roads and streets in Portage?**

230	29.7%	No, it is not a problem
338	43.7	Yes, slight problem
175	22.6	Yes, moderate problem
31	4.0	Yes, severe problem
[ 39	4.8%]	Don't know

**23. How do you obtain information about what is going on in Portage city government?  
(Check all that apply)**

173	8.7%	The City website	
710	35.7	The Portager newsletter	
64	3.2	Portage Cable Access (channels 19 & 20)	
65	2.8	Contact with city employees	
547	27.5	The Kalamazoo Gazette/Portage Gazette	
408	20.5	Local television or radio	
19	1.0	Other (please specify)	<b>See Appendix B</b>
12	0.6	None of the above	

**24. As a source of information about what is going on in Portage city government, how important is the Portager newsletter?**

451	58.3%	Very important
284	36.7	Somewhat important

38	4.9	Not important
[ 40	4.9%]	Don't know

**25. As a source of information about what is going on in Portage city government, how important is the City of Portage website?**

142	32.0%	Very important
213	48.0	Somewhat important
89	20.0	Not important
[348	45.4%]	Don't know

**26. Do you think you are getting good services for your city tax dollars?**

567	85.1%	Yes	
99	14.9	No (Please specify why not)	See Appendix B
[150	18.1%]	Don't know	

**NEIGHBORHOODS**

**27. Is there a problem with the condition of neighborhood homes and yards in Portage?**

415	55.5%	No, it is not a problem	
260	34.8	Yes, slight problem	
48	6.4	Yes, moderate problem	
25	3.3	Yes, severe problem (Please specify what)	See Appendix B
[ 65	8.0%]	Don't know	

**28. Has the condition of your neighborhood changed in the last five years?**

79	10.8%	It is better than it was
535	73.0	It is about the same
119	16.2	It is worse than it was
[ 80	9.8%]	Don't know

**29. Has the condition of neighborhoods in the city, other than yours, changed in the last five years?**

52	9.8%	They are better than they were
384	72.6	They are about the same
93	17.6	They are worse than they were
[284	34.9%]	Don't know

**TRANSPORTATION**

**30. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on South Westnedge Avenue?**

204	26.4%	No, it is not a problem
288	37.3	Yes, slight problem

198	25.6	Yes, moderate problem
82	10.6	Yes, severe problem
[ 41	5.0%]	Don't know

**31. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on Oakland Drive?**

340	47.9%	No, it is not a problem
235	33.1	Yes, slight problem
105	14.8	Yes, moderate problem
29	4.1	Yes, severe problem
[103	12.7%]	Don't know

**32. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on any other Portage streets?**

189	36.4%	Yes (Please specify streets)	<b>See Appendix B</b>
330	63.6	No	
[294	36.2%]	Don't know	

**GENERAL OPINION**

**33. In general, what do you feel are the best two features of Portage?**

**See Appendix B**

**34. Looking at the next ten years, what do you think is the single most important problem facing Portage?**

**See Appendix B**

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

**35. About how many years have you lived in Portage?**

8	1.0%	Less than 1 year
88	11.1	1 to 4 years
102	12.8	5 to 9 years
596	75.1	10 or more years
[ 19	3.8%]	Don't know

**36. Are you male or female?**

406	52.5%	Male
367	47.5	Female
[ 40	4.9%]	No response

**37. What is your age, please? Are you...**

23	2.9%	29 years or younger
71	9.1	30-39
118	15.1	40-49

88	11.2	50-54
94	12.0	55-59
389	49.7	60 years or over
[ 30	3.7%]	Don't know

**38. How would you classify your racial or ethnic heritage?**

724	94.4%	White/non-Hispanic
11	1.4	Black/African American
1	0.1	Alaskan Native, American Indian, Eskimo
13	1.7	Asian American or Pacific Islander
3	0.4	Hispanic
2	0.3	International/non-US resident
7	0.9	Multiracial
6	0.8	Other (please specify)
[ 46	5.7%]	Don't know

See Appendix B

**39. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

106	13.6%	High school or less
260	33.5	Some college/technical school
216	27.8	Bachelor's degree
195	25.1	Graduate degree
[ 36	4.4%]	Don't know

**40. Which of the following best describes where you live?**

650	82.9%	Single-family home
13	1.7	Mobile home
56	7.1	Apartment
55	7.0	Condominium
10	1.3	Other (please specify)
[ 29	3.6%]	Don't know

See Appendix B

**41. Using Centre Avenue and South Westnedge Avenue as dividing streets, do you live in the northwest, northeast, southwest, or southeast portion of Portage?**

361	46.6%	Northwest (Near Crossroads Mall)
84	10.9	Northeast (Near the airport)
124	16.0	Southwest (Near the state game area)
205	26.5	Southeast (Near the lakes)
[ 39	4.8%]	Don't know

**42. Which of the following categories represents your total family income for the last year before taxes?**

87	12.1%	Less than \$25,000
176	24.5	\$25,000 to \$49,999
180	25.1	\$50,000 to \$74,999

126	17.6	\$75,000 to \$99,999
148	20.6	\$100,000 or more
[ 96	11.8%]	Don't know

**43. If you have access to the Internet from home, what type of internet service to you have?**

120	15.8%	No internet service	
53	7.0	Dial-up	
194	25.5	DSL	
9	1.2	Satellite	
351	46.2	Cable	
33	4.3	Other (Please specify)	<b>See Appendix B</b>
[ 53	6.5%]	Don't know	

**44. Do you have conventional land line telephone service or cell phone service in your home?**

112	14.2%	Land line only
657	83.5	Both land line and cell phone
18	2.3	Cell phone only
[ 26	3.2%]	Don't know

**45. Please indicate below any other comments, concerns, or suggestions you may have for the City of Portage.**

**See Appendix B**

**That was the last question! Thank you for your time and cooperation. Just put the survey in the postage-paid return envelope and drop it in the mail.**

## Appendix B

### 2009 Portage Community Survey Responses to Open-ended Questions

#### 9. If you have city water, is there a problem with the quality of the drinking water? [Yes, severe problem - specify]

- Allergic filter needed
  - At times a high chemical odor.
  - Bad odor
  - Bath water is yellow
  - Becomes brown at times
  - Calcium build-up
  - Can taste chlorine
  - Cannot stand to drink, it has a bad odor/taste but it has improved some as of late
  - Clothes turned off color. Toilet is brown. Leaves a brownish coating on water purifiers, humidifiers.
  - Color and taste
  - Costs way too much
  - Doesn't really taste good.
  - Extreme rust issue
  - Few times every year gets a real strong funky taste to it for 1-2 weeks.
  - Had to install a water system because of rusty water.
  - Hard water level.
  - Hardness of water; arsenic levels
  - Heavy rust, have to filter to make it drinkable
  - High level of phosphate - 2000 ppb.
  - I live at the end of a line and rarely is it blown out - have rusty water and lots of staining
  - I still filter to get better taste.
  - I use a filter on my faucet if I'm going to drink it.
  - I use water filter on the tap.
  - Increased hardness.
  - Iron content high, causes rust in shower and bath. Tastes funny
  - Iron Ferric and Ferrous Chloride are high, also phosphates.
  - It has black grains like coffee some times, lot more rust or yellow looking, and an odor
  - It's yellow and stains things.
  - Lack of pressure this year
  - Looks cloudy, does not taste good.
  - Lots of rust.
- My toilets always have a yellow ring no matter how much they are cleaned. An iron or other

problem? I have never had this problem in other cities.

My water is always yellow - my tub is ruined

No water pressure in house while sprinkler system is on.

Odor in water

Our water is very hard and rusty. We have a water filter and still have problems with calcium build up and rust.

Prices are very high and accelerating at an alarming rate.

Rust and dirt in water

Rust colored

Rust from flush; chlorine is strong

Rust in water - small particles in water, bad taste.

Rust/iron stains

Rusty, more often

Sediment, bad taste, odor – not drinkable

Sediment in water also rusty at times

Seems to be an abundance of lime in water.

Slightly yellow/brown when settled in container.

Smells bad the first thing in the morning.

Smells like a sewer even after going through a filtration system we have purchased. After a few days, the filter is awful. We cannot get the city to even look at it

Some rust

Sometimes it tastes too strong of chlorine. I'm sure that probably can't be helped.

Sometimes the water smells like bleach.

Stains washer, too many minerals

Taste

Taste

Taste

Taste, hardness.

Taste, smell, contents

Tastes funny - have to filter it.

Tastes like "hot garbage"

Tastes terrible and is hard; rusty.

The taste has changed to a chemical chlorine taste

The water tastes like metal - no good

There is iron in water is my only complaint. Especially when watering lawns, etc.

Too hard

Too hard

Too hard, too many metals

Too much chloride

Too much fluoride and chlorine

Too much iron

Too much iron and off-taste

Too much rust

Too much rust

Too much rust in water or rusty color.

Very hard. We have our water filtered or bottled. It doesn't taste very good.

Very hard; black mold builds up on the underside of my faucets and accumulates in the toilets every few days; bad taste; some times is rust colored.

Very rusty water.

We do not like the taste so we buy water.

We drink bottled water

We get brown stain streaks in our toilets where the water comes in after the flush.

We have a condition because of hard water.

We live in Colonial Acres, and the water is bad

Without our water softener the water is very hard and clouds our dishes.

**19. If you have had any direct contact with Portage city employees over the past year, how satisfied were you with the quality of the service received from the employee? [Very dissatisfied - specify]**

A person at Treasury was extremely rude and unprofessional  
City assessor's office treats residents as ignorant. The assessors stubbornly refuse to provide information to residents and are reluctant to admit errors.

City employees don't care about the citizens they work for. They blatantly tell lies and won't listen at all.

City recreation director did not give me what I wanted, and didn't seem to consider my opinion or believe what I reported as fact.

Contradictory statements from 2 employees.

Curbside recycling container - two contacts over phone; polite employees but no actions - still waiting after 1 ½ months

Girls in office not friendly when paying city bill

Had to do with class code of houses - changing from code B to A. Did not think this was legal.

I had an interaction with one of the individuals mowing at the park - obnoxious and discourteous.

In cemetery by library - keep mowed and watered - well cared for

Many lie and are rude

Must see too many people for a simple answer.

Not friendly, but not rude

Not truthful of all facts.

Rude

There is one official who is never friendly. Treasurer's clerk is very nice. Planning staff are very serious, but courteous and helpful.

They seemed uninformed and under staffed

They were blowing out sewers without notification, and I had my face in the toilet hole preparing my floor at the time. Got a lung full of sewer gas. Not Good

Very rude manners and uniforms were dirty with sleeves ripped off

Very wishy/washy on barking dogs.

Was treated rudely by a man in the Treasurer's office, very condescending.

Water bill unresolved – very rude – lost contact – didn't call back

When I pay my bills in the office, I have not found them to be customer friendly

Would not provide council members' email addresses.

**23. How do you obtain information about what is going on in Portage city government?  
[Other – specify]**

Agenda and minutes from boards at library

At church or school events

Call directly.

Conversations with people in the know.

Friends and family

Go to city hall and ask

I am a member of the Park Board

Internet.

Kalamazoo Gazette seems to shorten announcements e.g., Army touring band at band shelter.

Lots of seniors went and it was a great rock band. But band was disappointed when told about the newspaper's promotion. Also tour of Australia at the Kalamazoo Museum. It was for children.

Neighbors

Neighbors

Neighbors

Neighbors

Portage Senior Center newsletter.

Senior Center Info

Word of mouth

## 26. Do you think you are getting good services for your city tax dollars?

Always adding fees to get into different events. What happens to the families with limited income. Just pay the taxes and smile? People not friendly. It costs for everything. Where does the tax money go? Seniors on limited budget can't enjoy, but do pay their taxes.

Better snow removal

Brush pick-up was not as good as it has been in years past when Portage was in control.

Changing regular streets into boulevards often makes it hard to turn into stores. Why do you reduce speed limits after widening and repairing the streets like Oakland, Milham, Shaver?

Condo living. No leaf, waste, snow removal etc done on our streets but we still pay for it.

Curbside recycling is too fussy what they will take and how to put it in container. Shouldn't need leaf bags - a waste and not good for environment. Brush collection too fussy too about size length.

Decision makers not using sound judgment in setting priorities; e.g., finding streets is easy with lighted signs, but can't drive on them because of the terrible conditions of the road surface.

Disappointed in street cleaning, brush removal, snow plowing.

Have lived here two years - still have not seen any city workers.

Have no use for anything taxes

Having water works maintain public utilities is not working. Millions of tax dollars.

High costs – getting higher – we are paying for services – time to cut back – taxes keep going up

Housing values down – but my taxes are up.

How the school system gets to use our tax dollars. Spring cleanup more often. Police officers for high crime neighborhoods who will do more to attempt to find the suspect

I am very irritated that the boulevards used plantings and that the city has sprinkling systems for each boulevard. - too expensive. Trees are good.

I have to pay a private service to get me out after the city snow removal trucks have been here. Extremely disappointed. The snow trucks arrive late at night and plow. By the time morning arrives, I and many of my neighbors are blocked in due to piling of snow at the base of our driveways.

I live in a condo and pay a fee for services - snow removal, street, trash pickup. I feel I should be paying less taxes to the city because they don't perform this service for me.

I pay way too much for one person because I am on acreage.

I would like to see pick up more often.

I'm being taxed to death. Between special assessments, raising taxes, and losing my job, I'm barely hanging on. No more tax increases please.

In some areas the schools are favored with air conditioning, carpeted rooms and a brand new elementary. Others do not have these.

Keeps going up when the market is down and especially given the bad economy.

Less services and taxes still increase.

Live in condo with private streets and get no services which we pay for.

More adjustments should be made based on decreasing home values.

More bike routes

More frequent spring cleanup, earlier snow removal, reseeded snow plow scraped lawns.

More services - leaf, spring pickup all summer, brush pickup monthly

More street lighting on our street. Better recycling containers.

My taxes are high yet our road is plowed last and pavement is often in worse condition. My extra dollars don't give me extra services.

Need better public transit and more quality culture activities – should partner with professionals or WMU like Kalamazoo does.

Need better snow removal- it sucks. Spring clean up should be same as fall, not bagged

Need more leaf pick-ups

Not happy with decreased busing for elementary to Amberly. With the amount of supplies parents must buy at the beginning of the school year and during, shouldn't tax dollars cover them?

On fixed income - retired. Taxes too high

Our street is not getting plowed in the winter.

Our street needs repaving. Was told not for 10 more years. No snow removal in front of our house.

Outlying roads need to have sealer with stone to make them last longer, especially Plats. For example, Shaver Road, which was done at the same time, but Schoolcraft put sealer and stone on their part. Just compare the condition.

Parks Department, road department are too overstaffed - some work could be done with half the people.

Paying too much for services.

Poor municipal services

Poor patching of roads. Too hit or miss

Privatized water service and price is going up. Waste of money on entrance signs, which are questionable. Buying up too many properties for parks

Property taxes are going up and home values down.

Road is not clean, catch basin floods after a rain, freezes and breaks up black top.

Road repair is pathetic and should be improved

Roads are not being maintained - like Vincent and BrynMawr

Roads need lots of work. Too many potholes and neglected areas.

Schools are declining.

Schools – yes. Snow removal – No. Assessed value is way too high. There was a slight reduction but I can't sell my house for the value.

Services during winter months are bad. We are overtaxed, streets and drains are poor, trees over sidewalks, the water is bad, streets and sidewalks flood. Side streets are not plowed, and when they do plow you have two-three feet deep and high in your driveway

Snow plowing of residential areas is slow

Snow removal is not as good as it was. We live on a lake but receive less in the way of services.

Snow removal, spring clean-up

Street conditions

Street lighting is insufficient

Streets are going to pot along the edges – nothing is being done.

Streets not plowed often enough. Bike trail not cleared for walkers. Takes far too long for

snow plows to clear, and then they do a poor job

Tax dollars aren't spent uniformly throughout the city. Property taxes are an unfair way to support the city - promote decay. We have no curb while other streets have bricked crosswalks.

Tax dollars or a part of them could be put to better use.

Taxes are getting too high.

Taxes are not my favorite thing

Taxes are really high and we only get big trash pick up 2 times a year and don't have city weekly trash pick up.

Taxes are too high

Taxes are too high for the services we receive.

Taxes are too high for the services I use.

Taxes are too high for the services.

Taxes are very high. KVCC tax is too high

Taxes in Portage are very high compared to cities that offer similar services.

Taxes seem high - however, services are of good quality.

Taxes too high for services provided

Taxes too high for services being offered.

Taxes too high

The addition of the boulevards was a large waste of tax dollars

The city seems overly concerned with aesthetics and landscaping, and too little concerned with street repairs and maintenance.

The disabled and seniors who do not have children should also have to pay the majority of their taxes for all the education taxes we have to pay for

The services are too expensive

The tax increase over the years has not been commensurate with an increase in services. Mattawan is a better value. I see Mattawan as Portage 20 years earlier and Portage going the route of Kalamazoo

There are excesses that could be reduced.

There is room for improvement

They are very high

This is a close call, but the terrible level of snow removal service pushes it to "no" given the very high property taxes.

Too high for what I have

Too much corruption

Too much spend on cultural activities and too little on roads and hiring good office staff.

Wasteful in parks and streets and not enough in fire/police.

Water bill high

We could spend a little less on flowers at city head quarters. Use some perennials

We have to pay city taxes but don't get any benefit – we have to maintain our roads, snow removal, yard pickup – no spring pickup – we have to remove our own dumpster. We don't get any benefits from the city. We should be exempt from this part of the taxes

We live in a condo development and pay taxes for services not available there- should be a discount.

We live in a condo and seems like we are penalized for doing so. Services provided elsewhere

we have to pay for plus taxes.

We need to separate recycling but are only allowed one bin and I easily could fill up 2.  
Having to fill out application for school bus and my kid's bus is separate from one bus to two  
busses after school was in session.

While other properties went down because of the recession, ours in Portage go up.

Worry about school funding.

Would like to return to monthly brush pickup. Wish there was a hazardous waste drop off in  
Portage.

Yes, for the school system and library. No, for the road conditions

You waste our money on too much.

**27. Is there a problem with the condition of neighborhood homes and yards in Portage?  
[Yes, severe problem - specify]**

Abandoned cars, lawn mowers, lack of pride in ownership.  
Boat on trailer parked on street for several months.  
Campers, boats, RV parked in driveways and on the side of houses  
Cars in yards, appliances and furniture in yards, grass not cut.  
Cars parked in yards, poor maintenance of some lawns. Snow shoveling of sidewalks.  
Cars parked on grass, home-made signs litter street corners. Junk around homes. Lawns not mowed, sidewalks not cleared of snow. Do we even have an ordinance enforcer?  
City curb lawn not mowed all year in our area  
Corner of Portage and Stanley - rental unit with a lot of traffic and trash.  
Edmonds Street.  
Have a concern about half way houses. Has introduced a questionable element into the community without proper supervision.  
House at corner of Milham and Old Mission is beyond horrible  
House next door was sold at auction the last of June. Since then nothing has happened.  
Houses that are being foreclosed. Rental houses. Too many non-related living in one home.  
Inconsistent zoning practices with little or no follow through. Some homeowners need help - loans or assistance to bring up the quality of their property. Neighborhood grants?  
It is a very serious issue that is growing by the day  
Lawn/yard up keep, parking and storage of vehicles, RVs, boats, utility trailers on and around driveways  
Live in an area where there has been basement flooding.  
Many more rentals and most don't care.  
Neighbor doesn't take care or mow grass more than twice a season  
Neighbors on both sides of us have let their lawns go to weeds, do not water or trim overgrown trees and bushes.  
Not consistently maintained  
Not obvious in some areas but horrible in others, cars parked on lawns so look like car lots.  
Furniture etc. sitting out doors. Ugly sheds and attachments to homes allowed.  
Oakland estates.  
One person with junk  
People are doing the best they can to keep up with costs of living these days.  
People are renting their homes as they can't sell. Cost of upkeep difficult and kids not keeping to old neighborhood norms.  
People that are renting don't mow enough and pick up the trash in yards.  
People who don't mow, garbage and junk in yards, vacant unkempt houses  
Piling junk behind garage.  
Recreational vehicles parked in yards - too many garage sales and they last too long.  
S. Westnedge - fire wood piled in yards  
Schuring east of Arborcre has become an eyesore  
Smelly compost piles.  
Some do not keep lawns mowed or shrubbery trimmed. One lawn mowed only 3 times since

last winter. Leaves are not raked in the fall or sometimes not even in the spring.

Some folks could take more care in yard upkeep, pruning shrubs, and house upkeep

Some front yards with wood for burning in excessive amounts. Other trash in yard, especially one yard on South Westnedge. Also the back yard is about half covered

Some homes are allowed to be eyesores. Nothing is done when reported to city.

Some homes/yard could be kept up better

Some of our neighbors on Orchard Meadow do not take care of their lawn.

The neighbor's house across the street is vacant and lawn needs attention.

The vacant lot grass not being mowed

There need to be penalties for houses that are allowed to deteriorate and blight.

Too many cars on streets and yards

Too many foreclosures are not getting attention, i.e. mowing, appearance

Trees along sidewalks need trimming, some yards not mowed frequently enough.

We have homes for sale that are vacant and upkeep is poor - cutting grass etc.

Windows boarded up, grounds not maintained, 8-10 cars parked in yard.

Yards not taken care of, houses are falling apart.

**32. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on any other Portage streets? [Yes - specify]**

12<sup>th</sup> and Milham needs light

12<sup>th</sup> and Milham

12<sup>th</sup> get side walks and lights by the new schools

131 exit on Centre for left turn.

Always have hated how traffic flows on Centre and around Westnedge.

Angling, Centre to Milham. Romence, Oakland to Angling. 12th Street, Milham to Centre.

Autumn Street, southeast Portage. No one drives the posted 25 mph. I have clocked people going up to 60 mph in both directions. Autumn Street is about 200 yards long. Drivers speed up after 3pm.

Bronson Boulevard and Maple Ridge. It is very difficult to make a left-hand turn out of the Portage side - the flashing light is of no help.

Centre

Centre, 12th Street.

Centre and Sprinkle have slow traffic.

Centre at Brookwood.

Centre at Garden Lane, dangerous crosswalks

Centre at Shaver and Westnedge

Centre at Shaver and Westnedge

Centre becomes more congested; sometimes difficult to be on streets without lights

Centre during construction.

Centre, even with reconstruction it is bad. Too many mixed uses. Portion of Sprinkle is a nightmare at times.

Centre is now busier than Milham.

Centre, Milham

Centre, Portage, Romence, Milham, Shaver

Centre, Shaver - speed

Centre, the new construction is nice but there is a lot of traffic when making a left turn

Centre, too many different speed limits and lights are not timed properly  
Congestion  
Corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Milham and Texas Drive. That intersection needs a light.  
Currier Dr.  
Drive too fast on Centre  
East Centre needs another traffic light at Currier Drive  
Hard to turn north from Osterhout with no light.  
Hemlock, speeding  
I just stay off Westnedge as best I can. At certain times of the day - Kilgore Rd.  
Intersection of Milham and 12<sup>th</sup>  
Intersection of Milham, Texas Drive and 12<sup>th</sup> needs a traffic light.  
Intersections, Shaver/Centre and Westnedge/Centre  
Kalarama – can't get onto Oakland because the charter school has the street plugged up.  
Kilgore  
Kilgore  
Kilgore  
Kilgore  
Kilgore  
Kilgore and Westnedge.  
Kilgore at Westnedge  
Kilgore between Oakland and Westnedge - need light at Old Country.  
Kilgore - Bronson and Westnedge  
Left arrow light at Centre and Westnedge is too short.  
Left turn signal at north bound Oakland Drive at I-94 west ramp.  
Light at Schuring and Oakland  
Lovers Lane, Milham, Centre. Any street with a worthless boulevard  
Lovers Lane, Portage Road  
Lovers Lane - speed.  
Mall Drive.  
Melody and Shaver.  
Melody too busy  
Meredith at Sprinkle. Light for Meredith traffic is so short that people frequently run the  
light.  
Meredith  
Milham  
Milham

Milham & 12<sup>th</sup> – needs light  
 Milham, almost resolved  
 Milham and Monticello - light on Milham should be computer controlled  
 Milham and Oregon at school drop-off & pickup  
 Milham and Romence and Kilgore  
 Milham and Romence  
 Milham and Romence  
 Milham - Angling area, but I'm hoping the new light at that intersection makes a difference.  
 Very happy to see light put in  
 Milham around schools at 7:30 am.  
 Milham, at Downing Street. People turning left going west on Milham Getting out on Milham  
 to Downing is getting hard. Maybe the new light at Analina will help.  
 Milham, between 12<sup>th</sup> and 131  
 Milham, between Oakland and Westnedge  
 Milham, between post office and Oakland  
 Milham, between Westnedge and 12th.  
 Milham, by 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Milham, Centre  
 Milham, during school year  
 Milham, from 12<sup>th</sup> to Oakland, even with the new construction completed.  
 Milham, going west from Constitution to Oakland at peak hours  
 Milham, in Oakland Drive area  
 Milham, in the morning by PNHS  
 Milham is very congested and backed up  
 Milham needs to go through to Sprinkle. There needs to be another alternative.  
 Milham - speed the biggest problems  
 Milham through Westnedge  
 Milham, between Oregon and Oakland  
 Moorsbridge  
 Most streets during lunch and rush hours. All roads during the holidays  
 Need light at the corner of South Shore and Portage  
 Oakland & Parkview – Oakland & Howard – Whites & Westnedge  
 Oakland Drive big time  
 Oakland, Vincent School/Church between 7-8:30 & 4:30-6 Oakland doesn't allow traffic out.  
 Only the interchange at I-94 and Westnedge which should be corrected  
 Osterhout is getting very busy  
 People drive too fast on Ruth Street for the amount of children on the street.  
 People putting leaves/brush on the streets 2-4 weeks before pickup  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage

Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage  
 Portage and Centre - right turn lane needs to be restored.  
 Portage and Centre. Centre and Lovers Lane. The lights are sometimes an issue. When you are the only one at the light, the light will not change - becomes frustrating and go thru red light  
 Portage at 1-94 is not kept up. Gives bad impression as you enter city  
 Portage at Kilgore. Westnedge, PCHS, from parking lot reentering Westnedge. The whole HS situation is unsafe. It's a wonder there aren't more accidents. Sprinkle road traffic goes too fast.  
 Portage by and past Cork. Speed limit is way too slow.  
 Portage Central for games. Waylee exit onto Centre when school lets out.  
 Portage near I-94, both south and north.  
 Portage - smart lights don't work well.  
 Primrose Lane - lots of speeders  
 Romence  
 Romence  
 Romence  
 Romence  
 Romence  
 Romence  
 Romence and Milham  
 Romence and Milham  
 Romence and Moorsbridge  
 Romence and Westnedge  
 Romence at Westnedge and west to Angling. Lights badly timed  
 Romence between Constitution and Oakland. Timing of lights doesn't allow you to make a left hand turn during peak time.  
 Romence, Kilgore, Lovers Lane  
 Romence and Milham  
 Romence, Milham, and Centre.  
 Romence, Milham, Kilgore  
 Romence and Milham  
 Romence; Centre & Portage, Milham  
 Shaver & Centre  
 Shaver Road - increase speed.  
 South Shore - speed  
 South Shore onto Portage most of the time is hazardous to enter Portage. Safer with a traffic light.  
 South Westnedge, people fly.  
 Speed - large trucks, semis.  
 Speed limit is too high on Portage south of Centre The bar and speedway create a tremendous amount of room for error. Should be lowered to 35 all the way to Mandigo.

Speed limits are too high. Actual speeds of 40 are dangerous in residential/retail settings.  
Speed might be main problem - also changing lanes. Many people do not know how to drive or know how to get where they are going.

Speeding and ignoring stop signs in neighborhoods

Sprinkle

Sprinkle and Portage.

Sprinkle and Zylman one street each way

Sprinkle at Romence - left turn light, only no turn after camera has cleared. Pot holes at side roads caused by school buses cutting corners.

Traffic light timing

Traffic lights along Westnedge seem too long

Traffic lights on Centre and 131 exit southbound

Turn signals on Romence between Westnedge and Sprinkle. Proximity indicators, especially at Lovers Lane.

Van Hoesen

Vanderbilt because of Meijer and Walmart. Drive too fast - 35 speed limit almost never followed

West Centre, East Contize, Milham

West Centre gets caustic - where are the police?

West Centre - speeding

West Milham and Kilgore, especially with construction

Westnedge at Portage Central

Woodbridge Hills during Portage Invitational X-Country Meet

**33. In general, what do you feel are the best two features of Portage?**

- A nice place to raise a family.
- A very well kept city
- Abundance of parks and trails. It's not small but has the small town feel.
- Academics. Safety/security
- Access roads and condition of streets. Convenience to shopping
- Access to city government. Bike paths and parks
- Accessibility around town. Cleanliness
- Accessibility to everything. Solving problems
- Adequate city services. Efforts to time lights, keep traffic flowing.
- Adjacent stores and variety at stores. Parks on the small lakes, millennium park
- Aesthetics and businesses.
- Aesthetics of road construction with roads and boulevards. Bikeways and parks.
- All the lakes Schools
- Almost everything a person needs is close by. Easy access to highways.
- Although the cost is too high, I think the boulevards are attractive. The parks and bike ways
- Appeal of neighborhoods. City services – police, fire, public works - keep the city clean, safe and functioning
- Appearance and availability of all kinds of stores.
- Appearance is inviting as a nice place to live. Proactive city council.
- Appearance of property – well maintained and safe – quick responses to emergencies
- Attractive use of flowers in the summer and decorations in the winter of the city property.
- Available and convenient stores. Safety.
- Available Recreation. Schools
- Bandshell programs and the senior services programs.
- Beautiful flowers and cleanliness. Attention to residents
- Beautiful flowers. Lots of parks.
- Beautiful Parks. Air Zoo
- Beautiful place to live
- Beautiful recreational areas - lakes, parks, trails. Main roads in very good condition.
- Beautiful roadways, trees, flowers, boulevards, walkways, bike paths. Scenic city
- Beautiful trees and landscaping on streets and parks-cleanliness. Plenty of easy shopping and supermarkets. Good schools
- Beauty with trees and parks and a good school system
- Beauty.
- Bicentennial trail - wish it weren't closed between Milham and Kilgore
- Bicentennial Trail. Wooded areas on Romence, Milham, Portage.
- Bigger city amenities – entertainment/universities/etc. - without traffic and congestion.
- Schools and neighbors
- Bike and walking trails. Retail shopping.
- Bike lanes on the roads in Portage. Landscaping along Centre
- Bike paths and parks. Schools
- Bike paths etc. Several good neighborhoods

Bike pathways  
 Bike/Recreation trails. District Library  
 Bike trails  
 Bike trails and overall care of parks.  
 Bike trails and Celery Flats  
 Bike trails - Celery Flats, Lovers Lane, etc. Family activities - concerts, plays, fireworks, etc.  
 Bike trails. Library  
 Bike trails, neighborhood close to shopping  
 Bike trails, retail stores/restaurant variety  
 Bike trails. Clean streets.  
 Bike trails. Parks  
 Bike trails. Sidewalks  
 Bikeway/paths, but would like more. Local restaurants unique to area.  
 Bikeways, all the beautiful flowers  
 Bikeways, family activities.  
 Brush and leaf pick up.  
 Brush and trash pickup.  
 Business and work. Safe neighborhoods  
 Business climate. Schools  
 Business district, streets, parks, trailways, neighborhoods are well-maintained. Safety.  
 Business opportunities. Beautiful condition of parks, etc.  
 Businesses and restaurants. Celery Flats  
 Care and governing of city proper. Traffic direction control  
 Celery Flats and other trails - family parks. Stryker.  
 Celery Flats area and Westnedge shopping stores.  
 Celery Flats, parks  
 Celery Flats schools  
 Celery Flats walking trail. A good variety of restaurants.  
 Celery Flats. bikeways, pathways  
 Celery Flats. parks  
 Celery Flats. Library. schools  
 Celery Flats. parks  
 Choices. Easily accessible.  
 Christmas lights and lots of flowers. Band Shell and concerts  
 City common areas well kept. Free city activities  
 City Communications. Schools  
 City government officials. Schools  
 City government. Location.  
 City hall area, Library, Celery Flats area, bike ways and river  
 City hall grounds are beautiful. Planning does a good job working to attract businesses to the city.  
 City landscaping/planning, particularly attention to traffic flows  
 City parks and walking paths. Many quiet wooded neighborhoods.  
 City parks and recreation facilities and condition

City parks and the Library  
City parks are clean. Streets clean - no trash on land adjacent to street.  
City parks and bikeways. Library  
City parks. Boulevards.  
City parks. Leaf/brush and spring clean up.  
City services, cleanliness.  
Clean and Attractive, including flowers. Parks  
Clean and beautiful landscaping Excellent schools  
Clean, and I love all the pretty flowers. I feel very safe living there.  
Clean, and it has a lot to offer.  
Clean and neat. The landscaping etc.  
Clean and peaceful. Free of serious crime  
Clean and pretty town. Flowers around city center very nice. Little crime  
Clean, good traffic flow.  
Clean. Fire and Rescue always respond in a timely manner  
Clean hometown appearance and feelings. Flowers around City Hall area and boulevards.  
Clean, just needs some work on city roads  
Clean, lots of stores and restaurants.  
Clean neighborhoods. Low crime.  
Clean place to live. Good street upkeep  
Clean streets and neighborhoods. Good school.  
Clean. Green.  
Clean. How well roads and everything are kept and maintained.  
Clean. Safe  
Clean. Store and restaurant choices.  
Clean. Well laid out street plan.  
Cleanliness  
Cleanliness and opportunity for growth and new business.  
Cleanliness and services provided  
Cleanliness, availability of services  
Cleanliness, beautiful landscaping. Parks and friendly people.  
Cleanliness Bike trails/parks  
Cleanliness Community parks  
Cleanliness, easy to get around  
Cleanliness. Availability of commercial businesses.  
Cleanliness. Good "livability"  
Cleanliness. Low crime.  
Cleanliness. Parks  
Cleanliness. Recreational services  
Cleanliness. Services available  
Cleanliness. Up to date.  
Close proximity to WMU and cultural/arts events. Natural resources Portage Creek, lakes,  
open spaces  
Close to highways. A new elementary school.

Close to shopping. Close to several routes to work.  
Close to shopping. Closeness to Kalamazoo.  
Communications. Schools. Parks.  
Community programs. Brush pick up.  
Compactness and ease to get around. Having most of what I need so close by.  
Convenience and nice balance of urban, suburban, and rural.  
Convenience and variety of shopping and restaurants. Wide range of cultural and recreational opportunities. Bike lanes on streets and walk trails are also wonderful  
Convenient location.  
Convenient shopping. Parks and bike paths.  
Curb side pickup and leaf pickup program.  
Curbside recycling program. Bikeways and trailways  
Curbside recycling. Leaf/brush pick-up  
Decent schools  
Design standards, parks  
Different businesses. Layout of city  
Different retail stores and restaurants. Beautification of non-commercial areas, preserving wildlife.  
Diversified employment. Overall appearance  
Diversity of opportunities in employment, recreation, housing. Government is responsive to residents' concerns.  
Diversity of stores and accessibility to them. The number of parks and natural habitats.  
Easy access to any major highway or street. Very clean and well cared for.  
Easy access to everything necessary. The plan to widen streets.  
Education and entertainment offered.  
Education. Infrastructure such paved roads, etc.  
Efficient use of tax dollars. Public facilities and parks, bike trails, etc.  
Everything you need is close. There is a lot to do.  
Excellent school system. City services.  
Fall leaf pickup and spring cleanup  
Family friendly. Good schools  
Family oriented activities. City parks and trails. Safe  
Family oriented. Good balance between city government and residence.  
Fantastic parks. Good schools  
Fire and Police Departments  
Fire Department Spring Clean Up, Brush, and Leaves  
Fire Department. Police Department  
Fire Department location and response time. Bikeways  
Fire/police services. Good response from city services when called.  
Fire protection. Police protection.  
Fire Protection. Police  
Flowers. Christmas Decorations  
Friendly atmosphere. Schools.  
Friendly community.

Friendly people, good government - police fire-protection  
 General Appearance  
 General attitude of residents. Professionalism of the police force.  
 Generally good neighbors, living spaces. Relative ease in driving around  
 Geographic location and access to major highways. Ability to attract shopping and things to do: malls, restaurants, parks.  
 Getting high paying industry and businesses.  
 Good balance of industry and retail . Park System is awesome. I love all the trees and landscaping. Lots of trees, is clean. A caring community that takes pride in its presence  
 Good balance of residential and commercial and good schools  
 Good business atmosphere. Generally good living/housing areas. Good schools.  
 Good city atmosphere. Cleanliness is good.  
 Good middle class city with good education system.  
 Good mix of residential, retail, industrial, and commercial properties  
 Good place to raise a family. Always clean and well kept.  
 Good place to raise a family. Access to major US roadways.  
 Good politics.  
 Government services and recreation opportunities  
 Government. Good access to medical and etc.  
 Government. Infrastructure.  
 Government. Library.  
 Great and convenient stores, restaurants. Very clean and well maintained roadways  
 Great opportunities and easy access. Clean and great police and fire support  
 Great place to raise a family- many opportunities for kids. I feel safe here.  
 Green Space. Convenient shopping  
 Green spaces and lifestyle  
 Greenary and Mall area.  
 Higher than average socioeconomic population. Convenient services and shopping.  
 I can be at the Senior Center, Library, doctor, grocery, dentist in 10-15 minutes. It's clean and friendly.  
 I like the entrances to the city. They are very attractive to visitors. The city in general looks very well kept. Once you are on the main roads, the traffic light timing is very good.  
 I think it is pretty well run. I feel safe at my house.  
 Improvement of our schools. Parks  
 Intangible sense of community and connectedness with other community residents.  
 Convenience to shopping, recreation, business, etc.  
 It feels like a small town even though it isn't. Lots of different activities to do.  
 It has everything we need – stores and services  
 It is not Kalamazoo School system  
 Jobs. Trees. Police  
 Kids recreational programs and bikeways and trailways  
 Lakes and bike trails.  
 Lakes and open spaces. Parks and boulevards.  
 Lakes. You can always find something to do

Lakes, most parks, the government. Senior Center is close by. Shopping is great. Medical not too far away. A good school system.

Lakes Shopping area on Westnedge

Lakes with public access. Beautiful and well priced real estate

Lakes. I feel generally safe in Portage

Landscape/decorations. Communications, activities.

Landscaping at new projects and buildings. Parks and play areas are very nice.

Landscaping, boulevards, and trails, recreation facilities.

Landscaping on boulevards and around public buildings. Parks

Leadership and public schools

Leaf and Brush pickup. Parks and Recreation

Leaf pickup services. Condition of parks

Leisure, Culture and Neighborhoods

Library

Library

Library and parks

Library and size of the city.

Library and the grounds are always beautiful, the bike trails

Library Bikeways

Library Celery Flats

Library YMCA

Library. Bandshell activities.

Library. Convenience of stores on Westnedge.

Library. Fire Department

Library. Meijers.

Library. Parks

Library. Safety patrolling

Library. School system

Library. The help with leaf pick up recycle and junk pick up

Liveability. Library

Local businesses. Cleanliness

Local restaurants and businesses features

Local theater and plays. Landscaping - lots of trees.

Location, access to cultural events in the region

Location - good access to shopping, major services.

Location of mall, food, and most stores on the same main street. is great. Celery Flats

Location to 94. Location to Malls

Location to all needs, close shopping. Clean

Location. Diversity of available social activities

Location. Parks

Location. Parks.

Location. Schools

Look and feel of the community. Shops and stores available.

Looks beautiful around Library and City Hall

Lots of community activities including sports, cultural and health related events. Bicentennial parks and trails, Celery Flats.

Lots of natural areas, lakes, parks, etc.

Lots of options for housing, shopping, walking trails

Lots of trees and woods

Low cost of living. Lots of parks.

Low crime rate

Low crime rate. Schools

Low crime. Clean city.

Low crime. Nice neighborhoods

Low crime. Parks.

Low density with exception of Westnedge. Parks and natural features.

Low property taxes, bike trails.

Low taxes and responsive city government

Low taxes. Schools

Lower crime than Kalamazoo Multiple lakes/parks

Lower taxes. Decent roads

Main roads tend to be in good condition. You don't see much trash on the streets/curbs.

Maintenance, parks.

Making an effort to be more customer friendly.

Mall and many good eating places

Mall. City government is good compared to Kalamazoo

Malls, Stores, restaurants

Many available cultural and recreational activities.

Many eating, business and shopping venues Crossroads mall etc. Cleanliness.

Mix of residential and commercial usage.

Most anything you could want access to - library, mall, restaurants, parks - they're all great.

It's a clean, safe place to live.

Municipal services. Cleanliness.

Municipal services. Leisure and cultural events, including great dining places

Neat appearance

Neighborhoods for retirees and families. Handy shopping

Neighborhoods, hardly any "blight." Diverse services shopping, dining, etc. nearby

Neighborhoods. Great schools

Neighborhoods. Open spaces/parks

Neighborhoods; close to shopping

Nice and clean, great outlook, beautiful flower beds, etc. Good city services.

Nice clean town

Nice community to live in. Parks

Nice neighborhood. School system.

Open spacious feeling one has here; the bicycle pathways which are so well kept up.

Openness - not completely developed. Facilities - library, schools, etc.

Opportunity. Great place to raise a family

Outstanding services. Upkeep, beautification programs

Overall appearance, commercial development.  
Overall beauty of the city, natural beauty of trees and lakes, superb job caring for its parks and other city grounds.  
Overall quality of life. Lakes.  
Parking - planning commission looking ahead. Beautiful and desirable place to live.  
Parking. Shopping.  
Parks  
Parks  
Parks & trails and the general atmosphere  
Parks and bike paths  
Parks and bike paths  
Parks and bike trails. Schools.  
Parks and bike trails  
Parks and bike trails  
Parks and bike trails as well as entertainment and events  
Parks and bike paths and Library. Also we appreciate our government leaders.  
Parks and bikeway trails  
Parks and bikeways  
Parks and bikeways. Police and fire. Schools  
Parks and boulevards - the aesthetic aspects. Cleanliness and safety  
Parks and cleanliness of streets. "beautiful trees"  
Parks and general landscaping.  
Parks and green spaces. Good communication  
Parks and lakes. School system  
Parks and Lakes  
Parks and Library  
Parks and Library  
Parks and Library  
Parks and low taxes  
Parks and neighborhoods  
Parks and playgrounds  
Parks and plenty of special events. Our family enjoys them very much.  
Parks and Police  
Parks and public areas are well maintained.  
Parks and recreation programs  
Parks and recreation programs. Schools.  
Parks and recreation. Atmosphere of the community  
Parks and recreation. Schools  
Parks and recreation; walking and bike trails, nature, protection of environment  
Parks and recycling program.  
Parks and schools  
Parks and schools  
Parks and schools  
Parks and schools

Parks and schools  
Parks and schools  
Parks and trails  
Parks and trails are great. Schools. City is trying to keep up with sewer and water.  
Parks and trails  
Parks and trails  
Parks and trails, the recycling, brush and leaf pick up  
Parks and trails. Recreation programs  
Parks and walkways, bike paths.  
Parks are beautiful. Bike paths.  
Parks are clean and family friendly. Anything you need is within 15-20 minutes.  
Parks, bike paths, flowers, schools  
Parks, bike trails  
Parks, bike trails  
Parks bike trails. Retail, restaurants, commerce  
Parks, bike trails. Convenient to US131 and I-94 with newer housing  
Parks, bikeways and schools.  
Parks, bikeways, Library  
Parks, bikeways/trailways. Schools  
Parks including Celery Flats. The services provided by the city.  
Parks including Celery Flats area. Attitude towards new business.  
Parks, Library  
Parks, Library, schools, fire department, police, shopping  
Parks, Police, and Fire  
Parks public spaces  
Parks, recreation, trees. Sidewalks.  
Parks, shopping centers. Library, Bandshell  
Parks Shopping  
Parks Stores  
Parks, trails. Quality of the people who live here  
Parks, trails. Streets  
Parks with bike paths. Variety of stores and restaurants  
Parks. Boulevards, like parts of Romance, Center, and Milham  
Parks. Boulevards. Library  
Parks. Clean  
Parks. Clean  
Parks. Clean city  
Parks. Fire and Police  
Parks. Free community programs for children.  
Parks. Library  
Parks. Library  
Parks. Library  
Parks. Schools  
Parks. Schools

Parks. Schools  
 Parks. Schools  
 Parks. Shopping  
 Parks. The Senior Center. The Library.  
 Parks. Varied businesses in a close area.  
 Parks- look nice, many available, well maintained. Community/ Family feeling  
 People. Location  
 People. The neighborhoods  
 Personal responsibility of residents. Council has interest and awareness of needs and priorities.  
 Pfizer, Stryker  
 Pickup programs and Bandshell programs  
 Police and Fire protection. Parks system. Celery Flats and trails  
 Police and Fire protection  
 Police and Fire protection excelling in emergency situations.  
 Police and Fire Protection  
 Police and Fire. Government  
 Police and Fire.  
 Police and Parks  
 Police, Fire Department.  
 Police, Fire, overall very well kept, lots to see and do  
 Police Good streets  
 Police protection and low crime  
 Police. Fire department.  
 Portage Schools Parks and Recreation events District Library  
 Portage trail system. Central access to city hall, library, and police/fire services.  
 Pro-business. Good parks and bike trails.  
 Professionalism of the city administration and the city council.  
 Programs offered for entertainment: Bandshell, Amphitheater, etc.  
 Progressive city. School, library, parks, neighborhoods, bringing shopping dollars into city.  
 Progressive city. Taxes remain reasonable.  
 Progressive. Concern about citizens.  
 Prompt attention to any problems. Police, fire department the best on prevention. Clean streets  
 Proximity to Kalamazoo. Shopping.  
 Proximity to Kalamazoo. Low taxes  
 Proximity to larger city / access to cultural events. Parks  
 Proximity to shopping Variety of restaurants  
 Public safety. Library.  
 Quality and safety of neighborhoods and parks and recreation  
 Quality of life and Police-Fire-Rescue  
 Quality of life and schools.  
 Quality of life. Lakes and bike trails to enjoy  
 Quality of service and quality people running the city

Quality of services, neat, clean city.  
 Quality of services. Schools  
 Quiet. Clean  
 Ramona Park Beach – Free Concerts and Beautiful Gardens  
 Recreation and quality of living  
 Recreation and Schools  
 Recreation, bike paths/parks. Environment recycling.  
 Recycling and other brush pickup and park events.  
 Recycling, leaf, brush pick up.  
 Recycling,. leaf pickup  
 Relatively crime free Leaf, cleanup, snow removal  
 Relatively small. Schools  
 Residential areas. Availability of stores  
 Residents. Recreational facilities.  
 Residents. Schools.  
 Responsive, efficient city government Well managed city  
 Roads, bicycle paths. parks  
 Roads, parks, bike paths. Convenient  
 Roads. accessibility  
 Roads. families  
 Safe, attractive neighborhoods and shopping. High standards and achievement of schools.  
 Safe community. Clean progressive community  
 Safe community. Parks and sidewalks.  
 Safe neighborhoods. Good services  
 Safe place to live. Schools. Access to shopping.  
 Safe place to live.  
 Safe. Clean  
 Safety and most services  
 Safety and Schools  
 Safety and Shopping  
 Safety Attracting and retaining businesses  
 Safety, cleanliness, and the sense of community.  
 Safety. Condition of parks and recreation. Bike trails. Schools  
 Safety. Condition of neighborhoods  
 Safety. Easy access to shopping, dining, and cultural/entertainment events.  
 Safety. Leisure.  
 School playground equipment is amazing. Availability of all types of shopping and services.  
 School system, continual attention paid to city functions.  
 School system. Neat and clean city with room to grow.  
 School system. Safe and active community-eye on the future.  
 Schools  
 Schools  
 Schools  
 Schools

Schools  
Schools  
Schools  
Schools  
Schools  
Schools  
Schools and affordable housing  
Schools and City leadership and organization  
Schools and City parks hiking trails  
Schools and people  
Schools and Shopping  
Schools and the citizens.  
Schools are great. The numerous community activities for all ages.  
Schools Cleanliness  
Schools Government  
Schools Park and natural areas  
Schools Parks and recreation  
Schools Parks and bike trails  
Schools Recreational opportunities  
Schools, support for children's programs.  
Schools Trail system  
Schools. Appearance of landscaped public grounds  
Schools. Area  
Schools. Bike paths and parks  
Schools. Bike trails  
Schools. Bike trails.  
Schools. Clean and safe environment for kids.  
Schools. Commerce.  
Schools. Entertainment venues.  
Schools. Friendly people  
Schools. General environment of the city  
Schools. General living conditions  
Schools. Good government.  
Schools. Good housing  
Schools. Good housing at a reasonable price  
Schools. Good neighborhoods.  
Schools. Good variety of business.  
Schools. Green space- parks, trails, etc.  
Schools. Green spaces  
Schools. Houses.  
Schools. Ideal location near I-94 and 131  
Schools. Junk pick up.  
Schools. Library  
Schools. Library

Schools. Low crime  
Schools. Low crime  
Schools. Lower crime than some cities of same size  
Schools. Lower taxes  
Schools. Maintenance of municipal building and grounds  
Schools. Malls  
Schools. Neighborhoods  
Schools. Nice neighborhoods  
Schools. Nice neighborhoods.  
Schools. Parking and Shopping centers  
Schools. Parks  
Schools. Parks and recreation  
Schools. People  
Schools. People take pride in their homes' appearance, also commercial and industrial.  
Schools. Pfizer  
Schools. Planting flowers and trees to make areas look nice  
Schools. Police/fire protection  
Schools. Programs for family, i.e. Celery Flats, Bandshell.  
Schools. Public safety.  
Schools. Responsiveness of local government.  
Schools. Restaurants.  
Schools. Retail district  
Schools. Retail.  
Schools. Safe, maintained neighborhoods.  
Schools. Safe place to live.  
Schools. Security  
Schools. Shopping  
Schools. Shopping  
Schools. Shopping  
Schools. Shopping  
Schools. Shopping opportunities.  
Schools. Small city almost  
Schools. Stores  
Schools. Tax structure.  
Schools. Well maintained boulevards

Schools.. Cultural affairs  
 Schools; Portage newsletter  
 Senior Center and Trees  
 Sense of community. Safety  
 Services are superior. The neighborhoods are kept up nicely. I expect that is due to code enforcement or that Portage residents are considerate of their neighbors. Hope it is the later  
 Services provided for our tax dollars. Governmental system that does its job representing residents  
 Services. Schools  
 Shopping and minimal crime. Close to major highways and nice neighborhoods  
 Shopping areas and rural type living  
 Shopping areas, very nice walking trails.  
 Shopping areas. Library  
 Shopping availability. Low crime rate-safety  
 Shopping availability. Parks. Churches  
 Shopping convenience. Road access.  
 Shopping opportunities. Curb side pick-up trash, recycle leaves and brush  
 Shopping, restaurants, parks  
 Shopping. Quality of living  
 Shopping. Restaurants  
 Shopping. Schools  
 Shopping. Schools  
 Shopping. Wide roadways  
 Size and Schools  
 Size, cleanliness.  
 Size of town  
 Small business support. Bike trails  
 Small clean city. Access to shopping and restaurants, convenient.  
 Small enough to get everywhere easily. Beautiful  
 Small town feel Traffic moves well  
 Small town feel. Cultural diversity.  
 Small town feeling while a city. Parks and recreation.  
 Small town friendliness. Lots of the conveniences a larger city can offer. Traffic is never an issue.  
 Small town mentality. Big town services.  
 Smaller community sense and family. Small business thriving.  
 Snow removal on the streets. Police and fire protection.  
 Snow removal, clean. Schools. Neighborhoods, parks.  
 Sonic Drive-In. The parks that I should take my kids to, but never seem to have the time.  
 Staff who care about their city. Residents who care about each other and their city.  
 Street conditions. Over-all neighborhood conditions  
 Streets and green space.  
 Streets and Roads. Easy access to all businesses.  
 Streets are safer than Kalamazoo. Good shopping

Streets in good condition. Parks and trails.  
 Streets that have been widened. Parkways  
 Suburban but convenient - easy access. School system is excellent. I am also pleased with tax payers picking up the tab for streets.  
 Suburban feel, trees and city services  
 Summer entertainment series. Celery Flats and all the parks  
 Taking care of the streets and shopping  
 Taxes. Nearness to every thing that a citizen needs  
 Ten minutes to virtually anywhere in town and the excellent school system  
 The community enthusiasm and activities. So well kept - such wonderful flowers.  
 The council and our mayor. The parks department and city hall personnel.  
 The Crossroads Mall- big box stores. Department and food stores. Parks- Walking and bike trails  
 trails  
 The good upkeep and government. I don't have to drive far to reach most destinations.  
 The green space and bike paths. Value of our tax dollars vs. Kalamazoo  
 The morals and values from elected city employee and the people of Portage. These make Portage a good place to live. The diversity in Portage. Great schools, shopping, restaurant, people, police, and the District Library.  
 The parks and bike trails. The brush, leaf, and spring clean up pick ups.  
 The school system. Safety and security.  
 The school system. The city is clean, well-maintained, growing, safe, and we're proud to live here.  
 The town is clean and friendly. Everything you need is close to you for shopping.  
 The trees and flower planting in so many places. Recycling. Pickup leaves, branches  
 The welcoming boulevards and landscaping upon entering the city.  
 They keep the roads clear in winter. Leaf and brush pick up.  
 Trails and bikeways Parks  
 Trails and city programs - brush, leaves, curbside  
 Trails and Parks  
 Trails to connect the city. City beautification  
 Trails to walk/run/bike. People.  
 Trails. Celery Flats. Police.  
 Trails. Crossroads Mall  
 Trails. Senior Center  
 Tree city. The flowers in the library area  
 Trees, parks, safety, and schools  
 Trees, trails for walking, police, fire  
 Trees. parks  
 Trees. snow removal  
 Up grading streets. Police/Fire departments  
 Upscale neighborhoods. No junk in yards - cars that should be junked.  
 Variety of businesses and schools  
 Walking, biking, outdoor exercise opportunities, great library/activities, good arts/culture.  
 Walkways/bike paths

Walkways, flowers, and parks create a welcoming atmosphere to visitors. Variety of entertainment venues for all ages.

Water, nice boulevard roads.

We have many caring, intelligent individuals watching out for the best interest of our community and its residents. We have an above-average library as well as many other services available – police, fire, medical services.

Well maintained and good police and fire department. Beauty of park areas and library.

Well maintained neighborhoods. Progressive attitude of officials and administration. Good communication of Portage news.

Well managed government. Provides residents with effective services and a variety of cultural activities.

Well seen and it's a great place to live

Wide-open. District library

YMCA. Bike trail.

You don't have to travel far to shop for groceries or anything for that matter. Great schools

**34. Looking at the next ten years, what do you think is the single most important problem facing Portage?**

“Rome fell apart from within” For Portage to thrive into the future we will need to invest in building good values into our citizens. All that is good in Portage is contributed by people who care. Also encourage and build community involvement.

A city with no downtown area

A potential increase in crime.

Ability to cope with much higher fuel prices and the impact on sales tax revenue and community transportation.

Adding more high paying jobs.

Adequate police and fire protection.

Affordable housing

Aging

Aging population - need good jobs to attract more young families.

All old plats, also sewer and good schools.

Attract new business to offer new jobs and keep our tax based stable.

Attracting long term, sustainable businesses and local employment

Attracting business

Attracting businesses to fill existing empty buildings and stores

Attracting industry

Attracting industry - long term

Attracting more businesses, not retail

Attracting more industries and smaller shops to the available spaces. They would be a source of labor. We are midway between Grand Rapids and Indianapolis, and Detroit and Chicago. Maintain roads and housing, schools to colleges, including entertainment center as well as an arena.

Attracting new business

Attracting new business and keeping large companies in the city.

Attracting new businesses and jobs without giving up too much in tax incentives.

Attracting new businesses that would employ large numbers of people.

Balancing commercial growth with healthy neighborhoods.

Balancing development between residential and commercial uses.

Being an attractive site to draw in businesses to provide jobs for residents

Being small business friendly.

Better cooperation with Kalamazoo for the benefit of everyone.

Blight in older neighborhoods - unusable cars parked in yards, lawns that aren't watered.

Bring in more tourist sights to see.

Bringing in good businesses. New stores like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods.

Bringing in new business

Bringing more jobs

Bringing more manufacturing to the city. Neighborhood roads

Building too many subdivisions on one road and creating terrible traffic jams

Business and economic development

Business development. Jobs in the city.  
 Business economic growth  
 Business growth  
 Business growth - be more friendly to business  
 Business owners say it is hard to own a business in Portage if they are not a part of the in-crowd.  
 Businesses became too large. There is no longer enough space for residential living and recreation.  
 Businesses closing or moving and buildings left unoccupied.  
 City budget and declining tax rolls  
 City funding sources for city management and services  
 City government is inclined to become too entrenched. Term limits are the solution.  
 City growth. Deer population - they are all over the place  
 City needs to anticipate street conditions, not have to call when problems arise.  
 City roads and streets  
 Cleaning up closed business buildings.  
 Cleaning up lower income neighborhoods  
 Community center for young people. Larger Senior Center building.  
 Condition of streets.  
 Continual economic development - industrial and commercial.  
 Continual raises in taxes as property values decrease  
 Continue to attract businesses and residents to this area.  
 Continue to improve employment and bring in new business/industry.  
 Continuing reduction in workforce at Pfizer.  
 Control spending and taxes  
 Controlling tax increases while continuing to provide a high level of services.  
 Controlling the spending  
 Cooperation with Kalamazoo. Racism.  
 Cooperation with other area communities in economic and educational activities while at the same time keeping focused on the best interests of the city itself.  
 Creeping blight.  
 Crime  
 Crime  
 Crime  
 Crime  
 Crime, B&E's, economy.  
 Crime, business development, raising taxes  
 Crime - more police are needed. Crack down on speeders and those that disobey traffic laws  
 Cut spending - flowers, extending parks. Just because you get a grant doesn't mean you have to accept it  
 Decay of neighborhoods  
 Decline of neighborhoods and schools due to low income residents  
 Decline of some of the neighborhoods – not enforcing city cleaning protocols on neighborhoods.

Declining housing stock/value due to deteriorating condition of homes/property.  
Declining Michigan economy and its negative effects on the community in jobs and state funding.  
Declining schools due to poor administration.  
Decreasing home value.  
Deepening our city's collaboration with the city of Kalamazoo  
Deer on Sprinkle, Portage at Pfizer. The city has done nothing to prevent accidents or death  
Need state help with fences, shrub height, bells and whistlers and DNR deer kills  
Deer. Something needs to be done, they eat the flowers and are a danger on the roads.  
Density of population.  
Deterioration as people move farther out.  
Develop the land between Lovers Lane and Portage. Do not let outside parties influence decision making at city hall.  
Developing business dollars Tax revenue  
Diminishing job opportunities.  
Diversity of employment  
Drug abuse.  
Drug use in schools.  
Drug use - street drugs, prescription drugs, and alcohol  
Drugs  
Drugs  
Drugs  
Drugs  
Drugs  
Drugs and alcohol abuse. Flow of traffic on Westnedge.  
Drugs and alcohol illegal use - underage.  
Drugs and alcohol. Lack of police.  
Drugs and unemployment  
Drugs in our schools  
Drugs in our schools  
Drugs in school - discipline  
Drugs in the schools  
Drugs in the schools  
Drugs in the schools - this problem will lend to relocation of good families to other areas.  
Drugs, parenting involvement - community involvement.  
Drugs. Loss of Pfizer tax dollars.  
Economic development  
Economic development

Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development  
Economic development and rising taxes  
Economic development, filling vacant office space such as Pfizer's vacant buildings.  
Economic development, loss of jobs.  
Economic development, public transportation  
Economic development. Abandoned/empty business buildings  
Economic development. Neutral growth at best so less dollars to work with.  
Economic development- keeping taxes low.  
Economic growth  
Economic growth  
Economic growth  
Economic growth  
Economic growth  
Economic growth and retail growth.  
Economic growth – including employment, home sales, taxes  
Economic growth. Aging growth. Taxes.  
Economic issues and tax dollars. Problem neighborhoods like State Streets, Chedeau,  
Meredith Flat  
Economic stability.  
Economic stress - closing businesses, losing small businesses  
Economic support and development. Important to support our local businesses during tough  
times.  
Economic viability of Pfizer, downsizing  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy  
Economy: Bringing in and maintaining businesses for jobs and tax base. Keep personal taxes  
down.  
Economy in the state.  
Economy, jobs, schools  
Economy - Lack of employment  
Economy. Budget  
Economy. Need new business and keep existing business  
Employment

Employment  
Employment  
Employment  
Employment  
Employment opportunities  
Employment opportunities  
Employment opportunities  
Employment opportunities for the youth and unskilled trades  
Employment opportunities, losing residents to the west  
Employment other than retail.  
Employment so that families can't keep their homes. Otherwise, this equals lower tax base and higher taxes for those of us who do own homes.  
Empty businesses  
Empty commercial spaces  
Empty storefronts on Westnedge  
Encourage more businesses.  
Enforce people to maintain yards, houses, keep sidewalks clear of snow, make people sell vacant houses.  
Enlarge the Senior Center, the community is aging  
Expanding the economic base to something other than service industry, need a balance 60/40 of industry/service  
Extend Romence road over 131. Access to 12<sup>th</sup> will be a problem in the future.  
Extensive growth and increasing Westnedge congestion.  
Finances  
Finances  
Financial - revenue losses.  
Financial  
Finding enough people who are willing to work.  
Finding new ways to finance improvements  
Fixing roads - paving etc.  
Fixing the streets – we can't seem to do it. High school drugs.  
Flooding on the eastside.  
Flow of traffic  
Flow of traffic  
Foreclosures, homes not selling.  
Funding for the schools. Keeping our schools well-maintained and strong in areas of academics and athletics without raising taxes.  
Further deterioration of the older neighborhoods and more unsavory people moving in.  
Getting large businesses for tax base  
Getting more businesses in the city.  
Getting property taxes out of Portage - especially at retirement.  
Getting quality work for the least amount of money.  
Getting the proper businesses for the best taxes  
Good commercial tax base - the money to maintain for what we have, especially our streets.

Good streets and roads  
Good tax base of businesses.  
Grow tax base  
Growing business for jobs and tax base  
Growing too much.  
Growth  
Growth  
Growth and development.  
Growth and road repair.  
Growth, economic stability - bringing in more businesses to increase/diversify income base.  
Growth in businesses and industry.  
High property taxes. Traffic congestion on Westnedge  
High property taxes  
High paying jobs. Since Upjohn was sold our home prices have dropped. There are not a lot of people moving to the area.  
High quality of life while keeping taxes low  
High tax rate risk inhibiting normal growth as employers, homeowners relocate outside.  
Particular risk to schools.  
High taxes  
Higher taxes - people moving out to Mattawan to avoid them. Like what happened to Kalamazoo.  
Holding down costs.  
Home mortgage - not being able to sell home due to economy.  
Home values declining because of the loss of well paying jobs in the area.  
Homes looking worn down due to economy  
Housing  
Housing market  
Housing market  
Housing market affecting value of houses. Hopefully, next ten years will be better than last two.  
Housing values  
How to keep economic growth as we have done.  
Improving neighborhoods that are declining. If we expect kids to walk to school, we must put sidewalks in areas that do not have them  
Income and need for manufacturing to provide jobs and tax revenue.  
Increase in the deterioration of homes due to the recession and folks losing those homes.  
After a while, homes that are vacant will become an eyesore and squatters will be living in them, with the problems of drugs etc. that those folks typically bring with them.



Jobs and the related ability to keep housing.  
 Jobs - economic growth. Traffic and crowding on Westnedge.  
 Jobs, home sales  
 Jobs, industry, etc. to maintain tax base lost by Pfizer job reduction  
 Jobs, keeping the youth busy and involved.  
 Jobs, money  
 Jobs - ones paying above minimum wage  
 Jobs, roads and infrastructure  
 Jobs. Drugs. Stubbornness, lack of creativity.  
 Justify why more buildings are built and others empty – e.g., strip of stores between  
 Chocolatea and Mr. J's Sewing  
 Keep business here  
 Keep business here  
 Keep business here  
 Keep business here  
 Keep businesses in the area, such as Pfizer.  
 Keep businesses. Hate to see a lot of empty stored and shuttered businesses and restaurants.  
 Keep crime and drug use low.  
 Keep enough business to support education.  
 Keep existing jobs and creating new  
 Keep industrial employment  
 Keep it a nice and quality city without the heavy traffic patterns in neighborhoods.  
 Keep jobs and industry in Portage.  
 Keep jobs here.  
 Keep large retailers and manufacturers healthy. Traffic flow on Westnedge  
 Keep level of living as it is now.  
 Keep neighborhoods - not removing houses for commercial growth.  
 Keep Portage a great place to live and operate a business.  
 Keep property taxes lower- cut the amount of park maintenance. Keep up the good schools  
 and better maintenance on secondary roads- tax breaks to businesses.  
 Keep residential buildings in check.  
 Keep taxes at an affordable level.  
 Keep taxes down  
 Keep taxes in check.  
 Keep taxes low  
 Keep taxes low  
 Keep taxes low as possible. Expand the city slowly.  
 Keep the city as safe as it is today.  
 Keep the city growing and providing good jobs. Too many homes for sale  
 Keep the focus on sustainable living and development - keep natural resources clean and  
 green  
 Keep the quality of the school system high  
 Keep the quality level of services in this time of economic cutbacks.  
 Keep the roads in good condition.

Keep the tax rate in check.  
 Keep traffic manageable.  
 Keep up some neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods are becoming rundown. The people aren't maintaining their properties very well.  
 Keep up the infrastructure.  
 Keep Westnedge stores open.  
 Keeping and increasing industry  
 Keeping and recruiting new business.  
 Keeping businesses and attracting new businesses.  
 Keeping up all our great services without raising taxes.  
 Lack of businesses - too many empty buildings - create diversity - more shopping, food services.  
 Lack of job opportunities  
 Lack of jobs.  
 Lack of real jobs - full time with insurance - don't need more big retail with part time jobs  
 Lack of state funds and revenues lost - too much unemployment.  
 Land use development, sprawl  
 Local businesses going out of business. Tax increases. Need more industry.  
 Loss of business. Getting to be too much for a business to keep going.  
 Loss of industrial jobs. Too many low paying, service related jobs.  
 Loss of jobs, leading to depressed housing prices and vacant properties.  
 Loss of Pfizer  
 Loss of Pfizer, let's hope they don't go anywhere.  
 Loss of tax base and reduction in quality employment.  
 Maintain a quality school system with a struggling economy  
 Maintain an excellent school system.  
 Maintain business growth  
 Maintain businesses.  
 Maintain current services without increasing taxes as businesses suffer, close  
 Maintain high quality of the schools  
 Maintain jobs in the area so deterioration of city and neighborhoods does not occur.  
 Maintain quality of life vs. push for commercial retail and industry development.  
 Maintain quality services in the financial environment.  
 Maintain service without raising taxes.  
 Maintain tax base with jobs. You can't keep raising taxes without seeing people move. I have been considering moving to a neighboring town if the taxes continue to rise  
 Maintain tax base.  
 Maintain the quality of public education.  
 Maintain the quality of life and environment while being fiscally responsible with the city's arrests  
 Maintain the same quality of life.  
 Maintaining with economy  
 Maintenance of lake levels, maybe? Utilization of closed businesses - e.g., Sam's Club  
 Making it attractive for businesses and manufacturing to locate in Portage.

Making sure older neighborhoods are kept crime free and not “run-down”.

Money

Money being taken away from programs

Money, the city has to scale back its fine effort to match people dropping income

More businesses

More businesses and more jobs to draw more people to fill all the empty homes.

More employers – new business

More housing.

More industry and business to keep taxes lower

More job openings become available.

Need for positive growth

Need municipal golf course to better utilize undeveloped properties.

Need to keep our tax base so we can have a better life here

Need to replace both high schools

Neighborhoods declining.

New business

New business

No more room for houses, businesses.

Not becoming “average” in any areas

Not enough industry

Not enough minorities in city

Not enough sidewalks, walking paths/trails in all neighborhoods

Not keeping up with other states and city.

Occupants for empty buildings.

Over building homes and too many restaurants on S. Westnedge.

Over building of stores.

Over developing of “open” areas.

Over development, both business and subdivisions.

Over development. Slow new commercial and residential development. Promote green areas and landscaping on any new or revised development.

Over estimation of property values in a slowing economy is causing concern and dissatisfaction.

Over expansion

Over expansion - traffic Westnedge/Oakland. Budget and potential loss of Pfizer tax base

Overcrowding

Overcrowding. Not as family oriented or community friendly due to more outsiders coming in and too much construction.

Overpopulation

Overpopulation, streets, taxes

Overspending

Pavement

Paying more property taxes to make up for businesses and residents leaving. Too spread out.

People

People leaving because of no jobs.

People need decent employment. Maybe the tax cuts given out for employment growth could be given to Portage residents who need work

People needing work

Pfizer leaving and taking jobs and tax income with them.

Pfizer will no longer be in Portage sometime in the next 10 years.

Potential unemployment leading to increase in crimes like theft and drugs.

Prejudice

Pricing senior citizens on fixed income out of Portage with increased taxes.

Proper maintenance of roads. City will not be able to keep up with improvements to all roads because of all the multi-lanes that have been built. Strip paving is just a band aid approach.

Property taxes are becoming a burden. Too much spending on trailways and nonessentials during a difficult economic time

Property taxes increasing

Property taxes way too high, cannot grow any good jobs here with these high taxes.

Property values

Property values, taxes, budget issues, financial

Protect gays and transgenders from discrimination in housing and elsewhere. The Walnut trail beating gave Portage a black eye nationwide. Portage gained nationwide notoriety due to no hate crime protection for gays and lesbians.

Protecting our environment from over development and our resources from exploitation.

Providing quality services to residents without raising taxes or fees for services

Putting corporate interests above the needs of the people. More businesses only leave vacancies, and sprawl doesn't mean quality of life. It's the type of business you promote.

Real jobs, beyond restaurant, sales jobs.

Redevelopment and revitalization of old shops.

Redevelopment of vacant commercial properties

Reducing property taxes. Reducing costs, eliminating non-essential services. Maintaining quality.

Reducing reliance on property tax revenues from Pfizer.

Rehabilitation of old manufacturing sites with good paying jobs

Renewable energy, recycling, for homes and businesses.

Rental property maintenance

Revenue, taxes, employment

Rezoning of areas where commercial and residential are clashing

Rigidity of thinking regarding development and reasonable tax increases may stifle the ability to be a progressive community.

Rising taxes

Rising taxes

Road conditions, pavement

Road maintenance

Road repair

Road repair and repaving

Roads

Roads

Roads

Roads and taxes

Roads and traffic problems

Roads - the more construction that's done, the more existing roads break down. Not the best construction was done in the area. The speed - no one seems to know what the numbers mean or care.

Roads, traffic with more growth.

Roads.

Rotten economy - can we sustain?

Safe neighborhoods and schools.

School buildings are aging. Many schools on the east side have closed and it is the only area with room to grow.

School funding

School funding

School system

Schools and education. More nursing homes.

Schools are going to need the most attention

Schools - ball field - elementary school. Keeping up with family growth. We need more colleges.

Schools could use upgrades, both inside and outside.

Schools need funding and improvements

Schools, not enough money, overpopulation.

Schools, roads, traffic

Schools. You need to stop building new and just add on. My money is being wasted.

Seniors are not listening to the youth. Remember, they will run it next. Listen to them.

Services for an aging population.

Sidewalks, heroin with teenagers killing themselves.

Six lane highways - so the surrounding bedroom communities can get to Westnedge easier.

Why should Texas Township, etc. build any stores when Portage is so willing to destroy its small town feel.

Slowing tax revenue

Small business growth.

Smooth traffic flow.

Snow plowing is minimal. Area by the lakes is severely insufficient.

Social problems in the public high schools.

Soliciting and retaining good employment opportunities, i.e. manufacturing.

South Westnedge is unwalkable. We need to be able to walk rather than drive. Maybe build an overpass for pedestrians? There needs to be a trail between Constitution and the mall so that we don't have to go through the mall parking lot.

Southwest Michigan economy.

Speeding tax dollars

Stable tax base

Stop building new homes.

Stop the sprawl of businesses.

Stopping and reversing run down homes and urban blight. Surtax property owners when they do not maintain their properties and give tax breaks when targeted properties are improved.

Street conditions. New businesses.

Street widening.

Streets and sidewalks - south Oakland needs curbs and gutters, no parking on streets and sidewalks.

Streets maintaining and repairing. Traffic flow. Managing neighborhood growth

Substance abuse

Tax base

Tax base

Tax base and larger corporations

Tax increases.

Tax management

Tax revenues

Taxation

Taxes

Taxes are too high

Taxes are too high on some items.

Taxes are too high, forcing people to move or lose their homes.

Taxes for seniors.

Taxes getting too heavy for retirement age people – raise taxes even though values are going down.

Taxes going up drastically when the value of homes are going down.

Taxes high, people having trouble making ends meet, so you will be losing people - they'll be moving to areas with lower taxes

Taxes in this economy. Taxes continue to increase while the property values decline.

Taxes increasing.

Taxes keep getting higher. Cut costs and lower tax burden on citizens.

Taxes pushing people out.

Taxes, schools, business taxes  
Taxes too high  
Taxes too high  
Taxes too high. Not enough incentive for business to start.  
Taxes. Busing the k-5 kids, they need this service. They can't walk 1.5 miles to school.  
Taxes. Deer  
Taxes. Police Protection  
Teenage curfew and noise violations.  
Teenage drug use.  
Teenage drugs  
The ability to attract economic development.  
The budget, expenses  
The condition of the roads. Keeping a check on drugs  
The deterioration of houses as they grow older and people move to other towns and villagers.  
The economic crisis which has lower property values and rising unemployment. Bring in businesses that hire more than 20-50 people.  
The economy  
The economy will negatively impact the school system. I am concerned that we will never recover our property values.  
The economy. Keep the businesses we have and bring in new businesses  
The Kalamazoo Promise.  
The loss of Pfizer  
The need to cut the deep population  
The overall economy and the unemployment rate  
The people running Portage  
The politics of the city.  
The value of our homes going down and taxes going up  
Their rigidity to new and different ideas. The board has trouble stepping outside the comfort zone  
This used to be so "countrified." Leave the trees and open lots and fields alone  
Too high taxes  
Too many people  
Too many store fronts, traffic on Westnedge.  
Too much business and/or traffic  
Too much green space disappearing. Empty buildings should be torn down and new built on those lots as opposed to using new lots. Hate Sam's Club fiasco - there were other spaces available. How far down Romence will the building continue?  
Too much growth. Empty businesses should be filled with new ones, not build new strip malls until percentage of buildings standing are occupied. Lower taxes to businesses on Westnedge, mom and pop businesses can't service.  
Traffic  
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Traffic and people. Costs of things property, housing

Traffic concerns - only have main roads east/west. Major intersections should be computer controlled. Some roundabouts could be built to speed traffic at a few intersection

Traffic control

Traffic control

Traffic flow

Traffic flow

Traffic flow on Westnedge

Traffic flow. Maintain a balance of residential, commercial and industrial development.

Traffic on busy roads. Taxes getting too high.

Traffic on Oakland

Traffic on Westnedge

Traffic on Westnedge

Traffic on Westnedge

Traffic on Westnedge

Traffic, over development, crime.

Traffic, property taxes

Traffic related to growth.

Traffic, surplus of empty buildings

Traffic. Road conditions.

Traffic. Roads

Traffic. Taxes are too high.

Transportation

Transportation, money, traffic control.

Trying to get too big and get the boulevards removed.

Unemployment

Unemployment

Unemployment

Unemployment and job shortage.

Unemployment, having to foreclose and move.

Unemployment, increase in drugs and alcohol consumption.  
Unoccupied commercial buildings.  
Upgrade the schools.  
Use of existing buildings, less development in wildlife areas. More areas for wildlife.  
Vacant store buildings  
Wasting water on boulevards - the streets are watered too much  
Water quality  
Water/Sewer infrastructure,  
We need a place for the teens to hang out after school other than the local businesses.  
We need our own water facility so we can be independent of Kalamazoo.  
Westnedge traffic at I94. Empty buildings not used while new buildings go up. Over development of natural resources.  
What to do with empty big box stores and other empty commercial retail outlets.  
Widening bridge on Westnedge and I-94  
Working with city of Kalamazoo in a cooperative effort. The outcome should be a stronger economic base for both cities. Without Kalamazoo, there would be no Portage.

**38. How would you classify your racial or ethnic heritage? [Other - specify]**

American

Anglo father, Hispanic mother

Dutch heritage.

Indian from India

Mixed

Racially mixed family.

**40. Which of the following best describes where you live? [Other - specify]**

Assisted living

Austin Lake

Duplex

Rental townhouse

Renting a home in Portage neighborhood.

Senior apartment

Senior complex of Hearthside

Senior home

Senior housing.

Senior independent living.

Town home community

Town house apartment

**43. If you have access to the Internet from home, what type of internet service do you have? [Other - specify]**

AT&T  
AT&T phone lines  
AT&T U-verse  
Broadband  
Library internet  
Library.  
Sprint Mobil Broadband  
Wi-Fi from neighbors  
Wireless air card.

**Please indicate below any other comments, concerns, or suggestions you may have for the City of Portage.**

A great place to live except for the water.

A lot of the small pot hole paving is not done very well. They fill some then leave a lot that needs filling. The police sit in the best place to write tickets.

A traffic light needs to be installed between Romence and Milham on Oakland Drive. During rush hour it is extremely difficult to turn left onto Oakland.

Add drinking fountain at Lexington Green Park. Add gymnasium to PSC for basketball and pickleball. Add indoor track and arthritis exercise pool to PSC.

Add to the brush pickup - it would be nice if they could help with old or dead tree removal. The snow removal could be better, don't take or hit my mail box. Ice is a problem, not enough salt for what we pay.

Adjust sensitivity of the traffic light sensors at Romence and Portage - a motorcycle will not trip it to get a green light. Fall leaf pickup is generally too early. Keep ahead of maintaining bike path pavement. Control deer population in parks - dangerous

After heavy rains, some drains do not handle the water, roads are covered, mud develops in driveway as water settles. Better drainage needed.

Airport needs to be sustained and additional flights/carriers would be good. An alternative would be high speed rail to Chicago and Detroit.

All city work should use local labor when other than city employees are needed. To many out of town contractors are doing city projects. Feed our community not others.

Almost impossible to keep sidewalks free of snow when city plows throw out slush and ice several times a day. A real problem where sidewalks are close to main streets.

Although I have only lived in Portage for 4 years, I feel it is a good place to live and I would certainly recommend it to everyone.

Arbanas Tree Service seemed to accept more items and do a quicker, more efficient job. Why doesn't the left turn on Westnedge at Garden Lane work? It's there – very frustrating – often a problem turning at all.

As a lake resident, I do think the city should do more to support the lakes and their maintenance, especially the ones with public access that are used by many in Portage.

As a near life long resident, I remember Portage becoming a city. It was for the benefit of its residents - not for business. I so wish that it held to that today. Unfortunately, Portage hasn't in the past 30 years. While big business/developers get tax breaks, residential taxes have increased and services decreased.

As a resident on Milham International Speedway. I would like the city to recognize the small number of properties east of Westnedge as commercial or office as was done on W. Milham. To sell my property for what the city says it is worth, will not happen, because of the amount of traffic.

As the value of my home dropped the taxes increased. I think this is unfair

Attracting businesses other than retail, service jobs. Find larger businesses that hire large numbers of employers. Don't rely on Pfizer/Stryker.

Bag leaves in fall pick up - saves money on fuel, labor, and clean up, weather is not a factor. Privatize more of parks, streets in order to save money. Maintain city equipment better. Police

cars, fire trucks, DPS vehicles are very old and falling apart. Be more conservative with the way money is spent on programs.

Bathrooms need to be open at the parks. They are always locked when my daughter needs them.

Be an example for alternative energy. Use wind turbines and solar panels. Others will join in if they see the city doing it.

Be pro-business and keep the city on the grow theme going.

Because of its close proximity to Kalamazoo, Portage benefits from many of the cultural, athletic and university offerings of that city. It is important that we work together to produce a healthy environment and vital economy for both.

Better acknowledgment of our drug problems. The number of youth who are using is growing, make more services available before it gets out of hand. Right now you must be using a lot and get in legal trouble to get any intense help. Portage minimizes.

Better clean up of yard after leaf, branch, and trash pick-up.

Better responses when folks call the public utilities area other than to say I can call an independent and pay to have my water evaluated. I am paying for a service that has a "take it or leave it, but don't complain about it" attitude. Yet a personal well at your home site is off limits. My question is this - would you continue to pay for any other service through a company that doesn't stand by the service or product they sell? I'd be curious to see exactly how many Portage City Council members would be quick to rush into or remain with any business that wouldn't back up the service or product they were selling.

Better to lower taxes, etc. than to have empty businesses. Portage Central High School walkway for students is an accident waiting to happen.

Beyond the economic issue, I think the city needs to take care of the infrastructure of the sewer, roads, education and other aspects of city life.

Bikeways are too narrow for walkers, bikers and runners, then strollers. Some of the independent businesses need to clean up their fronts. The huge for lease or for sale signs are annoying. Half the time the curbside recycling folks never stopped to pick-up. Fall Pickup not often enough. Always plow me back in, I pay a service to plow my driveway. Curbside recycling doesn't pick-up enough times, we need once a month brush pick-up. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Boulevards obstruct traffic, costly to maintain, and make it very difficult to navigate the city. Especially on Westnedge. They look nice in pictures but are very impractical.

Brush pick up back to monthly.

Can't see the reasoning of putting in those boulevards with grass and trees in the middle. Tremendous cost maintaining the greenery. Becomes dangerous when all covered with snow because we can't see where the curb is.

Celery Flats Bicentennial trail - bikers go too fast, do not announce their presence, ride abreast, attach dogs too close. Speed down the hill too fast. I walk my dog daily and this is a huge problem. Any chance of banning bikes on the hill portion of the trail. I am not the only one complaining about this problem. Please install another dog disposal box post across from the current location in the Celery Flats area. Need more opportunities that are affordable for seniors to do water aerobics in a pool with stairs to get out. YMCA is too expensive for seniors and pool at JRHS's steps in pool wall are too hard to get out of pool. Great job. Economy does not help

right now.

Centre and Shaver intersection - poor traffic flow - need turn right from Shaver to Centre.

Centre Street was under construction way too long

Change brush pickup back to monthly – being quarterly is unsettling as brush piles up. Water bills are a hoax.

Change city slogan, too wordy “Portage, where opportunities grow”

Change leaf pickup if weather is bad. Speed limits need to be enforced on Westnedge from Shaver to Whites, also on Centre and Oakland. We need to look at taxes in the city.

City Council bending rules – Church sign size – Tax allowances for businesses – Assessments

City growth is dependent on keeping city taxes low and continued investment in roads, bike paths, and non-transportation infrastructure. The ability to function with less dependence on cars will be one of our biggest challenges.

City needs a designated dog park. Need to address the depreciation of home values. Library continues to excel and strives to improve each year. Too many empty businesses along Westnedge.

City of Portage website could be easier to navigate.

Clean up all leaves during fall pick up - too many left behind. Two times a year when “junk” is picked up by the city, not just spring clean up.

Clean up homes on East Centre that should be condemned.

Closer monitoring of speeders on the residential streets - 25 mph. Many people go like 35 mph while pedestrians are walking. There are also cars with loud stereos speeding around late at night. Overall, we love Portage and prefer it to living in Kalamazoo.

Complete reconstruction of Osterhout as planned 5 years ago. Redo bicycle trails. Not safe now. Speed. Adjust all traffic lights to get speed down. Make sure all pumping stations odor free. That is real bad in summer.

Concern about rental properties in single family home neighborhoods.

Concerned about deer damage to yards, gardens, and neighborhood. They are literally destroying all above ground vegetation. A culling situation is needed.

Concerned about street sweeping. Sweeper moves dirt from curb to driving lanes without picking it up. Snow plowing 4 to 5 trucks plowing a 2 lane boulevard. All trucks spreading material. Doesn't 90% of the material get bladed off? If the city is going to hire a company to maintain streets, they should have someone ok their work, not just go through the motions. That means get in a car and go look.

Concerned for youth - drugs and alcohol use. Appreciate efforts being made in that area.

Concerned that businesses were more important than residents zoning, etc..

Condominiums are over taxed. We have no snow plowing, no leaf pickup, no brush pickup, and we should have a tax break for not having these services.

Consider monthly brush pick-up

Consider removing the island on Oakland by the bike path. It's dangerous when parents pick up kids at Oakland Academy. Paint “school” on road in front. Time lights better on Westnedge.

Continue current programs such as summer entertainment series, parks, bike trails. Also making the hard choices of cutting if revenue is low. Curbside collection was two weeks late

Continue the economic growth. Support the school system. Take pride in neighborhoods.

Continue to build the community and good values into this city. Encourage and promote both paid and volunteer opportunities within our city. Promote and encourage our citizens to help out. Provide opportunities for Portage citizens to help around the larger international world. Thank you for the opportunity to do this survey.

Continue to improve major streets. Continue efforts at economic development.

Cost of city sewer/water is outrageous

Curbs need sweeping more often. I don't like seeing dirty gutters with trash and weeds growing. On street parking when too many people live in a single family home.

Curbside recycling should go back to each month.

Curbside recycling should go back to every month.

Currier Drive needs widening or parking restrictions because of the traffic for Hearthside, Tendercare, Senior Center, Library, doctor offices and the Community Center.

Cut the spending in all areas to keep the property taxes down or reduce them. My property taxes go up every year but my income does not. Cut the park system. Portage cannot be everything to everybody. Mainly, I would like to see more cuts in areas that are not really needed.

Dakota Street needs to be re-surfaced.

Decline in home value can be corrected if we do not build more new homes in the area. Need to attract more businesses to open their headquarter office here.

Did not feel I was treated very courteously when I called to inquire about a very high water bill.

Discount taxes for senior citizens

Do not build any more boulevards.

Do not plow close enough to edge of street. Leave 2'-3' of snow in front of my driveway  
Speed limits too high on Centre. Should be 35 between Westnedge and 131.

Do not spend more money than the city has. Keep crime rates down with more policing or input from local church leadership. Help businesses located here stay here and flourish.

Do we need a ban on bow and arrows in all areas of Portage? Keep up our parks and natural areas.

Doing a good job overall

Doing a good job.

Don't expand government

Don't let drugs and crime get the best of Portage. Keep up the good work.

Don't like increase in assessment when property value is decreasing. Parks with low use should have funds cut. Fall leaf pickup starts too early – first pickup is a waste of funds. Could use less plowing on residential streets, sometimes plowed with only 2-3 inches. Instead of paving in small sections why not do the whole thing and have it done for several years e.g., Osterhout.

Don't make Wal-Mart bigger

Don't need parks on every corner - no tax basis there. Leaf pickup should be spring and fall - especially on very busy streets Drivers go too fast for effective job of snow removal Police speed on all roads

Don't try to get too big, try to keep more small town feeling

Drains on roads could be improved - a lot of standing water after it rains.

Driving danger from growing deer problem.

During last Fall leave clean up the streets were left messy. Although last winter was snowier than normal it still appeared that Portage lacked the usual efficiency of removing snow

During this extreme financial downturn, I believe Portage would do well to maintain what they currently have rather than look for new projects.

Empty gas stations on Portage are an eyesore - one has been there 15+ years- tear them down. May be an incentive for keeping their property nice looking?

Encourage development outside of Westnedge – too crowded.

Encourage redevelopment of existing properties instead of the trend to abandon property and develop in ever decreasing open areas. There are a lot of abandoned properties in Portage now - let's discourage "sprawl" and better utilize what we already have.

End the proliferation of boulevards on the city's major roads. The installation and maintenance costs are very high. I would like to see the city council monitor more closely the actual cost of out-sourcing water/sewer maintenance. The rate increases for several years have been substantial, especially wastewater, and outstrip the increases Kalamazoo passes on to Portage for treatment costs.

Enforce homeowners taking care of lawns and snow removal. My street has a problem in this area.

Ensure city staff understand they are to help residents. The stubborn and obstructive behavior of the Assessor's office is unacceptable. Portage deserves better.

Ensure the parks and related accessories are kept up to date and nice tennis courts, fields

Even though growth is important, the clearing of land, especially a lot of trees, bothers me. Some of the land gets cleared, then nothing is built on it. What a waste of natural habitat for all the wildlife.

Excellent city, good government and schools. We moved here 50 years ago because of the schools.

Expand curbside recycling with larger containers. Possibly a spring and fall clean out? Also, neighborhood snow removal was not as prompt as would like. Main streets are maintained well, but the pavement gets abused, so need to address promptly.

Extra dates for hazardous waste would be nice. Snow plows need to not hit mailboxes. Poor condition on some bike paths.

Fall leaf pickup is too early.

Fast driving on residential streets near where children are playing in their own yards. Too many deer - need a bow hunting season in the city. There are people who would hunt and eat the deer.

Finish resurfacing of South Shore Drive. Consider a new east-west connection between Westnedge and Shaver south of Centre and north of Osterhout.

Fix Kilgore between Portage and Sprinkle. It is falling apart and I have to dodge giant potholes. Also fix the Portage at Kilgore intersection.

Fix the light on Portage across from South Shore drive - it has a short in it. It works depending on traffic weight that goes by. Condos and farms lack sufficient privacy and barrier that you stated would happen between homes and farms.

Fix the solid red left turn signal at north bound Oakland to west bound I-94 - it needs to be blinking yellow - traffic congestion there is now worse than before the bridge was rebuilt.

Focus on diversity in everything you do.

For the most part, I am happy living in this community. Believe it would be helpful to have a fall pickup. Would like to see the street cleaner in the spring to gather the gravel left from winter. These are small things, but small things can increase the quality of living here. The city has a great grasp of big things. Some lights on Westnedge are too long - encourage speeding thru yellow/red lights

Frivolous use of tax dollars for projects that are aesthetic and have no substantial value – e.g., the Westnedge medium north of I94. Unfair increases in taxes on property to complete road work in front of your house. I do not think Portage needs public transportation. The buses are routinely empty.

Funding for the Portage PREP program needs to continue. I know this is state funded, but the city needs to help fight for it. Plows get very close to the curb. I end up shoveling 10' into the street or more. The 94 interchange can be a mess at certain times of day.

Garbage collection - they leave a mess when they are done. Needs to be more centralized to remove excess and improve quality. We don't need 10 different trucks up and down neighborhood streets. Leaf pickup also needs to be restructured. Two before they fall and one after a snow does not help.

Get people in top positions to provide some real leadership and get rid of those not needed. I have observed for years, work crews with many standing, resting, smoking, while one or two are working

Get rid of deer population. Look at money spent on car, garden repairs. Do something just to show an interest and concern. Portage has done nothing. Before you know it turkeys will be worse than deer. Milham and Westnedge light too long.

Get rid of ordinance for “green spaces” in parking lots.

Get to neighborhoods and cul-de-sacs sooner for snow removal. When plowing, get all the snow. The triangle is always full of big piles. Makes it very difficult for us to get out of our driveway. Can't tell you how many times we get stuck. Traffic is a problem mostly during holiday

Good people - hope it stays that way

Good police and fire departments

Good survey.

Grave concerns of reports that Pfizer uses wells to pump hazardous waste underground, potentially poisoning our water supply.

Great job on new business and road work.

Had leaves out for last pick up, but they never came. Had to pay someone to come and get them.

Have been very pleased with the City of Portage.

Have more “smart” stop lights with sensors.

Have not attended programs recently. There is a nice variety and many we would have attended, but had conflicts with schedule.

Have police patrol Moorsbridge and give tickets to all speeders – we have been very fortunate no one has been killed.

Having nine or more garbage trucks coming through neighborhoods is a waste of fuel, air quality, and is hard on the streets. Divide city up giving a portion to four companies. City negotiates fair price for pick up and add to tax bill?

Help keep our families safe.

Hire more minorities and stop allowing friends/relatives get the good jobs while keeping the outdoors jobs for people they know. Share the wealth and allow all people to work in the city where they live. You request degrees needed, but lots of city workers don't have degrees. They get jobs because of who they know. That is not right.

Hire more officers to combat drug problem areas. Also, get drugs out of middle schools.

Homes and condos are over their market value and that is a major concern to prospective buyers

How can we finance a stadium at Northern? The parents of the area may be willing to foot most of the bill over a few decades if presented correctly. The county has spring cleanup once a month. We have it once a year and there's a laundry list of things we can't throw away Why are the stipulations for pickup so stringent? The limbs have to be cut to a ridiculous length. Estate streets are better and subdivision are beautiful

How do we take advantage of our strengths? Medium size city with a small town feel. Proximity to Chicago, Indianapolis, Detroit, and Grand Rapids Consolidate city services with Kalamazoo such as health insurance, retirement, and other support programs to leverage volume discount. Planning seems to be weak - repave a street and a week later cut it up for a manhole/drain modification. I have a radar gun for kid's baseball and I used it for traffic in morning and evening on Westnedge. Average speed 7-10 / 3-6 was 53 mph. Why?

I am a stay at home mom, as are many of my friends, and would like to see more activities/programs for younger children during the day while older children are in school.

I am angry at the fall leave pickup program. For the past two years, the loader has scraped away large portions of my yard along the road. In the spring, there were large clumps of grass and dirt in my front yard. I had to wait until March before I could reseed. It took several weeks before the grass seed came up. Stay off my lawn. Last winter, the plow knocked my mail box off the post. I had to pay to put it back. Suggestions - monitor the speed limit on Winter Drive. Put speed bumps in. There was a 25mph speed monitor on my street for 1 week, but it should have been there longer. Every day I am concerned about the kids and adults walking. The police protection is fine.

I am concerned about the availability of drugs in the schools at all levels.

I am from the Detroit area and still visit there regularly. Traffic here is fine. Home ownership is less stable these days.

I am in a new subdivision and I feel very safe. I also feel that the city is doing a great job.

I am pleased with the services and the city. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

I am proud of Portage schools. On the whole I am a satisfied Portage citizen.

I am concerned about the deer population. They have all but destroyed the hedge in my back yard and it will be extremely expensive to have it removed and replaced. There is also concern about people being in auto accidents. A deer died behind some shrubs and was there for some time before it was noticed and taken care of. I feel this is also a health problem

I am very concerned about the future of the schools. It seems as though we built and are building beautiful schools but cannot afford to operate and maintain them. Our taxes are high enough. Schools are important to the community - they define a town. We cannot let the education and athletics suffer, but we also cannot raise taxes continually.

I believe that funding of the schools will become a problem in the future. It seems that every

new school is architecturally masterful, but I wonder if basic buildings would be a better use of tax payer money. I and my friends are concerned about school taxes.

I believe the Mayor is providing excellent leadership

I don't think we need weekly recycling. I would like to have monthly big trash pick up. There is no place to keep things you need to get rid of when big trash only comes 2 times per year. Will never participate in any city recreation program after the drama camp and the way my complaint was handled by the city employee in charge of this program.

I hate to see the encouragement of chain stores - would like to see more independent, small stores. Strict enforcement of barking dog rules. Need to replace more than a mile of road at a time. Finish at least two miles a year.

I have been impressed with the city of Portage's snow plowing service during the 25 years my wife and I have lived here. However, last year's plowing seemed to have been cut back. There were times when our main streets were not plowed in a timely manner.

I have lived in Portage my whole life, watched the city begin and continue to grow. There were times when it seemed very fast, we call that progress. Some times it is difficult to see decisions made by those who have lived here a short time, with little consideration of where we have come from. Overall, I am proud to be a Portage resident. However, the City does not service private roads, but we pay taxes like everyone else.

I hope we continue to be a progressive city with more job opportunities for all areas not just white collar workers, but blue collar workers as well. In general - Good Job.

I like Portage, have lived here over 70 years and would not like to live anywhere else.

I like the fact that the city cares about what I think.

I live at Spring Manor – I asked if the city could put a couple of benches on Mall Lane so seniors would be able to walk to Hardings or Southland. Nothing happened. I know that there is a way to anchor benches so they won't be stolen. There are so many older people who can walk but need a place to rest after a short distance. I don't think the cost would be prohibitive. Please give it some thought.

I live in a cul-de-sac and the snow removal is terrible. All of the snow from the middle of the cul-de-sac is often pushed into our yard. The overall clearing of the cul-de-sac is inferior to other roads in the neighborhood.

I live in an area at Austin Lake that does not have access to AT&T Internet. As a result I can't "bundle" services to save significant money. This might be something the city can help change.

I live in Woodbridge and when it snows a lot it can be days before a plow comes through. Putting in curbs and sidewalks have helped the appearance Why have you made it so that you can't drive from one business parking lot to the next without going back on Westnedge? The lane that ends going south by Milham apartments causes problems with cars not turning in.

I live on a curve and they don't plow all the way to my curb. They leave a good 2 feet.

I love the city of Portage. My only worry is that our schools stay drug free. I realize this problem is everywhere, but I seem to hear bad reports about Portage Central. I just hope they keep a good eye out for this problem.

I might have to move because of my taxes. I love my house but my taxes go up year after year even though housing prices have dropped. Angling south of Centre - lots of pot holes

I strongly suggest the sidewalks - all of them - get cleared after a snowfall. If they are not, I suggest steep fines for failing to obey city ordinance. Steep means \$500 or more per incident.

I think Portage should start being its own city and not just a suburb of Kalamazoo. We need a daily newspaper and our own downtown. We need to develop Portage between Osterhout and Centre. Need a Fall cleanup program also

I will probably need to leave Portage within the next 2 years to relocate to an area with lower taxes. Now that my children are out of the public schools there is no enticement to live here that is worth the higher property taxes.

I would like to be able to recycle more types of waste plastics #3-7, styrene, etc.. I could like lower property taxes

I would like to see the city create its own food and clothing bank. Although Portage has many affluent families, other families are facing very tough economic times. We have worked very hard on making Portage a beautiful city with its streets and parks and new schools. I think now we should turn our attentions to the quality of life our residents are experiencing.

I would like to see the speed limit enforced more on Constitution - a lot of apartments and a day care. Also Crossroads Village apartments have elderly people who still drive and it is very hard to get on the Boulevard.

I would like to see the police enforce the speed limit in residential areas. I would also like to see tickets being issued for "rolling" through stop signs in residential areas. These issues seem to be increasing rapidly and are becoming serious concerns.

I would like to see dead flowers and debris removed from the cemetery. Really appreciate the availability of water and waste containers.

I'd like to see the city of Portage show all the support we can to higher education - possibly a "Portage" off-shoot of KVCC to relieve some of the congestion on that campus. Also show support to the K-Wings & their facility as both a sports arena and convention site.

I'm just about to buy a condo - taxes are high.

I'm retired and a widow. I live in a 55 and over complex. I really love Portage.

I'm so pleased with Portage.

I'm very proud to be a part of Portage. My husband worked in several departments at the city of Portage for 20 years before his death.

I'm very unhappy about my water. It is uncalled for that my bathtub is ruined and so are my clothes. I'm upset at the way the schools are doing busing. My child will not walk. The plows suck.

I've lived in Portage for 31 years and proud of it. I had two girls graduate from high school, very good schools. I go to the Senior Center and enjoy all things offered, including the lunches for \$2.50

I've only lived here less than a year. I love Michigan and my little house. The people are very nice.

Increase the brush cleanup schedule to monthly from March through September.

Inexpensive or free internet available to all households.

Inform the plow drivers to not use W. Melody as their own personal raceway, especially at 4 in the morning. They don't need to drive that fast to clear the snow. They obliterated 2 mailboxes, although they were replaced by the city.

Invest in a community pool. More frequent street sweeping. Strict enforcement of ordinances related to the upkeep and care of property. Not enough street sweeping which allows weeds to grow in the gutters. There is too much money being spent on a level of police protection that is

not warranted considering the low level of crime in Portage.

It is a nice clean place to live. Would like have better bus connections to shopping areas.

It is a very nice city to live in. I would say it is one of the nicest cities in the country.

It looks like the city's storms catch basins could be cleaned more often - if they do at all

It rains and our water tastes like worms.

It really surprised me that the City would be build a multi-million dollar grade school and then send buses to take kids to school. It should have been built in a more central area. We then lay off janitors and teachers because we can't afford them.

It was a load of crap that the city pulled its tree service once a month pick-up. I believe a millage was passed to pay for it and now it's only four times a year. The two take away pick up is crap - who is setting the extra money that we paid for the service.

Jobs Worry about taxes getting out of control Need good streets and sidewalks - make sure contractors use materials that last. Keep up the focus on jobs and balancing the budget

Jobs. Drugs. Flexibility. Reduce property taxes for retired. People's bullying attitude. Accidents on Westnedge due to poor light signals. State of the art technology needed on Westnedge to lower deaths or hospitalization.

Just wish they'd replace my mailbox

Keep attracting new business as a major priority

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work - keep asking for input and keep listening.

Keep up the good work. I Live on a cul-de-sac that doesn't always get plowed well.

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good job of making this a beautiful city to live in. We could use a nice 18 hole golf course

Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work

Keep up the recreation program. It gives this younger generation something positive to fill their time. Please do not fill in the marsh areas. There should be no building over these areas. There used to be a law against this. There is never enough done to keep up the roads repaired. Pot holes. Please do not build more small malls. Leave lots green and open.

Lack of jobs, affordable housing.

Last winter I would shovel my sidewalk and then the plows would come by and fill it in because the sidewalk is so close and they go so fast it throws it all the way to the house. I'm waiting for an ice chunk to break my window. Tell them to slow down. Celery Flats blind curve - cement sidewalk on Lovers Lane - needs to be made wider. Can we go one winter without the plows taking the mailbox out. They need to slow down when people are out shoveling the walk.

Law enforcement along the north boundary of the Portage where we live is not equivalent to other areas. Crime has increased in our area over the last five years and police patrols are rarely observed.

Less signs. More trees especially on bike paths. Manager is doing a great job. What a difference from previous city manager. More cooperation with city of Kalamazoo. The mayor is also doing a good job. Progress on 2020 study - where are we?

Let us keep doing our best to make Portage the best community in Michigan

Like it better than Kalamazoo.

Live on Oakland Drive and snow is thrown on the shoveled sidewalk for us to redo

Living on a short private road, we are pretty much unable to use services unless we hire someone to haul debris to the curb of another house on the public street.

Love living in Portage. Would like a cleanup in spring, one in fall.

Love Portage.

Love Spring Cleanup

Lower cable bills in the area. Give us an extra day to shovel sidewalks if there is a lot of snow before we receive a citation please. Thank you.

Lower taxes on property when value goes down. Only fair We need more lights on dark streets turning off Oakland. Watch snow removal trucks - speed when streets are clean. Too much snow removal - 5 times a day? 2 bucks per trip even when almost bare payment.

Lower taxes. Fix your streets- snow removal, floods, tree overhangs, uneven sidewalks. Clean water, please upgrade system. Dirt/rust so thick you can pick it up with your fingers from drinking and bathing water. Teach city employees to plow snow correctly. We have to pay to have driveways plowed. Dogs running loose, young children out all times of night, no supervision South Westnedge cannot accommodate much more traffic

Mailbox has been knocked down by plows three times in one year

Maintaining 2 high schools, both with out dated facilities. Migrating them into one 'best of class' facility with sports complex would improve growth into Portage.

Maintenance of three new schools. Being erected at the same time, repairs should be coming at the same time

Majority rules - all government these days is being overrun by liberals and special interest groups - listen to the majority.

Make more bike trails and parks. Keep us clean and beautiful. Thanks

Make sure that all streets are plowed in the winter. Even the dead-end ones. Wish there was a fall clean-up. We hardly ever get plowed. We live on a dead-end street and they just circle in front of our street and dump all of the snow in front of our driveway.

Make the brush and leaf pickup times more flexible when the weather doesn't cooperate. Please also increase brush pickup to at least a bi-monthly schedule. Three months is just too long. Thanks.

Manhole covers should be the same level as road. On Woodlawn Drive, fill in with gravel from road to property. On Romence going east, right lane should be able to go straight as well as turn right.

Many buildings are vacant, land is vacant, yet Portage tends to give up green space for new construction of businesses instead of utilizing pre-existing areas. Sonic could have gone in where PCOC or the old trailer park mobile home business was instead of killing the wetland area.

Many children who play in the streets in our neighborhood, but drivers speed through and ignore stop signs. Traffic is bad from I-94 N

Mayor, city council and manager are all doing a very good job. I have lived here for 50 years and I cannot understand why our street does not have a street light at least midway. The only light we have is the one we have installed on our roof.

Merge services provided by the city with neighboring communities to reduce costs. Promote

neighborhood crime watches. Determine the source of crime and expel. Push for native habitats on city property roadways, parks. Improve traffic lights for flow and convenience. Too much time spent waiting for lights. Find ways to bring low-cost flights to the airport. Enforce RV parking at residences

More bike paths, repair existing paths, extend bike path to Meijers on Shaver road so you can cross the road. Have city water on all streets

More community awareness of kids and peer pressure - parent involvement - drugs, etc. More development for Sprinkle. Traffic congestion during holidays.

More concerts in the Band Shell I live on a corner and the plow empties its blade in my driveway. I usually have a 2 by 4 foot wide area to shovel

More diversity in government - become more cosmopolitan.

More jobs for people with disabilities.

More neighborhood police patrols during and after school hours. Unsafe conditions with traffic and child pedestrians - primarily discourteous drivers. More patrols around school could be a deterrent.

More recycling for plastics #1,5,7, etc

More reminders, more notice of Spring Cleanup.

More sidewalks so people can walk to local shops. More un-franchised businesses and easy access to them, perhaps a village-like area that is easily accessed by foot, bike, or car. More employment for teens even if it is by the tax payers - we can find something for them to do.

More spring cleanup - once a month like Kalamazoo city.

More than 1 spring clean up. Could use a new container box. Monthly curbside collection is good

More than one spring clean up. Disappointed to see brush collection go quarterly. Some of the less traveled streets are in very poor condition. Be better stewards of our tax money.

My concern is with all the new development in the Centre-Westnedge area. This has had an effect on the water table in our neighborhood since we have moved to Portage 16 years ago. We went from no water flooding issues to now having 3 sump pumps in our basement. The water table in our area has changed and needs to be addressed.

My first concern is too high property taxes, they hurt Portage growth. The parks are very nice but there are too many; 18 parks in ridiculous given its population. That's a lot of expense. City government has to cut back just like its people.

My main worry is the condition of school discipline and behavior. This is nation-wide, but we are responsible for our part. Why are we feeling the need to build new schools instead of repair which in the long run are economical. Our school needs have been diminished sharply and new schools won't help. What happened to regular upkeep? Milham Park has really gone downhill. Hayloft Theater roof needs repair - too nice to neglect.

Need a crossing person, skywalk or tunnel to control the kids at PCHS to keep the traffic flowing.

Need attention to the no parking zone at Woodmont and Kilgore intersection – Restriping and tickets to violators.

Need catch basins kept clear of debris to avoid street flooding when it rains. Perhaps residents would be encouraged to sweep curb areas of street after mowing if city cannot sweep more often. Would love heavy trash pickup 2 times a year. Brush pickup quarterly is adequate. Are citizens

in order when property is not kept up? This has increased since recession? Foreclosures.

Nice clean city.

Nice job on Milham and Romance

No more additional boulevards, please. I don't buy bags for leaves and store paper bags did not get picked up. It would help if you shut off the left arrow light if you get there too late and could turn left when others can go straight - after traffic clears, of course.

No more boulevards - waste of money. Synch our traffic lights better

None of the lights on Westnedge let the traffic flow. Need help.

Not a bad place to live. Happy with Portage as a community.

Not enough to keep teenagers busy - no place for them to hangout other than the mall.

Not much of an urban core area, just endless big box sprawl Need to get away from corporate type businesses and encourage smaller cottage-type business. Too many empty buildings. Need a broader curbside recycling program - different types of recyclables Meth house in neighborhood with little follow-up or intervention When there is a problem in a neighborhood (meth house) local people should be informed, but for the most part it's a good reliable force.

Oakland Drive Park. Bandshell - 10+ years ago when churches were given a Sunday night to host. I like the curbside program, don't cut it more. We have a speed problem on Romance. Calls to the police get little response and excuses about budget. I guess someone needs to die before we get action.

On Westnedge need to time lights better to go along with the speed. On Oakland need more speed control, people do not follow the speed limit south of Centre.

Our city leaders and all the people that work for them do a wonderful job managing the city. I don't think for a city this size we could expect too much more. Thank you for all you do.

Our daughter enjoys the bike trails

Our street needs curbs and sidewalks. I'd like to see monthly lawn/branch debris pick ups resume. Notify the neighborhood with signs on the major streets when pick ups are delayed by a day or more.

Over taxed for schools and boulevards

Overall, I think the city is doing a good job, but I do feel the city needs to more adequately meet the needs of citizens 50 years and older by building a new Senior Center. The present building is inadequate to accommodate many programs/classes that could be made available. Snow removal - since I live on the end of a dead-end street, many times after the snow has been cleared, the plow dumps lots of heavy, wet snow at the end of my driveway, plugging it so I can't get out. I have to go out and shovel it, which is a hardship for me. My street is overdue for repaving and the curbs are crumbling at the end of the street. Brush should be picked up more often than it is now.

Overall Portage is a great city. However I feel they focus too much on boulevards than they do our police force, and public safety.

Overall, we are pleased with life in Portage. Thank you.

Ownership and enforcement of misused road ends and walkways on Portage lakes. To ask citizens that are paying high taxes to handle it themselves with law suits, is a cop out and totally irresponsible.

Particularly in the current economic environment, the city's response to assessed values has lost touch with reality. It is not necessary to have verified sales to realize that property values

have dropped significantly. Check listing agreements. Sometimes pickup schedule doesn't match leaf fall.

Playgrounds need to be bigger and more interesting.

Plow the trail between Angling & Constitution. Many people use it and it's impassible in the winter.

Plow West Centre between Oakland and US 131 earlier and more frequently. I have taken that route every day for 12 years and that stretch of road is messy and hard to drive on when I leave for work at 6:30 am. This has always been a problem and cannot be blamed on the current budget problems.

Police department should be focused on drugs and crime, not traffic. Revenue is important, as is the judge's retirement fund, of course, but it grinds me to see officers sitting waiting for a 1-10 over when I've just come from an area where the driver is drinking a beer and playing with the phone and radio- You know the areas. Be there

Police officers are among the most unfriendly employees of the city, especially the older ones. A course on citizen relations would remind them, we're all in this together.

Police patrol Autumn street, once or twice in 24 hours. Last winter several cars were parked on the street over night for days, but no ticket. Police need to hide off Centre street and catch speeders.

Poor bus service

Poor snow removal during am traffic

Portage has to learn there is a breaking point - leaving city on tax increases each year.

Portage is a nice place to live.

Portage is a really good city to retire in. Thanks.

Portage is a great city to live in.

Portage is a very dynamic and enjoyable city to live in

Portage is an awesome city. The services are spectacular.

Portage is no renaissance city nor does it need to be made one at the tax payer's expense. Quit wasting money on traffic hazards like the boulevards. They require an enormous amount of upkeep. Quit wasting water on fountains that just water the roads and cars every time the wind blows. Start concentrating on lowering property taxes and repairing the roads correctly by paving them, not just patching them year after year.

Portage is overspending. Instead of new businesses coming into Portage that pay taxes and decrease homeowners property taxes, our taxes continue to increase. The city spends everything that they get rather than lowering or containing property taxes. I am also concerned about the amount of cancer in my neighborhood. I believe that it is disproportionate to the rest of the region.

Portage is supposed to be the city of trees and every time you turn around trees are being cleared out. Poor deer - everyone complains but they have nowhere to go. Not every street needs to be made into a boulevard. It would be nice to see some of the empty buildings in town used before more land is cleared out. I have recently found used needles and empty bottles at the playground. I wish they would accept plastic grocery bags in the curbside recycling program.

Portage it is my favorite city by far. I love the convenience of city life, but also am able to see wild life such as deer, turkeys, rabbits in my backyard

Portage needs a new or enlarged Senior Center to accommodate the many seniors that utilize

the Center, plus the non-residents that use it. More programs at the Overlander Band Shell.

Portage needs to step up and clean up the area. All these vacant houses that are unkempt, the drug problem. Fine people who do not shovel their sidewalks.

Portage should not allow open fires or fire pits. The last 2 years the quality of our air had downgraded - it stinks of smoke. So many have gone to having fires on cool evenings, it's polluting the air and anyone with breathing problems may suffer.

Privacy fences look like junkyards and people should be made to keep them up

Problems with city parking decisions in private parking lot. Handicap spaces poorly planned, wasting space assuming everyone is wheelchair bound. Not everyone uses vans or needs huge spaces next to doors. Please allow lower cost entrance fees for handicapped at public beaches, fishing - Ramona Park. Too much iron in water and I can't afford water cleaning system.

Prohibit summer parking of boats, trailers, RVs on public thoroughfares over night.

Property tax assessments are too high for real market. Tree limbs/branches around power lines need trimming. Black slime in tap water needs to be addressed. Street sweeper needs to be in neighborhoods - not just Pfizer, City Hall area. Clean storm drains. Need action on basic services- less on cultural more neighborhood support

Property taxes are forcing older people to move. Please, no Sunday brush pick up.

Proud to be residing in Portage. Clean. Traffic flow is good There are no warnings or rails across Centre and Westnedge and another one farther south. Very dangerous Centre looks great Public pool. Chick-fil-a.

Put newsletter online- save printing/ mailing cost. Plows aren't able to do a good job with all the trees/plant areas in the middle of roadways. Need to increase level of police officers. Don't see them out on patrol like I used to. High visibility decreases more random crime. Need to improve equity in tax dollars/services. Living in a condominium community yet I still pay high property taxes but do not see some services such as full leaf program, trash events. We have to pay additional money to have that privately done. City should extend to all or none.

Put unnecessary projects on hold til the economy improves - more important uses for the money than an extra walkway or trail. How can people enjoy these things if they can't pay their bills?

Put up light on Shaver between Vanderbilt and Charles River. Keep grass or weeds cut to train tracks so you can see deer before you hit them.

Recently there was a fire in my neighborhood. Seemed like it took a long time for the trucks to arrive; home was a total loss.

Recycling program should be advertised more and strongly encouraged. Trail ways are wonderful. Snow removal should be more consistent. There should be an understanding that streets would be plowed if 3" or more fall. Sometimes the plows go by with only 1 or 2 inches.

Residents are leaving curbside garbage containers out all week, working on cars - many left for weeks propped up on jacks, parking trailers or equipment on the streets making it hard to drive safely through the neighborhood, and people with garages overflowing with "junk" which then sits outside. I thought there were city ordinances to prevent some of these things. Make our neighborhoods look like a nice place to live.

Retain and bring in more manufacturing jobs for employment, but they also need to look very closely at giving big tax breaks to companies for only minimum jobs. Fall pickup needs to move back to coincide with the major leaf drop.

Road condition is the first impression a person has of the city, therefore should be top priority.

Road repair and repaving – especially in our subdivision – Amberly neighborhood.

Roads need to be fixed when there are potholes. My house has a bus stop in front, and I have to pick up trash daily. Also people begging for cigarettes and drinks of water. I think bus stops need to be away from homes. Never know when they come for brush collection.

Roads with bike paths on the side could use a sweeping once in a while. The roads with curbs get attention and the roads without are neglected. Portage is a great community.

Safety of residents is of utmost importance to me. If crime were to become a big problem, my wife and I would move.

Salt is destructive. Snow is plowed from 1” depth and salt applied. Heavy snow is late being plowed. Paint on Westnedge is bad, traffic lanes need it badly. Running traffic thru red lights

Sand volleyball league. Dodgeball league. Better organization of skill levels in softball. Develop more roadside bike paths. Spring and fall cleanup.

Satisfied with the city of Portage. Would suggest the possibility of street lights on Angling as it is a dark area at night for safety.

School taxes are outrageous as well as city taxes. Being on a fixed income, we have to cut back and budget at times. The city should also do this to alleviate this high tax burden on retired, disabled, and/or making low wages. Thank you. Our street is falling apart.

Seeing high school kids by school smoking and nothing being done. It is against the law. I see 10-20 kids everyday. Not being able to turn except when a turn arrow is on. Many times you must set through a complete sequence of lights even though there is no traffic to prevent a safe turn. Last pick up needs to be a little earlier. Always seem to have snow and no last pick-up. Leaf bags should be available at city hall at a reasonable price.

Seems like last fall leaf pickup was too early. Street snow removal sometimes takes 2 days to clear. This must improve as we are now a walking neighborhood to 12<sup>th</sup> street elementary. Many vacant homes – sign of the economy. Overall, Portage still better off than many Michigan communities.

Senior Center poor concern for safety in exercise classes. Allows people to wear street shoes to exercise in the winter, they are wet and leave slippery spots. Open doors to outside air without consideration for peoples immune system - even when its 18 degrees in winter. Not proper way to cool down. Totally not willing to improve condition because they are intimidated by some in class.

Senior housing that is affordable without such high increase in electric and heating. Most are keeping it cold in winter and do without air in summer.

Seniors should get a break on property taxes. Want us to keep our lawns nice, which we do, but then summer comes and you charge a arm and a leg for water to keep them pretty. Quit building more buildings and use the ones we have.

Service to city streets/roads

Services, parks, public facilities are very good in Portage, but I could be satisfied with less if it meant lower taxes.

Should have some where to take brush now that we have four pick-ups a year. On the off months, the people of Portage could take the brush if we had a drop-off spot like the city gorge. Look into how the city of Hastings, MI does it.

Sidewalks not shoveled in winter. Lawns left unmowed all summer

Slow down the traffic on Oakland. 35 MPH is ok, but everyone is going 45.

Snow plows dump too much snow at the base of my driveway - as much as 3 feet high, 6 feet deep all along the width of the driveway.

Snow removal is a problem on the sidewalks - especially from Avon to the post office - it isn't cleared for walkers or for students - dangerous. The plows push too much snow on the sidewalk - city should clear the sidewalks

Snow removal needs to proceed in a timely manner, 2 days wait is too long. Overall, pleased with Portage services - a lifelong resident.

Snow removal needs to be improved

Snow removal was much better 20 years ago - people have to pay for private snow plowing to get out in the morning. Continue to try making the city walker friendly. Street lights on Stonehenge neighborhood deteriorating and an eye sore.

So far I am pleased with condition of Portage.

Some homeowners leave brush at the curb for weeks, sometimes months. Discarded items are too often left at the curbside. Could owners be charged for cleanup if they don't do it themselves?

Some of the intersections that have cameras should be reevaluated from time to time to relieve congestion because sometimes you wait at the light and there's no cross traffic.

Some streets are very good, some very bad.

Someone cut tree limbs from a tree in our front yard without our permission. The next year the tree died. We called the city person and they said there was nothing they could do.

Something needs to be done about the sixty or so empty business buildings. Some of the buildings should be torn down. Stop filling in wetland areas. Stop building new buildings until you have filled some of the existing empty ones.

Speed and traffic control signs are not being enforced.

Spring cleanup - would be nice to have different clean-up times. We are one of the last streets snow plowed, and a lot of children go to school in this area

Stay clean and healthy.

Stay focused on economic development and maintain city services. If funding improves, please address the city streets. Continue to survey and involve residents - know the concerns and needs of the people living in our city.

Stop this madness of landscaping the boulevards. I do understand that boulevards slow traffic down which is a good thing. But with the cost of maintenance, water, pruning, - you could achieve the same result with only trees and cement. You are wasting our tax dollars, and seem not to care about how you are going to pay for things in the future.

Stop using bags for leaf pickup. Better traffic patrol - too many people running red lights and turning on no turn intersections. Very concerned about drug use at both high schools.

Stop using money on parks and bike trails and trailways and fix our streets. We seniors don't use those but still pay our taxes. We have an overabundance of both. The senior center is badly in need of refurbishing. How about some help there too. Enough trails

Street drain grates need to be cleaned more often.

Street drugs, prescription drug abuse, and alcohol use threaten the safety and well being of all our community members. Thefts, vandalism, car accidents, property damage often occur as a

direct result of substance use. Let's be proactive in addressing our issues.

Street repair on side streets. Water and sewer drains promised over fifteen years ago. Our side street has not been top coated or sealed for over 15 years and is breaking up. Use local contractors to help keep the money here instead of sending it to Grand Rapids.

Strive for economic development to keep people here.

Suggest city investigate AT&T's "MI Plan" - currently paying too much.

Super fire and police protection but our neighborhoods and schools are rapidly declining. Low home values enable lower income and lower educated people to move in. Homes are poorly maintained. Our quality of life in Portage has declined in the last 5 years due to the change in demographics

Taxes are too high

Taxes are too high for the house I live in. Deer population is out of control near Centre, Portage. Pleasant Drive needs work

Taxes not in sync with housing decreases. Many businesses closing. Many homes not selling. I raised my family here, son got degree at Western, this area did right by us for education. I am thankful to have lived in this city. If they want us to wash and separate, give containers that have separations for glass, plastic, paper.

Taxes suck, people who live in apartments and pay no taxes should not be allowed to vote.

Teenagers are out past 12AM during week days and causing disturbances. Plows hit mailbox

Tennis courts in the parks need new nets and better patchwork on the court surface. Court surfaces are in constant need of repair.

Thank you for re-building Milham. The new light at Angling is wonderful and greatly eases traffic flow. Please re-do Milham to 12<sup>th</sup> St. We need guard rails going west of Milham just after 131, on the north side. I have had heavy wet, unplowed snow "pull" me over from the traffic lane and it would be awful if I slid off the road and down the embankment. All the other sides have a good rail. The northwest side of the street needs one too.

Thank you We love Portage.

Thanks for asking for our opinion. Monitor outsourced services. Bags and brush pickup was inadequate. The connector between Constitution and Crossroads by the theater needs work. Also turning left from Meijers right lane goes to I-94. No indicators

Thanks for the great parks and bike trails. Additional attention to the bike trails, including expanding them would be fabulous. I can only ride the Celery Flat trail so many times before I am bored. Thanks

The bus route does not go south of Melody and does not operate at the corner of Osterhout. This puts a great burden on people without a car.

The bushes around Taco Bell at Westnedge and Mall Drive need to be trimmed to see the traffic coming. Need a home that a battered women and children can stay in to get back on their feet and back out into society - a place that is safe with plenty of room for the children to play.

The city appears to be well-run. However, taxes keep going up as times get worse.

The city didn't need to entirely resurface east Centre. Plows fill our driveway every time Radio noise too loud in cars at stop light Too many for sale signs - yards not mowed. Traffic at I-94 and Milham

The city is pretty well-managed.

The city is very difficult to deal with regarding property issues and taxes. Most of the city

employees I have dealt with on these issues have been rude, and some really lack common sense.

The city is beautiful and my family loves living here. Fill up the empty buildings. Have more spring cleanup/pick up days. They throw the pickup bin in the road, and come very late in the day - some times items blow away.

The city is working hard to do its best in trying times.

The city needs to provide wireless internet across the entire city. The city has a severe problem with uncontrolled deer herds that endanger citizens. Time to get this problem under control. Trap and kill.

The city of Portage is a wonderful place to live

The city seems to be doing everything it can to drive businesses out of Portage. My wife has lived in Portage her whole life and we are so fed up we are ready to move

The city should not renew Earthtech and use people that care about clean streets. Our street not swept but one time a year. We live on a cul de sac, it should be plowed to the center

The city wastes a lot of money on beautification projects such as brick on corners, trees, and walkways. We do not see enough people using them to justify the cost. The money could be better used on our streets. They repair streets in patchwork fashion and it looks really tacky.

The condition of the city light poles in Stonehenge is inconsistent with the general character of the neighborhood. I'm disappointed that the city contractor will not scrape the rust and repair them.

The drug problem that continues at our local schools – students on Milham smoking - 9 out of 10 are underage. Recently attended a football game and stood behind the student section. You could get high on the air.

The fall leaf pick up, spring clean up and curbside brush programs are great. But, cleaning the streets/curbs afterwards is terrible. Why can't the city cleaning program coordinate with these other programs? Even after calling the city, my curb was never cleaned.

The flowers are beautiful. The library is great. The cemeteries are in good shape.

The islands for beautification in front of West Middle School and on Romence by Woodbridge were not necessary. The one in front of school has already had to be redone. A waste of money.

The last 2 years the last pickup was not done because of snow. Therefore piles of leaves decayed on the side of the road. It was a mess to clean up by homeowner.

The little pond near the cemetery is a disgrace, with slimy water and weeds

The main streets and intersections need to be more closely monitored for violators speeding and running red lights

The manager has changed a great deal of the perceived culture in city government. It seems that some businesses still believe the city is not reasonable regarding curb cuts, sign ordinances, and zoning rules/regulations. The quality of city government structures are something we can all be proud of. We need to be sure our schools do not stop their facility upgrades after the current projects are completed.

The new city manager is too passive. Quit the beautification and parks extensions - cut flowers expenditure and maintenance and all the holiday extravagance - over kill. Why does every municipality feel they have to accept every grant? That's like over use of a credit card. I'm not sure Portage knows what is cultural, nor do they have the facilities - however, they try. This town needs a new and much larger Senior Center - perhaps funds need to be redirected. People

put leaves in the road way before pick up and it is never monitored.

The Newsletter is biased and is used to spread propaganda for the city, they always list new jobs/businesses but don't list ones closed and/or lost. The taxpayer funded newsletter is used to promote certain issues rather than being fair and balanced. Parks have been put in strange areas e.g. Skating park behind businesses. The city police do not enforce red lights, no turn on red- I've even seen the police run red lights and turn on no turn intersections. Please enforce traffic laws at Shaver/Centre before people get killed...awful intersection

The Portager newsletter could be printed on newspaper to save money. The high quality glossy paper it is printed on is unnecessary. I think more could be done with the recycling program. You could make people more aware that it is available and how they could obtain a recycling container. I also think Portage should have "junk pick up" 2 times per year.

The property taxes here are so high that I'm having difficulty meeting my budget.

The randomness of sampling seems unusual. I have been called for the survey about every four years which seems more than normal.

The sound abatement fences on I-94 are unsightly. It looks like Detroit Industrial Freeway. On Downing it is like living at the Berlin Wall. This has severely reduced values of these properties and the neighborhood in general. Three lane Roads were shown to be hazardous years ago in the 1950s. Use as acceleration lanes by left turners is especially hazardous. Signs should be posted prohibiting use as acceleration lanes now that we have 3 lanes roads. New divided Westnedge has created a dangerous parking lot. City should pay for Meijer's parking lot changes because of bad street engineering. Two plus minutes lights create too much incentive to run lights. Shorten these lights for human engineering reasons- efficiency be damned. New 12<sup>th</sup> Street school zone lights are on too long. The zone is too long. The school sits way back and there are turn lanes. Restrict to actual school start times and high traffic into school. No playground near road.

The speed of police cars on Schuring is a major safety concern. I've personally observed them on many occasions going in excess of 75 mph in my opinion. How they manage to stop for Oakland is beyond my comprehension. This is serious. Someone needs to do something about it before someone is killed, either a police officer or an innocent driver pulling out from a side street. The speed of the police cars doesn't lead me to believe anyone could survive a collision or even a blowout on a cruiser. I also would appreciate not having my mailbox knocked down by the snowplow every year.

The spring clean up is good, but it would be very useful to have the service at another date also - perhaps in the fall sometime. Unless they have changed their program, I believe the city of Kalamazoo has a monthly or more often service of this type.

The streets have to be safe for the kids that have to walk to school now. Snow must be removed from sidewalks. If there are no sidewalks, some should be put in. The kids have to be safe walking to school. It is a must.

The streets in my neighborhood never get plowed in winter before a week goes by. We have at least 5 nurses living here and we have to plow ourselves out to get to work.

The taxes in Portage are too high - people will move.

The taxes on small 3 bedroom homes are way too high.

The traffic flow could have been better with the latest repairing of Centre between Westnedge and Portage. Are you putting trees to hide the new water treatment facility on Garden Lane -

what an eyesore. The city required us to hide our pole barn with trees - I think the city should do the same. Snow removal is okay except when the plow covers my drive right after I clear it. What are you gonna do? Grin and Bear it.

The traffic on Westnedge by Portage Central is extremely frustrating, especially in the early morning. Please help.

The value of property has fallen during the last couple of years, but the taxes keep going up.

The Westnedge business area needs to be spruced up, especially around the K-Mart and Toys-R-Us area. The next time Westnedge is torn up, spend the money to bury the utility lines. This will greatly improve the looks of the area.

There are uneven spots in the street that actually send vibrations through my whole house when large trucks drive by. There was work performed east of me and I hope someday this area will be addressed. Keep up the good work – I love Portage.

There is concern by business owners that there may be “selective enforcement” of ordinances in the city. The bigger the business, the less the concern. We need to promote new business and help them grow and have more customers use their services and buy their products.

There is too much speeding on our streets. People do not pay attention to the signs, do not come to a full stop at stop signs. We need to enforce the speed laws.

There seems to be no inspectors when streets get resurfaced. If there are, they should be fired. Way too many chiefs in the city of Portage. They use water and sewer bills as a new tax. Rates are way too high.

There should be separate codes for lake property - irregular lot size, lack of land to develop on etc

There should be both a spring and fall cleanup program. Not enough street lamps in residential neighborhoods and many of them need a fresh coat of paint. Poor visibility turning left from Rothbury on to Romence due to recent street reconfiguration. Traffic signal needed at intersection of Milham, 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Texas Township Road - dangerous

They do a good job and have not messed up my lawn in the last 8-10 years. It is more crowded.

They focus too much on the growth of the community and not the people who have lived here for a few years.

This is a great city - good schools, excellent management.

Thousands of dollars have been spent on improving human resources, PCOC; millions of dollars on the educational facilities. Isn't it time to do something to improve the senior center facilities?

Timed lights on Westnedge. More traffic enforcement - many vehicles running red lights and left hand turn lights. Pfizer buildings should be targeted for redevelopment when not used. Continue to extend the wonderful bikeways and bike lanes. It is nice to see a community with such continued improvement for everyone.

Timing street lights better, especially at Milham and Westnedge. Trying to turn left on Westnedge to go north from Milham can be nuts at times.

Too many corners that you can't turn right on a red light

Too many dogs running loose

Too many pot holes, but I've seen some improvement. I am pleased to live in Portage and hope it continues to thrive and be a model small city

Too much money is being spent on new bike trails that is needed to fix bike paths already in existence. Osterhout and Westnedge both are dangerous because of broken up asphalt and loose stone.

Too much retail and service. Too little manufacturing.

Too much trash – littering of public roads and walkways. A number of road-kills that are not being attended to. Is there a department responsible for removal and clean-up?

Traffic control – we live on a 25mph street that leads to a new subdivision – concerned about neighborhood children walkers and bicyclers in jeopardy.

Traffic flow. Speed control on Osterhout - poor monitoring. Intersections - running red/yellow lights. Love living in Portage. Keep up the good work.

Traffic light at 12<sup>th</sup> and Milham intersection. Monthly junk pick-up.

Traffic on South Shore Drive is heavy enough that it should be up-graded to “collector street” status. Parts are in intolerable condition.

Trailways are a good idea for bikers and walkers.

Transportation is not just about the flow of passenger cars through city streets. We need to keep walkability in mind when designing streets, intersections, so all modes are included - cars, pedestrians, bikes, mass transit, trolleys

Tree limbs over power lines, I am getting tired of losing power to our home.

Use Waldo Stadium for next PNHS vs. PCHS football game. Increase pick-up or add a fall with the spring Monitor garage sales- house on Angling and Romence is a business. Thank you

Used to be a nice place to call home. Taxes are about to run me out of my home

Value of condo did not go up in the last year, probably went down - but my taxes are more than last year. That needs to change.

Very concerned about manpower at police department. They lost five officers recently and only replaced three. They were short staffed to begin with but have an abundance of command. Why does a department that size need a chief and two deputies?

Very nice library. Street lighting good - roads good. Good schools, and teachers are working hard to help students succeed. We live in a private area and must hire our own snow removal

Very satisfied.

Was street sweeping totally cut from the budget? I'm faithful to “only rain in the drain” but most people don't care. Nice neighborhood of older homes but the streets look bad.

Water and sewer costs are too high. I don't feel that our property taxes have been lowered nearly to reflect the current decrease in values. Also, need an ordinance to eliminate off road 4 wheelers used on vacant land in residential areas

Water costs are very high. More curbside and easier curbside recycling. There would be more compliance if there were fewer requirements to sort. Improve pay for teachers

Water quality is good but contains a lot of silt that could be filtered and wouldn't build up in pipes.

Watering public lawns is expensive and could be reduced to save money. Why have sprinklers operating when there is plenty of rain. Why does the grass have to be green when the dry season comes along. It will soon green up again when it rains. I'd like to water my grass too, but I have to pay sewer charges for that water when it doesn't even go to the sewer.

We appreciate the newsletter. Wish there was more written about general community events; not just city sponsored events

We appreciate this fine community and the efforts put forth by the city council and government on our behalf.

We are fairly well satisfied with city of Portage, hence, why we still live here. It was a bit disheartening to be bumped up in taxes for the schools, understanding that they were needed, but our kids recently graduated and are not personally going to benefit from it. Clean, safe city for work and play. If we move it will be because the cost of living here is too high for what you get. Probably better value in some surrounding communities. School bus service should be prioritizing safety not savings.

We are glad we chose to live in Portage 42 years ago. It has been a good place to raise our children and now grandchildren

We are happy living in Portage. The improvements we propose are not huge, but require a shift of priorities to basic services, especially improving snow removal. Taxes are very high - at least give us more service, perhaps with fewer parks. Much too slow to clear neighborhoods

We are very proud to live in Portage. Top notch leadership and extraordinary schools. Keep up the good work

We have at least two homes on our street that use illegal drugs.

We have lived in Portage since 1960. It is one of the finest cities in the country. We both retired from the Upjohn Company in 1988.

We have lived in Portage for 51 years and have seen continual progress - the parks and bikeways are wonderful - keep up the good work. Please pave all of South Shore Drive soon

We have one of the best mayors we have ever had.

We have private recycling at our complex. Love it.

We live across from the state game area on Vanderbilt - over the years there have been bullets shot in our direction - perhaps co-operation from the DNR to do away with target practice so close to the road. Snow plows are mailbox bashers Some streets have big potholes

We live in a neighborhood right off Milham and Oakland. On average it takes 3 days after a snowstorm for roads to be plowed. That is too long and unacceptable. Our high schools are inferior compared to others in the state. For our tax base they should be much more up to date and Northern should have athletic facilities. Taxes don't provide enough for residents. It is absurd that there is a traffic light at The Preserve where there are only 5 homes and Oakland traffic has to stop for it.

We live on a cul-de-sac and would think that it might make sense to have a sign that says "no turn street"

We lost a mailbox because of a snow plow. Thanks for taking the time to ask citizens what they think. Keep up the good work.

We moved to Portage last November and have been very pleased with the city and services

We need a street light on the corner of Bronson & Kilgore. A flashing red light isn't of use.

We really enjoy living in Portage. It's a great town to live in.

We sincerely love living in Portage. What a great city. Kudos to our city manager for his strong visionary leadership. Portage is a city with a solid plan of growth and development. Thanks for allowing me the opportunity to share feedback. We think Ramona Park and Beach needs attention.

We think Portage is wonderful city - I hope it continues to be. Our neighborhood has been very safe and quiet. Since we don't work- we aren't aware of goings on in other neighborhoods.

We would love to see at least one tennis court in the whole city that has lights and/or electricity for using a ball machine. Now we have to go either to WMU or to Schoolcraft. In the fall it gets dark earlier but it is still warm enough to play at night if there were lights. I would like to see a nutrition centered food store in Portage such as Whole Foods or Trader Joes - what could the city do to attract such a business?

We're losing jobs and not able to replace them with similar paying jobs. We want our children in good schools but every year, we pay more for same services - not better services. No Promise for people who work hard so their children can benefit from a good school district - why not because we have standards? Why not Portage? I'm currently unemployed with no help, so good school district does nothing for my kids if I can't further their education from here. The state streets need work

We've loved living here. Thank You.

Web-coms at city parks or main traffic areas. Contract trash service or recycle to reduce the traffic and rates. Splash park for kids would be great.

Well run city.

What can be done about the increasing member of deer that come in our yards nightly to damage our lawn, bushes, flowers, and trees, not to mention the traffic accidents they cause. I mean right here in Shaver/Centre corner of the city.

When finishing off a road or a water project, they should put things back the way they were when they started the project.

When we bought our house our container was broken. We'd like a new one. Could we get more frequent notices of Fall and Spring cleanups?

While I am happy to do this survey and think it is a very worthwhile endeavor by the city, I don't understand why a separate letter was sent out a few days ago announcing the survey. A cover letter would have been enough. Excess of \$800 was spent on postage etc. on the 1<sup>st</sup> letter, which is a waste of taxpayer money. Why spray a great lakeside park? Why not near Haverhill Park or the park off Baywood. An area of no water access makes more sense. Sometimes development is at the expense of homeowners, such as the Oakland Drive project. It was wrong to bill some of the city's oldest homesteads.

While water rates have increased, you've minimized the increase so far to come up with a plan to cover political ignorance in suing the city of Kalamazoo. What were you thinking? Now someone us will be paying tremendously for your error in not letting sleeping dogs lie- instead of being big shots.

Why do snow plows go 40 MPH? They speed so much they often cause more harm than good. They have caused us a real hardship at times.

Why do you send 2 copies of water and sewer bills? Could save there. I feel all apartment people should pay \$500 to the city each year, like land owners do. Because they use the same services. Plows take front lawn. Police need to follow the rules too.

Why is no parking required at fire hydrants? Posted no parking across street from hydrant. Police can't seem to stop either.

Why would you put the new water treatment plant where you did. Thought Portage was a "tree" city, but you cut down a lot, and more folks in the Celery Flats area have an eyesore and much of the beauty destroyed.

Winter time people need to shovel. Streets need to be paved sooner than later.

Wish it could be done a little quicker in bike lanes.

Wish Spring Cleanup was twice a year

Wish they recycled styrofoam. Ann Arbor does. Hard to get to work in the AM with the lights so unsynchronized.

With the economy in its present state, Portage leaders need to remember residents are struggling to keep afloat. Increases in any taxes or services would be a terrible burden for many of us. Put a hold on constructing skateboard parks, fountains, and various other beautification projects that are not needed. Keep taxes down. No increases please.

Work harder to preserve open spaces, or return undeveloped areas to natural state. More and more studies show that natural beauty enhances quality of life. Also, no more encroachment in the so called Romence Parkway. Especially lacking in diverse culture and performances by artists with a different point of view.

Work needs to be done to the sidewalk. Clear them or fix them better

Would like brush pick up monthly especially in summer months - hope the economy improves so this would be back as a service.

Would like clean-up more than one time per year.

Would like frequent trash pick up

Would like more redevelopment. Wish they would take bagged leaves. Lots of pot holes

Would like to bring back boat rentals at Ramona Park; One house on our block high school kids in and out till 11 PM Our street was paved poorly 2 years ago Water drainage. Portage before Milham - hydroplaning bad.

Would like to see Portage expand their system of bike paths. Oakland/Milham intersection signal timing is off.

Would like to see a larger Senior Center. Applaud our school system Like the Portager. Scary to think that Westnedge, Portage, and Sprinkle intersections are yet to be done. Thanks for this opportunity.

Would like to see a dog park. More retail on south Portage, shopping center by Austin Lake

Would like to have the police enforce parking violations such as cars blocking the sidewalks causing pedestrians to walk into the street. If the city enforces removal of snow from the sidewalks, they should also enforce parking violations that interfere with pedestrian traffic. In the 17 years I've lived in this neighborhood, I've seen a police car drive through here three times. In my opinion, inexcusable.

You need to fix bumps in the road south past Oakland on Shaver. It would be nice to have wooden floors for basketball at the Portage YMCA. The Portage library is a great place. Where else can you go to read \$20.00 books for free? Only in America.

You offer a lot of programs but I'm unable to attend them. I love the city flowers. Portage is a good place to live - been here 35 years

You're doing a good job - continue.

Your desire to attract business to save us - but keep it in the right places.