

**THE 2014
PORTAGE COMMUNITY SURVEY**

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Introduction

The 2014 Portage Community Survey is the twenty-sixth citizen survey carried out by the Kercher Center for Social Research for the City of Portage. The survey was administered annually from 1986 until 2009, was next administered in 2011 and is now being done after a three year lag. As in previous years, the survey attempts to measure citizens' viewpoints on city services and issues. The first survey, in 1986, was administered through the mail. After that, until 2008, all subsequent surveys utilized a random-digit-dialing telephone approach, as it was faster and generally produced a representative sample. In 2008, the City Council decided to return to a mail approach. Since it proved to be successful, a mail approach was also used for the 2009 and 2011 surveys and for the current survey.

As before, the survey instrument was initially drafted by the staff of the City. It was reviewed by a Council committee, the Council, and the KCSR, and ultimately approved by the 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 2014 survey instrument was reviewed over the summer, and the data collection process began on September 8th 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. A week later, on September 15th, 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.

Data entry and coding began on September 29th, shortly after the first responses were received at the KCSR, and continued through October 25th. A total of 832 completed surveys were received though only 580 were received and entered by the cut-off date. In addition to the 864 completions, 38 mailings were returned to the City due to bad addresses. This produces a response rate of 44.0 percent. This is consistent with the last three surveys in 2008, 2009 and 2011 which all used the mail protocol followed here. The response rate is also clearly higher than it was with random digit dialing (36.6% in 2007 and 31.4% in 2006). This factor definitely adds confidence in the results. Moreover, response distributions on demographic and substantive indicators have been highly stable from year to year. It was anticipated that this year's survey would be equally stable, even though three years have passed since the previous survey.

With a 2010 Census count of more than 46,000 for the City of Portage, a random sample of 580 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 which has always been used for this work (that level of precision actually requires slightly fewer than 400 responses). Frequency distributions have been run for each item on the survey. **Appendix A** contains a copy of the survey instrument with the frequency and percentage distributions for each item. In addition, the responses to open-ended items were sorted by question number, then alphabetized and edited for readability. **Appendix B** contains the responses to the open-ended items.

Results

Characteristics of the Sample

In survey research, it is necessary 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, it was anticipated that the sample would be similar to the 2011 sample, as well as to the target population, given that the data collection approach is the same. 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. 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, there is a modest but consistent increase from 2009 through 2014 in the proportion reporting they have lived in Portage more than ten years. Respondents continue to be overwhelmingly owners of single family homes. Finally, the proportions from each area of the city remained fairly stable with the largest concentration of respondents coming from the northwest quadrant of Portage.

Table 1. Residential Characteristics of the Sample: 2014, 2011, 2009

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>
	%	%	%
<u>Years Lived in Portage</u>			
Less Than 5 Years	6.6	7.9	12.1
5 Thru 9 Years	8.9	12.1	12.8
10 or More Years	84.5	80.0	75.1
<u>Type of Residence</u>			
Single Family	86.2	84.9	82.9
Apt/Condo/Mobile/Other	13.8	15.1	17.1
<u>Area of City</u>			
Northwest	43.7	48.9	46.6
Northeast	10.1	9.5	10.9
Southwest	17.6	14.4	16.0
Southeast	28.6	27.3	26.5

In a parallel fashion, Table 2 below shows the age, education, family income, and gender distributions for the 2014, 2011, and 2009 surveys. More than half (54.7%) of the respondents have a college or graduate degree. The proportion of respondents over the age of 60 continues to rise and is accompanied by small declines in the proportions under 40 and 40 thru 59. It may be

that the mail protocol in general, and increasingly so, is a less attractive protocol for younger residents. This trend is certainly worth monitoring. The gender makeup of this sample, with 56.6 percent male and 43.4 percent female, is similar to the previous mail surveys though considerably different from that of previous years. Overall, the 2014 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 small and stable, and the proportion with incomes over \$100,000 increased somewhat to 26.3 percent, up from 20.6 percent in 2009.

Table 2. Respondent Personal Characteristics: 2014, 2011, 2009

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>
	%	%	%
<u>Age</u>			
Less Than 40 Years	5.5	10.0	12.0
40 Thru 59 Years	30.3	37.2	38.3
60 or More Years	64.2	52.8	49.7
<u>Education</u>			
High School or Less	14.9	15.7	13.6
Some College/Technical	30.4	31.5	33.5
College Degree	54.7	52.8	52.9
<u>Family Income</u>			
Less Than \$25,000	10.8	12.2	12.1
\$25,000 Thru \$99,999	62.9	63.6	67.2
\$100,000 or more	26.3	24.2	20.6
<u>Gender</u>			
Male	56.6	54.8	52.5
Female	43.4	45.2	47.5

The vast majority of Portage residents who responded to this survey identified themselves as White/non-Hispanic (96.9%, this year, 94.6% in 2011, 94.4% in 2009, 96.3% in 2008). Only 0.7 percent identified themselves as Black or African American (1.8% in 2011, 1.4% in 2009, 0.7% in 2008), and 0.5 percent as Hispanic. These numbers and proportions are all comparable to data from previous years.

This year, 90.3 percent, up from 87.1 percent in 2011, 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 84.2% in 2009, 83.3% in 2008 and 78.7% in 2007). Recall that this even holds as the proportion of respondents over the age of 60 has increased. More specifically, the proportion of those respondents 60 or over reporting that they do not have access to the Internet from home has continued to drop and currently stands at 13% (it was almost 27% in 2008). The respondents were also asked what type of Internet service they

receive. The percentage reporting cable has increased to over two-thirds (67.8%) while the percentage reporting DSL has continued to decline and is now only 15.1% (it was 24.4% in 2011). The same small percentage as in 2011 (2.2%) have dial-up access. Access to high speed Internet service in Portage is rapidly increasing at least among those who tend to respond to the survey.

Related to the decision to shift to a mail survey approach, the respondents were again asked what kind of telephone service they have at home. These percentages have remained stable since 2009. This year, 85.1 percent indicated that they have both a traditional land line and one or more cell phones (83.7% in 2011 and 83.5% in 2009). Only 4.3 percent (4.2 percent in 2011) reported that they only have cell phone service, and 10.6 percent (12.1 percent in 2011) indicated that they only have land line service.

Citizen Perceptions of Problems

Throughout the survey instrument, the respondents were asked if they felt particular issues were problems in Portage, and if so, whether they perceived the problems to be “slight,” “moderate,” or “severe” (see **Appendix A**, Questions 5, 8, 9, 18, 19, 27, and 29). For each item, point values were assigned to each of the categories (1 for “no problem,” 2 for “slight problem,” 3 for “moderate problem,” and 4 for “severe 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 weighted mean score. In Table 3 below, issues are organized from the most problematic at the top, to the least problematic at the bottom. The rankings are based on the mean scores, which are displayed in parentheses -- the higher the mean score, the more problematic the issue. Finally, the percentages in the table include all responses in the “slight” “moderate” and “severe” categories and therefore represent the cumulative percentage of respondents who felt the issue was some level of problem.

Table 3. Perceived Problems in Portage: 2014, 2011, 2009

Issue	<u>2014</u>		<u>2011</u>		<u>2009</u>	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Traffic-Westnedge	1 (2.05)	69.9	1 (1.99)	67.6	1 (2.20)	73.6
Home/Yard Conditions	2 (1.58)	44.7	2 (1.64)	48.0	2 (1.58)	44.5
Drinking Water Quality	3 (1.53)	33.7	3 (1.55)	34.2	3 (1.44)	27.5
Substance Abuse	4 (1.32)	20.1	4 (1.32)	22.8	4 (1.38)	24.7
Underage Drinking	5 (1.23)	17.8	5 (1.22)	16.7	5 (1.30)	22.3
Police Protection	6 (1.15)	11.2	6 (1.18)	13.3	6 (1.24)	17.8
Fire Protection	7 (1.04)	2.7	7 (1.06)	4.1	7 (1.07)	4.9

The obvious result from Table 3 is that the rankings of the 2014 mean scores are identical to the rankings for the mean scores for 2011 and 2009. Indeed, the level of concern as reflected

by the weighted mean scores, are also remarkably stable. If any change is present it is in a slight reduction in concern over substance abuse and drinking from 2009 and (perhaps not coincidentally) with police protection. The rates of concern over police and fire protection remain, as they have throughout the years, very low.

While the response of severe problem is included above in Table 3, it is isolated in Table 4. The dominant result for this part of the analysis continues to be that the proportions of respondents reporting issues as severe problems continue to be small. Traffic flow on South Westnedge took over the top spot in this table from drinking water quality which held that spot in 2011. The percentages remain small however with 7.4 percent reporting a severe problem with the traffic flow and 5.8 percent so reporting for drinking water quality. The other issues drop off dramatically as in past years with Police and Fire protection having basically zero identification as a severe problem (0.4% for police and 0% for fire). Also, while the South Westnedge traffic flow response of severe remains below what it had been years ago, it is a bit higher (7.4% compared to 5.0%) than in 2011 and concern over it and with flow on other Portage streets (question 30) remain common. The 35.5% who indicated a problem with streets other than Westnedge is down a bit from (42.5 percent) but roughly comparable to what it was in 2009 (36.4 percent).

Table 4. Percent Rating as Severe Problem in Portage: 2014, 2011, 2009

Issue	2014		<u>2011</u>		<u>2009</u>	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Traffic - Westnedge	1	7.4	2	5.0	1	10.6
Drinking Water Quality	2	5.8	1	6.0	2	5.7
Home/Yard Conditions	3	2.7	3	4.0	3	3.3
Substance Abuse	4	2.0	4	1.3	4	2.9
Police Protection	5	0.4	5	0.7	6	0.9
Underage Drinking	6	0.3	6	0.6	5	1.0
Fire Protection	7	0.0	7	0.4	7	0.7

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

The condition of homes and yards in their neighborhood was not perceived to be a severe problem by very many people and more than three quarters of the 2014 respondents indicated (**Appendix A**, q 28) that the situation is about the same as it was five years ago (77.4%). That is higher than the percentage so reporting in 2011 (72.8%) and in 2009 (73.0%). Also, while 17.2 percent of the respondents felt that their own neighborhoods had declined in the five years before 2011, which is almost the same as in 2009 (16.2%), this percentage dropped a bit to 12.4 percent in 2014.

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 1-3, 7, and 10-16). 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 "very satisfied," 2 for "somewhat satisfied," 3 for "neutral," 4 for "somewhat dissatisfied," and 5 for "very 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 weighted mean for that item. The lower the mean score, the higher the level of satisfaction. The first observation about these items is the fact that in most instances a substantial number of respondents had not participated in the program or used the service. This was true especially for the Senior Center, 911 Service and Recreation Programs with 80%, 75% and 74% not responding respectively. These three items are therefore reported in **Appendix A** but not included in Table 5. In addition, the items dealing with Bikeways/Trailways (39% not responding), and Brush Collection (28% not responding), were also definitely higher than desirable. Such levels, and indeed all of those above even 15 percent, raise a concern about the generalizability of the results. In fact, by that standard only two of the items, Snow Removal and the Condition of Pavement received acceptable rates of response.

The top five services are all very closely rated with Curbside Recycling taking the top spot with an average score of 1.26 and with almost 96% choosing either Very Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied. The fifth rated service was Fall Leaf Pickup which still had an average rating of 1.44 and almost 92% choosing Very Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied. These same five services were in the top five spots in the past two surveys. As we said in 2011, there was only minor reshuffling. Also as in previous years, respondent satisfaction with almost all city services and programs is high, so that even those services at or near the bottom - the Condition of Streets and Snow Removal - were regarded as satisfactory by substantial majorities of the respondents.

Only the Condition of Streets indicator seems to show a consistent downward trend across the survey years with an average rating that went from 2.17 to 2.59 (remember that higher ratings are negative on this scale) and a percent satisfied dropping from about 72% to about 58%. As we pointed out in 2011, however, some of this drop could be a result of a change in the wording, since in 2011, the word "neighborhood" was removed from the question. Although 2014 and 2011 values do appear to have varied significantly from the 2009 and 2008 values, it is not possible to determine if that is actually due to changes in the attitudes of the respondents.

Table 5. Satisfaction with City Services and Programs: 2014, 2011, 2009¹

Service/Program	2014		2011		2009	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Curbside Recycling	1 (1.26)	95.9	2 (1.31)	93.4	3 (1.39)	92.0
Spring Clean Up	2 (1.35)	93.4	4 (1.40)	92.8	4 (1.51)	89.8
Condition of Parks	3 (1.40)	92.6	3 (1.39)	92.2	2 (1.38)	93.7
Bikeways/Trailways	4 (1.41)	92.3	1 (1.31)	95.1	1 (1.36)	93.5
Fall Leaf Pickup	5 (1.44)	91.6	5 (1.52)	90.9	5 (1.56)	90.1
Brush Collection	6 (1.59)	86.7	6 (1.63)	87.3	6 (1.69)	86.5
Snow Removal	7 (2.20)	73.9	7 (2.08)	76.3	8 (2.19)	73.5
Condition of Streets	8 (2.59)	58.3	8 (2.56)	61.7	7 (2.17)	71.8

¹ 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.

As was the case in 2011 and previous years, a substantial proportion of the respondents in this year’s survey reported that they had direct contact with city employees during the past year (62.2%). Moreover, of those respondents who did report such contact, 68.7 percent (up from 57.0 in 2011) reported that they were “very satisfied”. Another 12.5 percent indicated they were “somewhat satisfied” with the quality of service they received. This was a bit less than the figure for 2011 (20.7%) though the percentage in both categories combined was higher this year. Those few (2.8% in 2014, 3.1% in 2011) that were “very dissatisfied” were also asked why they were dissatisfied. These responses are in **Appendix B, Question 17**.

Only 20.9 percent of the respondents indicated that they had utilized services offered at the Portage Senior Center. This figure is virtually unchanged since 2009. Of those in the 2014 survey who have used these services, 81.8 percent reported that they were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”. This is in comparison to 89.1 percent in 2011 and 83.1 percent in 2009.

Sources of Information about the City

This year as in 2011, in addition to items that asked respondents about their sources of information concerning City government, a second set of items was added concerning their preferred sources of information. In each case, the respondents were provided with a list of options and asked to choose all that they use. Since respondents could select multiple responses, the number of responses exceeds the number of cases. Therefore, proportions of both cases and responses are presented in order to explain the results. The figures in the Percent of Responses columns are the proportions of the total responses represented by each information source. The figures in the Percent of Cases columns are the proportions of the respondents that selected each information source. The results are reported below in Table 6.

Table 6. Information Sources about City Government

Percent	Current		Preferred	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
	of Responses	of Cases	of Responses	of Cases
City Website	7.7	19.2	7.5	17.6
<i>Portager</i> Newsletter	33.4	83.2	35.0	81.7
Public Media Network	5.0	12.5	5.4	12.7
Contact with City Employees	2.1	5.1	2.1	4.9
Kalamazoo/Portage <i>Gazette</i>	23.6	58.9	22.4	52.5
Local TV/Radio	25.7	64.2	23.5	54.8
Social Media	n/a	n/a	2.3	5.4
Other	1.6	3.9	0.9	2.1
None	0.9	2.3	0.8	1.8
Total	100.0%		100.0%	

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 33.4 percent (for Current sources) and 35.0 percent (for Preferred sources). Moreover, when you look at the distribution of cases for both sets of items, it is clear that many respondents have multiple sources of information, and that more than 80 percent of them selected the *Portager*. Although the numbers are not dramatically changed, Local TV/Radio has replaced the local newspapers as the second option. This relative trend was apparent in 2011 when the switch in places occurred in this survey.

The respondents were also asked how important *The Portager* and the City website are as sources of information about what is going on in Portage city government. Regarding *The Portager*, the results are virtually identical to those from 2011, 2009 and 2008, and with Table 6. This year, nearly all of the respondents (94.7%) indicated it was either “very important” or “somewhat important,” and only 5.3 percent indicated that *The Portager* was “not important.” These results are comparable to those of the previous three years. The proportions indicating either “very important” or “somewhat important” were – 93.4% in 2011, 95.1% in 2009 and 93.7% in 2008.

With respect to the item regarding the importance of the City website as a source of information, a substantial proportion of the respondents were unable to respond (35% compared to 33% in 2011). However, this represents a substantial drop from previous years (45.4% in 2009, 45.3% in 2008, and 48.6% in 2007). It does appear that as computers and the Internet become more ubiquitous, the website is becoming more accessible. Moreover, as was the case in 2011 and 2009, those that were able to respond to the item were largely positive. This year, 78.3 percent of the respondents (75.1%) indicated that it was “very important” or “somewhat important” compared to 75.1 percent in 2011.

Culture and Environment

In the last several surveys, respondents were asked to evaluate the city's efforts with respect to making cultural opportunities available (see question 4 – **Appendix A**). The respondents could indicate that the city was doing “Too Much,” “Just Enough,” or “Too Little.” Table 7 below displays the results and, while the differences are small, an interesting shift occurred this year. For the first time, there was clearly (more than 3:1) a higher percentage indicating that Too Little rather than Too Much was being done (of course, the overwhelmingly more popular response remained “Just Enough”). It is also the case that a small but consistent trend towards the extreme positions has continued for the past four surveys.

Table 7. Ratings of City Efforts on Key Issues: 2014, 2011, 2009, 2008

	Too Much		Just Enough		Too Little	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Making Cultural Opportunities Available						
2014	4.6	21	79.3	365	16.1	74
2011	9.0	68	81.3	614	9.7	73
2009	7.9	53	83.3	558	8.8	59
2008	6.9	49	85.0	608	8.1	58

With regard to issues related to the environment, in 2014 83.4 percent indicated that they have participated in the weekly Curbside Recycling Program. This is consistent with the surveys since 2008 and substantially higher than the rates obtained before that (73.9% in 2007 and 75.6% in 2006). Similarly, 72.4 percent (74.7% in 2011) indicated they had used the curbside brush collection which is higher than in earlier years (68.1% in 2009, 61.8% in 2008 and 54.0% in 2007). Along with the previously reported levels of satisfaction, these trends suggest a stable pattern of high use and utility. With respect to household hazardous waste disposal, the rate of use of the disposal center is again stable though, of course, at a lower level approximating 34 percent (34% in 2014, 34.5% in 2011, 34.8% in 2009 and up only marginally from 31.9 percent in 2008).

Perceptions of Governmental Operations

An area of ongoing interest relates to the citizens' perceptions of the ways that governmental operations take place in Portage. Several items focus on this issue. As before, an overwhelming majority (89.4%) felt they were getting good service for their tax dollars (87.7% in 2011, 85.1% in 2009, 85.4% in 2008). A recently added question deals with how the City should deal with the decision regarding the relationship between taxes and services. Asked if the City were faced with the decision to raise taxes or further reduce services, 28.6 percent (21.6 percent in 2011) of the respondents indicated that they didn't know or simply did not respond. Of the remainder, 59.4 percent indicated that the City should maintain services and raise taxes, while 40.6 percent felt the opposite, that the City should maintain taxes and reduce services.

This is a reversal since 2011 when the respective figures were 46.5 percent and 53.5 percent. As before, the non-response rate is high enough too easily sway the balance in either direction. Moreover, the responses to the next item on the instrument, which asks the respondents to list the services that should be reduced if it should become necessary, are distinctly mixed (see **Appendix B** – Question 21).

A new section added this year contained seven questions on “Potential New or Expanded Services.” These were not well specified proposals but rather content areas for possible exploration. The first question asked about support for creation of a dog park supported by user fees. About 48 percent agreed they would support (strongly agree or agree) such a proposal, about 30 percent were neutral and about 22 percent disagreed (strongly disagree or disagree). About an additional 16 percent chose not to respond or had no opinion.

The next question was on support for efforts to improve the quality of drinking water even if it cost the respondent more in user fees. About 37 percent agreed, 27 percent were neutral and 36% disagreed. Tax support for expansion of the Senior Center garnered about 23 percent agreement, 36 percent neutral and 41 percent disagreement. Support for a second household junk collection supported by taxes or fees garnered 27 percent agreement, 20 percent neutral and 53 percent disagreement. Asked whether they would support use of taxes or fees to create a county-wide consolidated dispatch (911) center, 24 percent agreed, 37 percent were neutral and 39 percent disagreed.

Asked if they would support use of taxes or fees to enhance public transportation, 20 percent agreed they would, 30 percent were neutral and 48 percent disagreed. Finally, support for an increase in neighborhood code enforcement, even if it cost more in taxes or fees garnered 27 percent agreement, 33 percent neutral responses and 38 percent disagreement.

Prospects and Problems

In addition to the item asking about services to be reduced (noted above), two other major open-ended questions were included in this year’s survey instrument, as they have been in the past. The first asked for the best two features of Portage, and the second asked for the most important single problem facing the City. All of the responses to these two questions are in **Appendix B**, Questions 38 and 39. 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**, as Question 50 – Final Comments.

As usual for the two positive features of Portage, many of the respondents identified the schools, parks, bike paths, library, and the overall safety of the city. They also focused on other elements of the urban environment such the beautiful appearance of public areas and generally that it is a nice place to live and to raise a family.

With respect to the problems, traffic, crime and drugs were mentioned as were infrastructure issues, particularly the condition of roads. The services most frequently mentioned as unsatisfactory in the fixed response questions were also singled out here. These included snow removal which is probably a particular emphasis after last year’s record snowfalls. Some concern over economic development and growth opportunities was also expressed.

As they frequently do, the final comments contain an array of concerns, opinions, and

personal complaints, and largely mirror the positive and negative points made on Questions 38 and 39. Throughout, direct references to persons by name were eliminated during the editing.

A final note of caution is offered again as it is every year of the survey. That is that one should respect but not over-react 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 are seldom representative of the attitudes or opinions of the majority of people. Consequently, while they can be useful as examples or 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

2014 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.

CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

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

Very satisfied	328	68.9%
Somewhat satisfied	113	23.7
Neutral	29	6.1
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	.6
Very dissatisfied	3	.6
Have not visited/Don't know	[104	17.9%]

2. If you have participated in any of the recreation programs offered by the city (such as softball leagues, Ramona Park Beach, etc.), how satisfied are you with these programs?

Very satisfied	82	53.9%
Somewhat satisfied	41	27
Neutral	27	17.8
Somewhat dissatisfied	1	.7
Very dissatisfied	1	.7
Have not participated/Don't know	[428	73.8%]

3. If you have used any of the city bikeways or trailways within the last year, how satisfied are you with the condition of these facilities?

Very satisfied	249	70.3%
Somewhat satisfied	78	22
Neutral	18	5.1
Somewhat dissatisfied	6	1.7
Very dissatisfied	3	.8
Have not used/Don't know	[226	39%]

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

Too much	21	4.6%
Just enough	365	79.3
Too little	74	16.1
Don't know	[121	20.9%]

5. If you have city water, is there a problem with the quality of the drinking water?		
No, it is not a problem	346	66.3%
Yes, slight problem	106	20.4
Yes, moderate problem	39	7.5
Yes, severe problem (See Appendix B)	30	5.8
Don't have city water/Don't know	[60	10.3%]
6. Have you utilized the Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center in the last year?		
Yes	186	34%
No	361	66
Don't know	[33	5.7%]

HUMAN SERVICES

7. If you have utilized the services offered at the Portage Senior Center, how satisfied are you with these services?		
Very satisfied	71	58.7%
Somewhat satisfied	28	23.1
Neutral	18	14.9
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	2.5
Very dissatisfied	1	.8
Have not used/Don't know.	[459	79.1%]
8. Is there a problem with illegal drug use in your neighborhood?		
No, it is not a problem	274	79.9%
Yes, slight problem	34	9.9
Yes, moderate problem	28	8.2
Yes, severe problem	7	2.0
Don't know	[237	40.9%]
9. Is there a problem with underage drinking in your neighborhood?		
No, it is not a problem	267	82.2%
Yes, slight problem	43	13.2
Yes, moderate problem	14	4.3
Yes, severe problem	1	.3
Don't know	[255	44%]

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

10. If you have utilized the Fall Leaf Pickup Program in the last year, how satisfied are you with the program?

Very satisfied	337	72.3%
Somewhat satisfied	90	19.3
Neutral	11	2.4
Somewhat dissatisfied	20	4.3
Very dissatisfied	8	1.7
Have not participated/Don't know	[114	19.7%]

11. If you have utilized the Spring Cleanup Program (household junk collection) in the last year, how satisfied are you with the program?

Very satisfied	360	76.6%
Somewhat satisfied	79	16.8
Neutral	12	2.6
Somewhat dissatisfied	13	2.8
Very dissatisfied	6	1.3
Have not participated/Don't know	[110	19%]

12. If you have utilized the weekly Curbside Recycling Program in the last year, how satisfied are you with the program?

Very satisfied	393	81.2%
Somewhat satisfied	71	14.7
Neutral	8	1.7
Somewhat dissatisfied	8	1.7
Very dissatisfied	4	.8
Have not participated/Don't know	[96	16.6%]

13. If you have utilized the Curbside Brush Collection Program, how satisfied are you with the program?

Very satisfied	276	65.7%
Somewhat satisfied	88	21
Neutral	21	5
Somewhat dissatisfied	23	5.5
Very dissatisfied	12	2.9
Have not used/Don't know	[160	27.6%]

14. If you have utilized the 9-1-1 emergency dispatch services in Portage, how satisfied were you with the service?

Very satisfied	116	81.1%
Somewhat satisfied	12	8.4
Neutral	10	7
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	2.1
Very dissatisfied	2	1.4
Have not used/Don't know	[437	75.3%]

15. How satisfied are you with the street snow removal?

Very satisfied	172	30.9%
Somewhat satisfied	239	43
Neutral	36	6.5
Somewhat dissatisfied	78	14
Very dissatisfied	31	5.6
Don't know	[24	4.1%]

16. How satisfied are you with the condition of the pavement on roads and streets in Portage?

Very satisfied	94	16.7%
Somewhat satisfied	234	41.6
Neutral	76	13.5
Somewhat dissatisfied	125	22.2
Very dissatisfied	34	6
Don't know	[17	2.9%]

17. 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?

Very satisfied	248	68.7%
Somewhat satisfied	45	12.5
Neutral	48	13.3
Somewhat dissatisfied	10	2.8
Very dissatisfied (See Appendix B)	10	2.8
Have had no contact/Don't know	[219	37.8%]

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

No, it is not a problem	396	88.8%
Yes, there is a slight problem	36	8.1
Yes, moderate problem	12	2.7
Yes, severe problem	2	.4
Don't know	[134	23.1%]

19. Do you think there is a problem with the level of fire protection in Portage?		
No, it is not a problem	402	97.3%
Yes, slight problem	6	1.5
Yes, moderate problem	5	1.2
Yes, severe problem	0	0
Don't know	[167	28.8%]
20. Due to the state of the economy, the city may need to increase taxes or further reduce services. If it becomes necessary, would you rather the city ...		
Maintain services and raise taxes?	246	59.4%
Maintain taxes and further reduce services?	168	40.6
Don't know	[166	28.6%]
21. If city services must be reduced, which service(s) would you suggest? (See Appendix B)		
22. How do you <i>currently</i> obtain information about what is going on in Portage city government? (Check all that apply.)		
City website	109	19.2%
<i>Portager</i> newsletter	472	83.2%
Public Media Network	71	12.5%
Contact with city employees	29	5.1%
<i>Kalamazoo Gazette / Portage Gazette</i>	334	58.9%
Local television and / or radio	364	64.2%
Other (See Appendix B)	22	3.9%
None of the above	13	2.3%
23. What is your <i>preferred</i> method of obtaining information about what is going on in Portage city government? (Check all that apply.)		
City website	100	17.6%
<i>Portager</i> newsletter	465	81.7%
Public Media Network (AT&T U-verse or Charter Cable)	72	12.7%
Contact with city employees	28	4.9%
<i>Kalamazoo Gazette / Portage Gazette</i>	298	52.45
Local television and / or radio	312	54.8%
Social media (e.g., NIXLE, Facebook, Twitter)	31	5.4%
Other (See Appendix B)	12	2.1%
None of the above	10	1.8%

24. As a source of information about what is going on in Portage city government, how important is the Portager newsletter?		
Very important	322	59.2%
Somewhat important	193	35.5
Not important	29	5.3
Don't know	[36	6.2%]
25. As a source of information about what is going on in Portage city government, how important is the City of Portage website?		
Very important	119	31.6%
Somewhat important	176	46.7
Not important	82	21.8
Don't know	[203	35%]
26. Do you think you are getting good services for your city tax dollars?		
Yes	456	89.4%
No (Please specify why not) (See Appendix B)	54	10.6
Don't know	[70	12.1%]

NEIGHBORHOODS

27. Is there a problem with the condition of neighborhood homes and yards in Portage?		
No, it is not a problem	304	55.3%
Yes, slight problem	186	33.8
Yes, moderate problem	45	8.2
Yes, severe problem (Please specify what) (See App B)	15	2.7
Don't know	[30	5.2%]
28. Has the condition of your neighborhood changed in the last five years?		
It is better than it was	55	10.2%
It is about the same	417	77.4
It is worse than it was	67	12.4
Don't know	[41	7.1%]

TRANSPORTATION

29. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on South Westnedge Avenue?		
No, it is not a problem	162	30.1%
Yes, slight problem	225	41.8
Yes, moderate problem	111	20.6
Yes, severe problem	40	7.4
Don't know	[42	7.2%]

30. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on any Portage streets other than South Westnedge Avenue?

Yes (Please specify streets)	(See Appendix B)	162	35.5%
No		294	64.5
Don't know		[124	21.4%]

POTENTIAL NEW or EXPANDED SERVICES

The City of Portage is interested in gauging support for the following potential new or expanded services. Although detailed proposals specifying levels of cost and service have yet to be developed, the city would like to obtain a level of citizen interest before proceeding.

For each question, please circle the response that best reflects your opinion:

31. I would support the creation of a dog park in Portage that would be supported by user fees.

Strongly Agree		73	15.1%
Agree		158	32.6
Neutral		150	30.9
Disagree		54	11.1
Strongly Disagree		50	10.3
No Opinion		[95	16.4%]

32. I would support the improvement of drinking water quality even if it costs me more in water fees.

Strongly Agree		53	10.3%
Agree		139	26.9
Neutral		137	26.5
Disagree		123	23.8
Strongly Disagree		65	12.6
No Opinion		[63	10.9%]

33. I would support the expansion of the Portage Senior Center even if it cost me more in taxes or fees.

Strongly Agree		28	5.4%
Agree		90	17.4
Neutral		187	36.2
Disagree		127	24.6
Strongly Disagree		85	16.4
No Opinion		[58	10.9%]

34. I would support the addition of a second household junk collection in the fall even if it cost me more in taxes or fees.

Strongly Agree	36	6.9%
Agree	104	19.9
Neutral	102	19.5
Disagree	171	32.8
Strongly Disagree	109	20.9
No Opinion	[58	10%]

35. I would support the creation of a county-wide consolidated dispatch (9-1-1) center even if it cost me more in taxes or fees.

Strongly Agree	42	8%
Agree	84	16.1
Neutral	193	37
Disagree	126	24.1
Strongly Disagree	77	14.8
No Opinion	[58	10%]

36. I would support the enhancement of public transportation (Metro Transit) even if it cost me more in taxes or fees.

Strongly Agree	27	5.1%
Agree	77	14.5
Neutral	159	29.9
Disagree	151	28.4
Strongly Disagree	117	22
No Opinion	[49	8.4%]

37. I would support an increase in neighborhood code enforcement even if it cost me more in taxes or fees.

Strongly Agree	34	6.5%
Agree	107	20.6
Neutral	173	33.3
Disagree	132	25.4
Strongly Disagree	74	12.8
No Opinion	[60	10.3%]

GENERAL OPINION

38. In general, what do you feel are the best two features of Portage? (See Appendix B)

39. Looking at the next ten years, what do you think is the single most important problem facing Portage? (See Appendix B)

DEMOGRAPHICS

40. About how many years have you lived in Portage?		
Less than 1 year	4	.7%
1 to 4 years	33	5.9
5 to 9 years	50	8.9
10 or more years	474	84.5
Don't know	[19	3.3%]
41. Are you male or female?		
Male	312	56.6%
Female	239	43.4%
N/A	[29	5%]
42. What is your age, please? Are you...		
29 years or younger	9	1.6%
30-39	22	3.9
40-49	66	11.8
50-54	34	6.1
55-59	69	12.4
60 years or over	358	64.2
Don't know	[22	3.8%]
43. How would you classify your racial or ethnic heritage?		
White/non-Hispanic	533	96.9%
Black/African American	4	.7
Alaskan Native, American Indian, Eskimo	2	.4
Asian American or Pacific Islander	4	.7
Hispanic	3	.5
International/non-US resident	0	0
Multiracial	0	0
Other (please specify) (See Appendix B)	4	.7
Don't know	[30	5.2%]
44. What is the highest level of education you have completed?		
High school or less	83	14.9%
Some college/technical school	169	30.4
Bachelor's degree	161	29
Graduate degree	143	25.7
Don't know	[24	4.1%]

45. Which of the following best describes where you live?		
Single-family home	486	86.2%
Mobile home	8	1.4
Apartment	25	4.4
Condominium	37	6.6
Other (See Appendix B)	8	1.4
Don't know	[16	2.8%]
46. Using Centre Avenue and South Westnedge Avenue as dividing streets, do you live in the northwest, northeast, southwest, or southeast portion of Portage?		
Northwest (Near Crossroads Mall)	243	43.7%
Northeast (Near the airport)	56	10.1
Southwest (Near the state game area)	98	17.6
Southeast (Near the lakes)	159	28.6
Don't know	[24	4.1%]
47. Which of the following categories represents your total family income for the last year before taxes?		
Less than \$25,000	54	10.8%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	106	21.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	127	25.5
\$75,000 to \$99,999	80	16.1
\$100,000 or more	131	26.3
Don't know	82	14.1
48. If you have access to the Internet from home, what type of Internet service do you have?		
No internet service	53	9.7%
Dial-up	12	2.2
DSL	82	15.1
Satellite	5	.9
Cable	369	67.8
Other (See Appendix B)	23	4.2
Don't know	[36	6.2%]
49. Do you have conventional land line telephone service or cell phone service in your home?		
Land line only	59	10.6%
Both land line and cell phone	475	85.1
Cell phone only	24	4.3
Don't know	[22	3.8%]
50. 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 assistance. Just put the survey in the postage-paid return envelope and drop it in the mail.

Appendix B (Confidential: for Council and Designees only)

**2014 Portage Community Survey
Responses to Open-ended Questions**

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

Bad taste, excessive minerals and occasional sand

Brown 2-3 times/ year

Cloudy, very nasty tasting water. Do not use for drinking

Cost is too high`

Discolored, stains

Do not drink the city water as too much crap added to the city water

Does not taste good. Not even sure if it is safe to drink

Filled with iron, very distasteful, periodically runs brown

Floaties hard and tastes like Clorox bleach

Fluoride is added-- Fluoride is toxic and does not prevent tooth decay. It is an industrial waste by product--stop wasting money

Get rusty water sometimes

Getting small sand-like particles in water. I don't drink it.

High calcium, lime deposits on our utensils/ cookware. Commonly use filtered water to drink and cook with!

High mineral content, cost- too high-Kzoo taking advantage of us

However I'm discouraged by the cost of water, who knew it, was so expensive?

I can often smell or taste chlorine

I change filter once a month always black with crud pressure also drops if I don't change

Iron, sand-- I have to flush water heater 4 times/ year-- sand inside water closets

It isn't Det. Bad after taste, destroys hair, yellow clothes, dishes, not good.

Lots of iron, I have to by an iron filter

Lots of rust in lines, and ruining clothes and appliances. I do not drink it because of foul taste and iron smell.

Low pressure and volume, pink algae

Makes me nauseous so only drink and cook with bottled water

My water smells like rotten eggs

Occasional sludge type substance at faucet mouth

Off color-sediment in the water at times
Often has sediment
Often have rust
Orange on occasion
Our ice cubes are orange. We drink bottled water
Rust
Rust
Rust color
Rust in the water and the cost of the water per gallon
Rust staining very high
Seems to be more iron in the water now--- needs higher cost salt in water
Smells like bleach, please see enclosure
Sometimes it looks yellow, cloudy and makes me question safe to drink?
Sometimes it smells
Sometimes there is too much rust in the water
Taste and rust!
Taste has gone downhill over past 5 years. Get urine colored water too often
Taste, cloudy
Taste
Tastes lousy, my wife won't drink it, I can tolerate it.
Tastes terrible
The water has a chemical taste. The water is not clear. I believe the water comes from pond near Westnedge Street and Romence Rd. Ugh
The water in the toilet is often yellow after flushing the hydrants and after any repair. It does not bother me but it bothers my wife because it is so often
The water is brown for a day
The water rate is too high- can't afford to use our underground sprinklers
Too hard
Too much iron
Very hard
Very hard H₂O
Very hard water
Water is rust on an intermittent basis- There is no solution. Very frustrating!
Water is yellow to orange. Too much iron--every home needs water softener

Water just fine but PSA of water is too high for dust the past few years

Water tests off the scale in hardness. Does not have a good taste. **DO NOT DRINK IT!**

We have our own well

We installed a reverse osmosis water filter system, and also we use soft water

With regularity we get rust and particles in our water. We only drink filtered water

You stopped the senior water discount!

17. 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? [Very dissatisfied-specify]

Courteous staff

Found employees in tax collection and assessment to be unhelpful disingenuous and deceiving

I had water running all winter due to broken pipe in street somewhere. I was told by one employee I would be compensated on future bill and told by water Dept. I would not. Dept. head lied and told city council people would only see a \$3 increase in bill. My water increase from \$40.00 to \$60.00

I have made several calls about different issues and never seem to get calls back. I always have to recall

Problem with water meter was never resolved. Corrective action proposed by technician was not authorized

Property assessor flipping me from one department to another

Still have cones in front of house covering a hole after 3 months

Unwilling to go the extra mile to help you in any way

Very impressed with Terry Urban/commissioner and Chris Barnes. Live on Oakview and the city has been very helpful with drain problem

With the spring water issue the older lady was very rude on the phone

Would like hydrant flushers to use a hose and run water down the street instead of my basement

21. Which services would you cut?

Of parks, # of leaf collections

% reduced

2 leaf pick-ups instead of 3?

Administrative services

Administrative staff

Administrative staff

Adult recreation, not including the bikeways

All

All but police and fire

All non function related services

All of the city employees as a whole

All of the services seem too important to cut

Any payment to the city planning commission should be terminated

Auxiliary services-- what do you mean by further? Need to know what services have already been reduced

Before i would look to waste

Bike trail maintenance

Brush collection

Brush collection

Brush collection and spring cleanup

Brush pick up

Brush pick up (but not for storm damage) need community garbage service

Brush pick up i don't use it

Brush pick up program-- over decoration at city center

Brush pick up, do leaves twice instead of three times

Brush pick up, not to be confused with leaf pick-up which helps keep neighborhoods looking clean-bags a good idea

Brush pickup

Building dept, planning and economic development staff

Bush pickup, spring clean up

Bush/ limb removal

Care of public parks

City ceo's
City council
City council-joke
City hall office employees
City management
City staff
Collections recycle and pick up services
Combine trash pick up 1 vender
Control employee costs, reduce park acquisition
Corner lots (park, plants bushes) recycle
Curbside brush collections
Cultural opportunities, recreation programs
Cultural programs, parks and recreation
Cultural, no dog parks
Curb brush pickup
Curbside brush
Curbside brush
Curbside brush collection
Curbside brush collection, spring clean up program
Curbside brush pickup
Curbside collection
Curbside recycling
Curbside recycling and garbage disposal should be globally contracted, it doesn't make sense to have it 6-8 different trucks driving down the road wasting gas and tearing up the road other cities are much smarter
Curbside recycling- it is available through garbage company
Curbside recycle to biweekly
Curbside trash pickup- brush pickup. I think citizens can figure this out if necessary on their own
Cut head counts or stop increasing salary
Cut out some of the parks. Keep a few of the main ones open. Cut down on the number of streetlights
Cut pay of city manager and landscaping of city property
Cut recreation programs offered by the city
Cut top administrative positions
Decrease the board

Difficult question--only cost of living rises for employees
Discretionary/non essential- should be a list to categorize
Don't discuss political views on votes etc
Don't know
Don't know-- hard decisions? On a fixed income and would not like to see taxes increase but value the services provided
Don't know i pay way too much in taxes and don't use any services
Don't know what to suggest
Don't know which is best to reduce
Don't know?
Don't waste money on flags like the portage 50th anniv. Flags--didn't need so many!
Don't water boulevards
Equal % reduction across all departments
Expensive surveys?
Find the services which are under utilized and cut them back
Gate openers and closers at parks
Getting rid of council members- and same city hall employees- way too many at the city hall- way too many city cars are driven around
Hard call... Leave it to the professionals
Have people pay for services they use
Hazardous waste services
Hazardous waste, fewer leaf pick up days
I don't believe the city streets needed sweeping on labor day! Big waste of \$.

I think cuts, if necessary, would be the bike trails and parks. The recycle could be reduced to monthly

I want to look at the cost of each service

I would need a detailed listing of all services to make an informed answer

I would need much research before attempting to answer this.

It would not be snow removal!

Junk pickup & brush pickup

Junk pick-up, brush pick-up, (don't stop leaf pick-up)

Keep at recent level with fewer office workers

Leaf and brush pick up reduced

Leaf pick up

Less pick-up services, i.e. Brush, spring cleaning pick-up, etc.-things people could do on their own- recycle

Library

Library, senior center

Maintain services at the level they are at

May close few parks--too many

Maybe ones not specific to well-being of residents

My taxes are over \$700 per month. \$8,600 per year. That's bullshit. Cut anything you want

News and paper

None

None at this time in the 9 years I've lived here, I've observed city reducing/consolidating as needed

None don't spend what you don't have

None-- increase taxes as needed to maintain

None- no services should be reduced-- lets maintain

None of them
None of them should have to be reduced
None. The services are what makes it great to live here
Not sure
Not sure
Not sure
Not sure... They are all important
Of the 3 leaf pickup dates you might want to eliminate the first one`
Office personnel and or office workload scrutinized and reduced
Our parks and schools are good, our "festival" are probably not cost effective
Parks
Parks
Parks
Parks
Parks
Parks
Parks
Parks and bikeways, wage freezes, cut back hours and services
Parks and rec
Parks and rec must be below safety/ roads
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation programs
Parks and recreation programs?
Parks and trails
Parks bike trailways
Parks dept
Parks should be commercialized, snow plowing should be commercialized
Parks, events
Parks, keep police and fire protection
Police
Police

Portage schools must improve service vs tax level
Privatize where it can be done, raise user fees
Proportion reduction across all services where possible
Public gardens/ landscape- make volunteer activity
Public service are paid too much/ pensions too much
Quarterly brush pick-up
Quit buying equipment for your water/sewer contractor to use
Raise my taxes and keep the services
Recreation
Recreation programs
Recreation programs
Recreation/sports
Recreational programs
Recycle & trash pickup
Recycle boxes
Recycle to twice a month or once a month
Recycling
Recycling
Recycling and drop newsletter
Recycling brush pick up
Recycling could be 2x a month, parks, not sure what senior services there are
Recycling to every other week or 1 a month
Recycling to every other week- park services
Recycling, brush pickup, spring clean up, get rid of Portager newsletter
Recycling, spring cleanup
Recycle, recreation
Reduce city hall positions
Reduce city hall staff
Reduce cultural activities to minimum
Reduce parks and rec. Close ice rink, summer entertainment
Reduce pay to city employees
Reduce personnel- many outdoor workers sit in trucks or stand around while some work
Reduce personnel; salary increases
Reduce salary of managers

Reduce tax and reduce services
Reduce wages of highest paid city officials-reduce bonuses
Reduced brush pickup
Road
Road repair (major projects)
School
Senior services
Senior center
Senior center
Senior center; events; parks
Service should not be reduced
Services come at night
Services for which i can buy. Brush removal but those can't e.g. Police, fire, parks etc
Shorten hours available at city hall; stop the parades; i.e. Memorial Day parade
Snow removal from streets (particularly when the snow is dumped at my driveway- 2 typical complaint from corner home owners!)

Some of the city employees
Spring clean up
Spring cleaning
Spring cleaning
Spring cleanup program and curbside brush collection
Stop adding medians to the center of roads that require upkeep/cost
Stop raises to higher level employees. Snr citizen don't get raises
Stop the leaf pick-up just do the last two
Stop the portage and other unnecessary waste of paper
Street cleaning
Street repair
Street sweeping
Summer entertainment, parks and rec
T know what all services they provide
Tax collection and assessor
Taxes are hard to pay now
Taxes raised but only marginally after hearing is in council
The garbage pick up

The less critical to city function

The news letter

Traffic ticketing, busting teenage parties

Trails, parks, bike paths

Uncertain

Uncertain

Unsure without further research

Using fire engines to go to grocery store wouldn't a fire car be a whole lot cheaper than fuel guzzling diesel truck

Weekly curbside services; reduce bike ways

Welfare

What departments demonstrate inefficient use of resources

Would prefer to see a list of services to consider before making a choice

Would require more analysis than i have data for

Your pick

22. How do you currently obtain information about what is going on in Portage city government? [Other-specify]

Channel 3

Coffee shop conversation

Community

Friends

Friends (word of mouth)

Internet

Internet

Internet

Local residents

M live

M live

M live

M live

M-Live

Neighbor on board

Neighbors

Neighbors

Neighbors

Neighbors and friends

Neighbors and associates

Radio

Word of mouth

Word of mouth

Word of mouth, experience and results of others

wwmt.com

23. What is your preferred method of obtaining information about what is going on in Potage city government? [Other-specify]

Don't care

Email

Internet

M live

M live

M live

Mailing and flyers sent by Portage city

Neighbors and associates

Not everyone has computer, smartphones

Word of mouth, bill board

26. Do you think you are getting good services for your city tax dollars? [No-specify]

As a retire, taxes are too high for my income

As a senior my taxes way too high. Most goes to public schools. Can we not get a reduction as we age so we can stay in our homes?

As a super senior, my taxes are becoming a real burden

Better roads/ replacement needed

But I still think my property taxes are too high

City council is running this city. We have no city manager (lost a good one) because of council and their own personal agenda

Curbs not in good shape on copper oaks

Depends on staff person

Emphasis on tax base enhancement (commercial, residential) with no increase in city services

High taxes (lake property) little return

I do believe that my taxes are too high

I live on SS

I think I would always feel that I don't get enough services out of what I pay taxes for
I think you could use labor and material waste such as placing a dead end sign in front of woods on my street. If people can't see mature trees they should not be driving in the first place, also the pavement ends and the mature trees begin

I would like better snow plowing-- it used to be great

Iffy opinion here. Some doubt about tax level vs. service

Living on a private street (condo development) we pay taxes and get no brush pickup, leaf pick up, or snow plowing. We have to pay the condo fees

My taxes are about 5,000 should have good services

No traffic control, out dated and missing signs on east shore drive. Missing speed limit bike trail sign near Cox Dr.

Not enough offered, water bill too expensive

Not with snow removal this year

Other communities in our area pay lower taxes

Our roads are terrible. MLK drive is a disgrace. REDO. Band-Aids aren't enough

Our street is in terrible shape-- some neighbors let grass grow a foot high

Over taxed

Poor maintenance. Too many areas in construction. Do one area; finish it sooner and more on to next. Why are they putting cement center road curbs on the potage Rd. construction at Zylman Rd and in front of Daane's? Very bad idea. They are a road hazard, especially in the

winter, big waste of \$ and time

Roads are not being cleared in the winter in a timely manner

Roads suck

Services are adequate why no middle choice here?

Snow is not cleared at the right time in the winters

Snow removal

Snow removal has gone way down in quality and frequency to the point residential roads is nearly impassible during any snow event days after it has ended

Snow removal on our street is very poor

Snow removal was terrible!! Took way too long to get plowed, roads were icy. Even Westnedge was not plowed!

Sometimes

Sometimes yes but there needs to be accountability for spending

Streets in poor repair, no street lights on Woodland Dr.

Taxes are high enough

Taxes are too high for benefits we receive

Taxes are too high plus special assessments

Taxes here are very high in contrast to other cities where we have lived (services don't reflect)

The snow removal was horrible. Even if it's bad secondary roads should have at least 1 pass done. Some of us have jobs that don't care about the snow and you can lose your job for not showing up. There is an occurrence system.

The taxes are very high--will probably move

The value is not there compared to other cities I have lived in. People on fixed income should be given a break taxation should be fixed on purchase price and you should not be taxed out of your home

Too much gov't and too many bureaucrats try privitization for services

Waste i.e., replacement of a perfectly good playground set at the Milham entrance to the Celery Flats

Water- should get their own system and not rely on Kalamazoo and pay big

We again live on Private drive pay for some services that we cannot use

We are getting good services but taxes are too high

We pay a lot of taxes where we live; we personally don't get anything for it.

We pay larger share and use less

With water rates rising yearly taxes should not go up-service should be excellent

Would prefer parks i.e. Bishops Bolt West Lake Nature Preserve be better maintained

Yes, except for snow removal for the elderly...snow from street is pushed into our driveways

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

6737 Cypress-vacant- yard work is sporadic, animal entering through holes in roof etc.

9609 Woodlawn Dr.! Look at the police call records. I've lived across from this dump for 9 years.

A certain house needs to have...and another needs to have an illegal license plate off--
some people neglect their yards

Appearance and maintenance

City seems to rely on neighborhood to call and report yard violations-- should be the
"staffs" job to ID violations

East drive has old garages that are near falling door (3414 East Shore Dr.)

Enforcement of lawn mowing degrading curbs-need stop signs

Foreclosed homes and Blight

Home on Edington-- hoarder lives there-- fire hazard, not fair to other neighbors

Idaho/Dakato St. neighborhoods

Junk cars, un mowed lawns, misc. junk

Lawn upkeep & edging

Lawns are not mowed, cars are parked on lawns, and snow is not removed from
sidewalks!!! When calls are made to city, residents are given 2, 3, 4... chances to take care of the
situation... seems as though police could take the addresses down

Let's lawn go--city won't serve notice-- people can't afford to keep house appearance up
but taxes remain high

Mr. Mayor, Question #27 of the Portage Citizen survey deals with the condition of the
neighborhoods. I am seriously concerned with what is happening and the lack of seemingly any
enforcement of City ordinances. My answer to 27 is as follows: 8430 Newell's Lane: Unused car
in driveway and small closed trailer on lawn. 8423 Newell's Lane: Camper trailer stored on lawn.
8438 & 8312 Newell's lane: cars on lawn overnight and camper trailer stored at side of house at
8312. 8322 Newell's Lane: Frequently a tractor and semi-trailer are parked on the property. 8236:
boat stored on lawn. 8145: camper trailer stored next to fence. Behind house at SE corner of
Centre and Newell's Lane (Actually on NE Parcel to the south) are stored recreational units that
change from time to time. 7910 Lovers Lane: Trailer stored on lawn. Frequently a truck is stored
there also. House between 7816 and 7832 has two vehicles stored off the driveway up against a
fence and one vehicle on front lawn. The front porch has a large amount of what looks like waste
items stored there. 7843 Lovers Lane: truck stored on lawn. 13?? Centre: Not to hair salon. The

front yard has been turned into a flower/ vegetable garden but there is no control over 3 foot high weeds. 1414 Centre: Three to four cars are parked on the lawn area. Next to 8022 Oakside: car stored on lawn. 8131 Oakside: camper stored on lawn. 2110 Prosperity: Vehicle stored on lawn. 2119 Prosperity: truck and boat on trailer stored on lawn. 1822 Thrushwood: boat stored on lawn. 1814 Thrushwood: boat stored next to garage. Mr. Mayor, above are the streets I love on and travel on a daily basis. These are way too many violations for such a small segment of Portage streets. If it takes a citizen's complaint to start action then please consider this letter to you as my formal complaint and request for action to stop these violations. Don't just take action in my neighborhood but get Elizabeth Money to check the whole city. Respectfully.

My neighborhood is maintained reasonably well-not all neighborhoods obviously

Non running cars in driveways and items thrown around yards

Not in my neighborhood

One home

One owner in 5000 block of Bronson Bluff

People are not taking care of their property. Many people not taking care of their investments

People leave Xmas lights up all year. Grass is not always mowed

Rental properties need more scrutiny as to up keep lawn maintenance, cars, general appearance

Some homes are too close to each other

Too many restrictions

Too tall grass at a lot of homes. Run down houses. Junk in yards. Too many foreclosures

Vacant homes, fire damage, no repair in 12 months (Milham and 12th street)

Whitby ave.

30. Is there a problem with the flow of traffic on any Portage streets other than South Westnedge? [Yes-specify]

12th and Centre

12th street when sharing w/ bicycles-- wider bike area would be great if possible

Angling between Romence and Centre

Angling Rd seems to be a drug strip

Angling, Romence, need flashing light people do not stop- children in area

Any street with schools where parents pick up and drop off students- example- Oakland Drive Academy- long lines onto Oakland Drive

Bypassing Oakland drive and going on Westnedge

Center @ S.West, Center @ Shaver

Center and Oakland Drive intersection

Center E Brookwood needs a traffic signal

Center Street

Center, Milham, Romence

Center/Westnedge, Milham/Oakland

Centre

Centre and Oakland intersection -eastbound on Centre turning north on Oakland --also traffic entering from business on N Oakland there

Centre Angling/ Centre and 12th

Centre Ave- excess speed west of Oakland Dr.

Centre by high school

Centre, Lovers Lane, portage. Take middle lanes out

Centre near Shaver/ Westnedge

Centre St.

Centre St. can be a problem with going to work and school and return home

Centre St. near Westnedege

Centre Street

Centre/ Q Ave

Constitution and W Milham-- too many blast through the red lights

Construction during the first of school

Depends on the time of day

Dillard at Milham

East Shore Drive, no speed limit sign east of Cox Drive

Entering portage road from Osthout is problem certain times of day-- light might help there instead of the light at Oakland and Shaver Rd.

Heavy vehicles should be kept off the secondary roads (Romence, Angling)

I don't understand why all construction to the south of town is happening at the same time and continuing after the start of school

Idaho, Oregon, and Milham before and after school

In neighborhoods should not be allowed to park on both sides of the street/ becomes congested

Kilgore Road turning left (south) on to Westnedge!

Kilgore should be a traffic light at Bronson and Kilgore

Light @center and Oakland

Light at Moorsbridge and Center constantly doesn't work by car activation

Lours Lane speed control mostly nonexistent unless PPD is present it's a drag strip most of the time

Melody St.

Meredith St. is like Indy 500 during AM &PM rush hours

Milham

Milham

Milham at Oakland

Milham between 131 and Oakland

Milham going east at Oakland

Milham near PNHS @rush hour

Milham, Angling to Oakland, AM rush hour

Milham, Oakland area

Milham, Oakland, Romence

Milham, sometimes

Milham/S. Westnedge

Narrow streets like Wildberry dangerous

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland

Oakland & Milham (from intersection north to I94)
Oakland @ Milham and @ Centre
Oakland and Center St.
Oakland and Milham
Oakland and Milham intersection
Oakland and Milham and I-94
Oakland and Shaver
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr., Milham Rd
Oakland Dr., Romence Rd
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Dr.
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive
Oakland Drive (Peak times)
Oakland drives at Center. Light time for Oakland is too short
Oakland Drive at Milham, northbound light isn't long enough to get backed up traffic through it
Oakland Drive between I-94 and Romence
Oakland drive between Milham and Kilgore Rds. during rush hour and high peak times
Oakland Drive by 94- everyday @5 and Sundays
Oakland Drive can be congested at certain times of the day-typically morning and late afternoon
Oakland Drive, Romence Road
Oakland drive, Sprinkle, Portage Rd.
Oakland drive/Portage Rd
Oakland from Milham to Kilgore
Oakland Milham center

Oakland North around Milham on weekday mornings
Oakland, Centre, Romence
Oakland, Kilgore
Oakland, Milham
Oakland, Milham, Centre
Oakland/ Centre
Oakland/ Sprinkle
Osterhoust to Portage Road left hand turn will kill people
Portage Road
Portage and Sprinkle @rush hours
Portage- between Kilgore and Milham
Portage-- increased volume (south of construction)
Portage near I-94
Portage Road- no enforcement of speed too less lights and don't need the tree and flower islands
in the turn lanes
Portage on 4-6 pm
Portage Rd
Portage Rd.
Portage Rd
Portage Rd.
Portage Rd. between 94 and airport
Portage Rd. by I94
Portage Rd. - Sprinkle Rd.
Portage Rd., Centre Street, Oakland Dr.
Portage Rd/ Sprinkle Rd
Portage Road
Portage Road has become very busy
Portage Road, Oakland
Portage St.
Portage St. between Zylman and Kilgore
Portage, Centre
Right now, Portage Rd
Romence
Romence

Romence and Oakland Dr., lights

Romence- Milham

Romence Rd

Romence Rd. and Westnedge- Milham Rd. and Oakland Dr.

Romence Rd., Milham Rd.

Romence, Melody and Shaver, old Centre, entering New Centre

Romence, Oakland (especially by Milham where it goes into the other lane) people try to race each other by Milham Meadows. Romence is hard for kids to cross to go to West. Need more police presence to slow drivers down especially when dark.

Romence/ Milham

Romence/ Milham

Rosewood Ave

Several intersections the lights are way too long and you wait when there is no traffic

Shaver and Vanderbilt Ave-need a light or widening

Shaver Rd

Shaver Road

South on Oakland @ Milham

Speed

Speed

Speed limit too low on Milham between Oakland and 12th street, needs to be 45

Speed of portage road around West Lake too high

Speeding on 12th street near the elementary school

Sprinkle

Sprinkle Rd

Sprinkle Rd. too fast

Stadium, Oakland

Traffic lights working during the early morning hours

The new billboard in front of Zimmerman has been a great hazard to the school busses coming in and out of Zimm!!! Please remove it

Too many people running red lights and not stopping at stop signs. Also, speeding. I go to Chicago often and they drive better over there than here.

Too much speeding on Milham near the roundabout

Travel to and from Portage Central high school. I fear travel in morning. Have already suffered hit by student

We have newer traffic lights but they go out of adjustment way too much

Wes bound Milham and Oakland afternoons

West of Oakland and north of Centre high crossing--lack of

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

A large (but contained) shopping area. A variety of schools and churches.
A nice city to live in- clean environment. Excellent school an economy
A safe place to live. Neighborhoods, homes.
Activities offered by city, city services
Area business, bike way
Area parks are very nice, up to date structure--current not run down
Attitude/aptitude, reasonable infrastructure
Available shopping, restaurants
Beautification of main parks, people friendly & bike friendly roads and bike paths
Beautiful gardens, library
Beautiful parks, boulevards with trees
Beautiful parks, very good services
Beautiful trees and parks relatively lower taxes than other municipalities
Beautiful, friendly city
Becoming more diverse, good community to raise a family. Well insulated from outside world-- wars, poverty, etc. do bother portage citizens
Bi-centennial trail, schools, parks, library
Bicycle paths, schools
Bicycle trails, police and fire protection + safety
Bike paths, lakes/ recreation
Bike paths, parks
Bike paths, safety- low crime
Bike trail and library
Bike trail and parks
Bike trail path. Very good schools
Bike trail system
Bike trail, spring clean-up
Bike trails and parks
Bike trails and parks
Bike trails and parks, safe neighborhoods
Bike trails-- well kept, landscaped. Streets...
Bike trails, Celery Flats

Bike trails, maintenance of public areas, planting of trees, etc.
Bike trails, parks
Bike trails, police protection
Bike trails, schools
Bike trails, schools
Bike trails, walking trails
Bike trails. Low taxes (good bang for buck)
Bike/ walking trails. Schools
Bikeway/ walking trails are second to none. I feel safe in the city of portage
Bikeways
Bikeways, access to stores and services
Bicentennial Trail, Recycle @ curbside
Brush and junk pick-up
Brush pickup, trails
Business
Caring about community, trying to improve portage
Celery Flats and paved trails. Parks and lakes
Celery Flats
Celery Flats paths and green spaces
Celery Flats, library
Celery Flats, parks, bike trails
Centennial Park
City bikeways and trail ways, Portage Public Schools
City essential services maintained well. School system should strive to maintain if not increase its standards
City hall, overall attractiveness of the physical city
City is clean & relatively safe
City Lake with country atmosphere, good quality schools / education
City parks, portage library
City services and library
City services and parks
City services, low crime
City wide pick up (recycling spring cleanup) and entertainment/ cultural events
Civic pride around city hall, library, walking paths Celery Flats and Lovers Lane path. Parks

Clean and attractive, parks
Clean city, good streets
Clean neighborhoods- selection of stores and restaurants
Clean-- not much litter, parks and trees
Clean, beautiful
Clean, safe
Clean, safe roads and lush, green trails
Clean, up to date
Clean, well-kept area to live in, most people friendly and helpful
Clean, well-kept city. Good law & fire protection
Cleanliness
Cleanliness and services
Cleanliness, civility, modern
Clean nice looking city and facilities, great recreational facilities
Close to everything and have everything, shopping etc. Clean and neat overall
Close to everything, no matter what I want or need. Also close to Bronson hospital
Close to shopping malls and grocery, close to highway
Community involvement and public schools
Continued maintenance and expansion of the city parks and bikeways as well as offering numerous family recreational programs-- the city leaf, brush and junk pickup programs
Convenience and road improvements
Convenience- everything is close, education- excellence, quality, drinking water
Convenience to a lot of places, sores, etc. Seems to have well combined city/ county fee;
Convenience to all shopping and growing development of, good roads and access
Convenient location. Great schools
Corner parkways
Culture, environment
Curbside leaf/ junk pick-up. Ramona Park
District library, parks
District library and Celery Flats and hiking trails
Don't know
Don't know
Driving distances are short, school are good
Ease of entertainment and shopping, parks

Economy and jobs; which I think creates a good share of problems we are facing with drugs, violence, fires and lack of respect for anyone

Educational programs and recreational and community programs

Emergency response. Safety and security

Employment growth and community diversity

Entertainment and safety

Excellent school system

Excellent school system, lower crime rates for city of this size

Excellent senior center staff and services and management. City management has been positive, in touch with community

Family friendly: good schools, parks, recreation/ trails. Safe and convenient to many things (shopping, dining, Kzoo)

Feel safe in portage

Focus of council has been to constantly improve leaf pickup/brush pickup spring and fall

Friendly neighborhoods, middle class residents

Friendly service, lots of businesses

Garbage pickup (spring cleanup) wish it were more than once a year

General feeling of safety and security. Convenience of transportation, commute time to/from work and shopping

Good fire and police depts., no visible slum areas

Good government, good roads

Good household, schools

Good neighbors, overall cleanliness of community

Good quality drinking water, excellent services (leaf & brush pick-up & recycling program)

Good residential area, schools

Good school system, high quality of life

Good schools

Good schools

Good schools and appearance--clean streets, neighborhoods, plants, and trees

Good Schools, feeling safe

Good schools, general cleanliness

Good schools, lots of shopping and restaurants

Good schools, low crime

Good surrounding and senior center- library

Great neighborhoods

Great parks and biking and jogging trails

Great restaurants, shopping

Great schools and safe city

Great schools. Clean city

Green space, people

Growth and expansion of our town, Celery Flats and the trails around town

Home and neighborhoods, shopping and convenience

Home of Stryker. Connection/ collaboration with city of Kalamazoo

Hometown atmosphere, variety of businesses

I don't like living here, no special features

I feel safe here-- except would like to see street lights on Waruf Ave. Employees, services are appreciated

I feel snow removal is very good and all the parks shows Portage as very family minded

I just love the community parks and the city itself

I like the leaf and brush pickups. I think quality of life is good in Portage

I like it here. I'll stay here

Improved flow of traffic-- Portage Rd. to I94 and Sprinkle d to I94 and to Gall Rd

In general the care for roads and winter road clearing services

Infrastructure, communication with public

It has two companies; Pfizer, Stryker. It has an international airport

It's a clean city and it shows growth and vibrance

It's location. Between Detroit and Chicago plus not far from Grand Rapids

It's safe and the people are nice

Jogging/biking trails, lakes

Lakes and Celery Flats

Lakes and parks

Lakes. General appearance of street scopes

Less crime and law and fire protection

Level of quality of government services, general appearance of city

Library and entertainment events

Library services and municipal services including cultural/ environ

Library- trails

Library, beautiful flowers

Library, parks and bike trails

Library, parks/ bike paths
Library, pretty safe place to live
Library, safe neighborhood
Location, Pfizer, Stryker
Location, schools
Location, variety
Lots of parks and stores
Love the flowers city plants. Neg: snowplows ruin my mailbox- go too fast
Low crime rate and parks
Low crime rate, good shopping facilities and restaurants
Low crime rate, great shopping and fine dining/ restaurants
Low crime rate, still has a small town feel
Low crime, quiet
Low crime-> great police and fire protection. Services offered by city government
Low taxes, good quality of life
Low taxes, services offered
Low taxes. Solving problems quickly
Low taxes-location
Many available medical services, many recreational services
Mature & progressive leadership of mayor, council, commissions, beautiful lakeside parks
Mature trees, ease of living and convenience
Merchants, space/ trees
Multiple routes through and around city and into Kalamazoo, the library
Municipal services and neighborhoods
My neighbors and close to shopping
NC
Neighborhoods
Neighbors take pride in their residents, good schools
Nice clean looking city-trees, flowers, etc. Immediate help from city hall-phone calls, police, fire. Excellent school system
Nice neighborhoods, shopping
Nice neighborhoods, feel safe
Nice parks and Westnedge corridor
Nice parks, ease of shopping

Nice parks, leaf/brush/junk & recycling services, convenient shopping/accessible roads
Nice place to live 59 years. Streets are kept up year round
No opinion
No opinion
None compared to Kzoo
Not sure
Not sure whodunit but applause for work on Portage main roads in last 12-15 years
Not too small--Not too big--Just right!
Our parks and lakes, I feel safe living in Portage
Our schools, our trails and parks
Over look of city property, parks, street, etc.
Overall a wonderful place to live
Overall cost of living, incidence of crime
Park system and safe neighborhoods and schools
Park trails and convenience
Park/bike trail system, curbside recycling
Parks
Parks & trails, shopping & restaurants
Parks (ball), fire prevention
Parks, lakes and water ways
Parks and bike trails
Parks and bike trails, schools
Parks and bike trails. Green spaces-- trees, wetlands, natural features
Parks and bike/walk paths
Parks and bikeways
Parks and bikeways and efficient government
Parks and biking tails
Parks and cleanliness
Parks and green spaces, services-- leaf pickups-- junk pickup--police/ fire
Parks and library
Parks and library
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation
Parks and recreation activities and opportunities, lakes

Parks and recreation areas, portage senior center and library
Parks and recreation, schools
Parks and recreation. Snow removal/ leaf pickup
Parks and schools
Parks and schools
Parks and shopping
Parks and spring cleanup
Parks and trails
Parks and trails
Parks and trails
Parks and trails
Parks and trails and bikeways
Parks and trails, brush and leaf pickup, library, boulevard-type streets, well run city!
Parks and trails, generally family oriented
Parks and trails, trees
Parks and trials, clean
Parks are wonderful, bike and walking trails
Parks and how clean it is
Parks, bike trails, closeness to area businesses
Parks, bike trails, library
Parks, bikeways
Parks, cleanliness of this city
Parks, police and fire protection
Parks, public services/ sewer/ water/ etc.
Parks, recreation
Parks, roads
Parks, safe neighborhoods
Parks, safety and security
Parks, schools
Parks, schools
Parks, schools
Parks, senior center, library
Parks, spring clean up
Parks, trees in yards, green! Recycle, household junk collection, leaf p/u

Parks/ trails/ bike lanes and convenience to everything I need
Parks/ Trails/ bikeways. Honest govt. / Good management
Parks/trees. Library-all it offers Portage residents
PCBP however they tore out the playground at Milham and have not replaced it.
Peaceful, little crime. Clean, nice lawns
People friendly- interest in promoting growth-- new programs, developments, industry
People, schools
Planned layout& zoning, police & fire
Planning coordinates of business with residential and vice versa, schools
Plenty of shopping, easy to get around
Police and fire, bike trails
Police protection and the city is clean and well kept
Police/fire and parks
Portage has a lot of retail services; Portage has a lot of restaurants
Portage is generally a clean and friendly city with good services
Portage library and variety of housing
Portage library. Parks and walking paths
Portage parks and bike trails, Portage spring cleanup & brush collection
Portage police, fire, and paramedics. The best in Michigan
Portage public schools, breadth of resources
Portage public schools, low crime rate
Portage public schools, potage neighborhoods
Preservation of green space and trails. Accessibility of services
Proximity of shopping, library facilities
Public library
Public schools, taxes
Public services, school system
Public walking trails, police & fire protection
Quality of education, low level of crime (serious)
Quality of education. Small community "feel" while increasing/ maintaining quality/
standard of living
Quality of homes, clean healthy environment
Quality of life
Quality of life/safety

Quality of schools
Quality of services, availability of services
Quiet neighborhood, government fiscally responsible
Reasonable city property taxes, relatively low crime.
Recycling for environment. Police and fire safety
Relative safety quality of life
Relatively safe and good place to raise a family
Responsive city government, numerous and well-kept neighborhoods
Restaurants and library
Retail shopping and office space
Road conditions and overall appearance and cleanliness
Roadways, parks and trails
Safe
Safe and good roads
Safe community and clean air
Safe community and controlled taxes, good retail services
Safe environment and availability of goods, services and social events
Safe environment to raise a family, parks/ rec (bike trails)
Safe neighborhoods and Portage Northern High school
Safe, attractive neighborhoods
Safe, clean
Safe, clean peace to live, close to amenities
Safe, parks, ease of shopping
Safe, quiet neighborhood, friendly neighbors
Safety, bike trails
Safety, city services. Would like larger recycling container with wheels
Safety, Portage is a safe city in which to live. Schools are very good.
School and parks
School facilities have improved
School system
School system and leaf, spring pickup
School system and the current level of provided services
School system is very good, local government listens to residents' concerns
School system, city layout

School system, geographic location
School system, parks and recreation areas
School, close to shopping
School, police protection
School, shopping
Schools
Schools
Schools
Schools
Schools
Schools
Schools -- good for rising kids
Schools & shopping
Schools and access to malls and businesses
Schools and city services
Schools and clean/ neat neighborhoods with parks/ trails
Schools and people
Schools and positive atmosphere of community-- enhanced by parks and churches
Schools and property taxes
Schools and services
Schools and services
Schools and shopping
Schools and shopping
Schools and shopping options
Schools-- low taxes
Schools parks
Schools- parks
Schools shopping area
Schools! Business base
Schools, a nice place to live
Schools, appearance and condition of property
Schools, bike trails
Schools, business expansion
Schools, businesses

Schools, caliber of homes and upkeep that are over 50 years
Schools, city facilities and support (government)
Schools, clean city
Schools, community unity
Schools, Entertainment/ Restaurants
Schools, F.D. P.D.
Schools, general condition and appearance of the city
Schools, libraries
Schools, low crime
Schools, mall with variety of stores
Schools, neighborhoods
Schools, nice retail sections
Schools, nice shopping
Schools, parks
Schools, parks
Schools, parks
Schools, parks
Schools, parks
Schools, parks and cultural activities
Schools, parks and trails
Schools, parks, lakes
Schools, people
Schools, police/ fire protection
Schools, proximity to shopping restaurants
Schools, roads
Schools, sense of community
Schools, shopping
Schools, shopping
Schools, shopping and dining
Schools. Lower taxes than Kzoo
Schools/ clean city
Schools/ public safety
Schools/cleanliness
Security, cost of living

Security/ safety/ stability and upscale/ upbeat/ healthy physical environment
Services (snow removal, leaf & trash pickup) most important, convenient to everything needed
Schools and roads
Shopping and parks and trails
Shopping and parks
Shopping close by, good fire and police service
Shopping restaurants, landscaping, views, lakes
Shopping, schools
Size, pleasant environment
Small city, big city advantages. Friendly place to live, good schools
 Smaller community w/access to larger community benefits, great access to multiple parks& trails, very well maintained
Smaller, family oriented city. Schools/ educational programs
 So far plenty of green zones and undeveloped land to walk and bike in and around-- well developed and timely services i.e. branch leaf junk recycling as well as library
Still has remained small town flair about it.
Street maintenance, quality of life
Streets and lots of a large variety of stores and businesses
Streets and parks
Streets-schools
 Strong, progressive city council-does a good job. Portage Parks & recreation Dept. which includes the Portage Senior Center
Suburban setting, quality of life
Tax rate and city services provided
Tax rates
The bars on the train crossings. The big variety of shopping choices and restaurants
The bike trails, the school system
The Celery Flats trail! Potage library!
The city parks and trails, street clean-up and fall/spring clean up
The entire city
The greenery and lakes
The lakes with parks and community services
 The library (yes, I know it's no longer a city service but it's the best!) The size is right, very good neighborhood services i.e. fall cleanups, spring cleaning
The library and bike paths

The park trails. The tree city focus

The parks and bikeway paths! Over all portage seems to be a safe place to live!

The parks and bikeways. So many families use them. Curbside recycling- a must

The parks and leaf, brush pick up

The parks and schools

The parks and the schools

The parks are amazing-- Ramona and Celery Flats, our favorites. Bike paths are also great (wider on 12th street would be great "nice-to-have_ someday)

The people and the mayor :)

The people in the city make it a city worth living and community activity allows that

The people, the schools

The recreation opportunities (parks, lakes, paths/ greenways), shopping is conveniently located and centralized

The recreational areas- parks and bike paths and the number of fire stations

The school system and safety in my neighborhood

The school system, the streets

The schools! The parks

The schools, restaurants/shopping centers

The schools, the parks

The schools...the trees/parks

The streets and sidewalks are kind of clean. Bicentennial Park clean

The walk ways

The walking trails, snow removal

The walking trails and generally feels safer

The well maintained and extensive bike path's throughout portage. The collection services- leaf, brush, junk, etc.

The wonderful parks and trails and marshes wet-lands- how well they are maintained. The care in maintaining neighborhoods

They keep Portage clean

Trail systems and parks

Trails and parks, schools

Trails and safety

Trails, library

Trails, parks

Trails, parks

Trails, safe
Trails/ parks, schools: general feeling of safety
Trash pickup in the spring, neighborhood parks, and the library
Trees, easy shopping, every thing's convenient. No major problems (good to live here)
Vacant land (what's left)
Very good schools, low crime rate
Very reliable power grid, the way the city currently takes care of its citizens with services
Walking path, shopping
Walking paths, water treatment
Walking trails, schools
Walking/ bike trails, Fiscal responsibility of local government
Walkways
Water and sewer systems. Public service includes; police, fire and library. Very good job
We love Celery Flats, Schrier Park and west lake preserve for walks, recycling is so important
Well maintained, updated when needed
West Lake and Austen Lake
With planting of trees along medians you have improved the appearance of the town
Wonderful park system! Great bike trails, great service provided for a reasonable tax rate!
Wonderful schools, no racial prejudice

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

A workforce with proper skills to attract new employers to ensure high employment rates

Abandoned houses in south portage

Actually, solving problems not just putting on band aids

Adding to and keeping small business

Affordable housing. All of new housing is SO expensive

Affordable, responsible, well kept, low income housing and protection of existing neighborhoods from irresponsible landlords

Age of schools

Aging houses

Aging infrastructure. (Elementary --> middle school) streets. Growing population Westnedge should be 3 lanes from Shiver to Kilgore Rd.

Aging neighborhoods and roads

Aging utilities may need upgrades/replacement

Aging: homes, residents, infrastructure

A lot of people moving to Portage and not keeping up with more people living here

Attracting and retaining major industry

Attracting manufacturing businesses that offer good paying jobs

Attracting manufacturing business/ expansion of

Attracting new businesses that pay higher than minimum wage

Barking dogs in neighborhoods, using costs and limited funds

Becoming too liberal minded

Being able to maintain services without raising taxes

Better improved roads! The "patches" just don't work anymore-- patches on patches! Bad water!!

Big Business paying less of a tax base. Families paying more

Blight and Business taxes

Blight in older neighborhoods

BUDGET/ TAXES

Businesses moving out leaving too many buildings empty

Business and traffic

Business retention and expansion

Busy mess on S. Westnedge Sept-Dec.

City Traffic Flow

City pensions

Clear and clean drinking water with no chemical taste

Commercial development on formerly residential streets

Commercial expansion, road traffic

Commercial expansion--too many empty buildings now!

Commercial zoning is too lax.

Competing w/ Kalamazoo Promise and "newer" townships

Condition of Home's and yards

Congestion, overcrowding

Continuation of quality of safety and services in our community

Continue building new commercial buildings when we have many open (non-used) buildings

Continue providing high quality service

Continued growth-- supporting that growth by adding additional services and money to support them

Continuing erosion of our tax base

Contracting communication services (high speed Internet, etc.) and making them available to everyone and utilities and garbage etc. We pay 5-10 times more than others in different parts of the world/county for less

Controlling cost

Controlling retail growth and traffic patterns, attracting new businesses, maintaining the excellent school and city

Cost of schools

Creating/ nurturing social/ community environments in neighborhoods. The suburbs lack meaningful ways for people to engage

Crime

Crime

Crime

Crime and drugs

Crime is creeping up, unfortunately. Hopefully, if the state gets its act together there will be more jobs and better employment opportunities. I believe that's the best deterrent to crime!

Crime?

Decline in infrastructure due to failed maintenance and lack of improvements

Decline in neighborhoods

Declining income levels

Declining infrastructure (roads)

Declining school enrollment

Decrease tax revenue

Deer population, lack of diversity-Portage is white- middle class-uppity snobs

Deforestation, destruction of wetlands/ natural habitats, urban blight. Portage must protect its natural resources and stop developers from filling in wetlands and clear cutting trees (on Centre between Oakland and Angling) while there are abundant empty existing commercial developments. Responsible stewardship of our dwindling green spaces is essential

Deterioration of neighborhoods and degradation of roads

Development

Difficult to predict. Perhaps a loss of industry?

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know

Don't know for a fact, but I hear Portage has a drug problem in schools

Drinking water

Drug and alcohol abuse in our city schools is out of hand

Drug enforcement

Drugs

Drugs

Drugs

Drugs and all the social implications, crime etc.

Drugs and crime

Drugs and the petty violence that comes with it. Poorer neighborhoods becoming poorer

Dugs and related crime near Westnedge and I94

Economic diversification of business community

Economy

Economy

Education

Employment

Employment opportunities, small business growth

Ensuring up to date and adequately staffed fire/police/ 911 services-- like many US communities

Environmental! Keeping the lakes clean

Equalizing portage northern and Portage central high schools. Central tends to receive more! Treated poorly at the shared stadium

Erosion of the property tax base

Expanding commercial tax base

Expansion

Expansion of businesses and traffic in those areas already very congested

Extra traffic and excessive speed in new neighborhoods off of existing arteries

Financial stability

Find corrupt officials involvement the buddy system is BS

Fix traffic light cameras none of them work right, stop Boulevards extra maintenance, water, upkeep

Funding for law enforcement and road improvements

Future drug problems in portage

Getting over run with business development which could take away from the natural beauty of our city

Go back to the much higher level of maintenance we experienced when Mr. Stampfler was city mngr.

Good city government

Growth

Growth

Growth and congestion

Growth in the city and roads

Growth of tax base

Growth- where the next housing development will be. How will it impact the present and future citizens? When will employment service come from and can't all be white collar

Have no idea

High cost and crime

Holding or reducing property taxes. Fiscal responsibility is crucial- look at Kalamazoo city taxes/services-how can a combined 911 system cost tax payers more?

Holding services at current tax rates. Traffic on Westnedge

Housing-- maintenance-- general upkeep

Housing that's affordable

Housing, maintenance of streets

How to maintain level of services with taxes increasing at an acceptable amount only-- unsure what definition of acceptable would be other than the CPI

I am 89?

I don't feel that city council listens to citizens- finds loopholes, etc. to push own agenda- i.e. divided road->Centre St. Shaver Rd.

I don't know, I'm not that involved

I hear that drugs in the public school are an ongoing problem that is not being addressed. I have friends with children in the school system and they are very concerned

I would like to see Shaver Rd. Corridor expanded more with shopping

Illegal drugs in our schools and employment

Improve Portage high schools, efficiency tests

Improve roads

Improved roads and community services

Increase in crime

Increase in crime

Increase in crime

Increase in property taxes for lake homes

Increased traffic on our roads

Increasing taxes

Increasing taxes

Increasing taxes due to lack of business/ manufacturing base

Influx of people-houses, apartments, senior care

Infrastructure

Infrastructure

Infrastructure maintenance

Infrastructure-roads

It seems that growth is out of control; everywhere you look houses are up for sale for commercial use. Land is being dug up for sale for commercial use everywhere. Not only am I concerned about nature but we already have closed buildings.

Job growth in region, aging population

Jobs

Jobs

Jobs and economy. No jobs= no economy

Jobs, taxes

Keeping a status quo in all services

Keeping costs- and taxes- down in a probably declining economy (there should also be a small maternity hospital in a city of this size)

Keeping costs down

Keeping crimes low

Keeping excellent schools

Keeping neighborhoods from decaying

Keeping residents safe (meth labs DUI's, threat of storms and repairing storm damage, fire and police protection)

Keeping roads nice

Keeping taxes down

Keeping taxes down

Keeping the budget balanced and within reasonable boundaries

Keeping the city clean and kept-up without raising taxes significantly

Keeping the local economy strong

Keeping the roads up

Keeping up the quality of our neighborhoods

Keeping up with the growth

Keeping upper/middle class families

Kids need to go to school all year

Lack of affordable senior housing

Lack of traffic speed control, will cost people's lives and as the traffic increases, you will have no control over it!

Law enforcement/ fire protection

Look into revenue generation other than Pfizer and Stryker

Looking for ways to increase the tax base without having to increase taxes or cut services--i.e. make the city more attractive to new businesses and residents

Loss of natural areas/state game area

Low income housing

Low income neighborhoods stressing schools and causing more crime

Maintain city services with limited cost increase to citizens

Maintain higher stand on houses and business help industry with less taxes

Maintaining all existing city services and infrastructure

Maintaining and increasing educational opportunity

Maintaining city image

Maintaining city services without increasing taxes and fees too fast to pay for the services

Maintaining community economy for employment

Maintaining economic accountability. No more of the superintendent debacles. Such a waste of tax payers' money!!!

Maintaining existing corporate relationships (Pfizer, Stryker)

Maintaining high educational high educational standards

Maintaining infrastructure

Maintaining job base

Maintaining natural areas

Maintaining or improving educational system, increasing job opportunities

Maintaining Portage's high standards

Maintaining property values

Maintaining quality and property values, controlling/ reducing the cost of water!!

Maintaining services and good lifestyle w/o tax increase

Maintaining services with a static or slowly rising tax base

Maintaining services with rising costs

Maintaining services without huge tax increases

Maintaining services without increasing taxes

Maintaining side streets (pavement)

Maintaining strong school system with modern facilities that attract young families to the area

Maintaining the culture, atmosphere, and recreational opportunities unique to portage amidst continued growth and development

Maintaining the current level of services and improvements (streets and facilities)

Maintaining the diverse economic makeup and infrastructure

Maintaining the high quality of neighborhoods. Make homeowners responsible to this

Maintaining the school system

Maintaining the schools

Maintaining the tax base and public services

Maintaining/ improving the city's infrastructure/ services while keeping costs (taxes) at a manageable level

Maintaining/ increasing quality of education to attract/ retain business and families in portage

Maintaining a good balance between homes and business so people feel comfortable living and moving to Portage

Making sure we continue to attract young families who can maintain the family friendly demographic while also caring for our older citizens. Feel like many are heading toward TX Twsp and that direction to taxes

Making sure Westnedge and Milham occupants represents family value stores. Not more stores like S.. Corner. I feel that store as an entry to all the neighborhood along the street are developed

Managing traffic and adding beauty to the landscape environments on major roadways (much like Centre parkways)

Maybe road conditions

Money

Monitoring current level of service and not seek out segments of the community to support

More "living wage" jobs`

Municipal services

Must eliminate pensions for city employees

National economy/ Tax policy

NC

Need to increase taxes to retain services

Need to maintain services. Why would anyone want to move to an area with poor police protection, poor school and bad libraries?

Need to promote and support our local businesses

Neighborhood and road maintenance

Neighborhoods declining

No idea?!

No opinion

No opinion

No opinion

No opinion

None

Not enough apartments

Not enough bicycle lanes on major roads

Not enough park sponsored events

Not sure

Not sure

Not sure

Not sure at this time

Number of people needing help with living expenses. G. we have a big food bank

Older homes and properties not being maintained with not enforcement

Open space. Traffic flow that allows business but does not congest roads

Opportunity for integration with Kalamazoo

Organized cohesive city government

Over building

Overcrowding, traffic flow

Over population-- traffic congestion

Over spending- too big of budget-gov't
Overcrowding of streets and access to service (essential)
Parts of portage are growing rapidly
People not taking care of their homes so that the community itself is less desirable
 People unable to live in the city any longer due to property tax cost. It needs to be kept under control. People tell me all the time they can't afford to live in Portage
Pfizer leaving possibly due to not getting incentives any longer
Police protection/ the amount of officers on duty/ lacking
Pollution and crime
Poor education and hopeless youth
Poor roads
Possible loss of tax revenue if Pfizer manufacturing closes
Property neglect
Protecting natural areas from invasive and pollution
Providing a balance between maintaining the current quality of life in Portage with a reasonable tax structure
Providing police, fire, emergency services to the ever growing populations
Providing services sufficiently without increasing taxes
Public safety
Quit being a yuppie city and think like it originally started
Raising taxes
Roads (condition) empty building
Reducing traffic flow on S Westnedge ave
Removal of certain boulevards
Repairing roads
Responding to growth, good roads and controlling traffic
Restore schools to previous level of excellence
Retire and medical underfunding
Revenue
Revenue and drugs or illegal substances
Rich getting richer and poor getting poorer
Road conditions
Road conditions
Road conditions

Road conditions
Road conditions
Road expansion
Road improvement
Road maintenance
Road repairs and improvement of traffic flow
Road repairs/ potholes
Roads
Roads and business expansion more factories and jobs
Roads and growth
Roads and maintenance
Roads and traffic
Roads and traffic
Roads/ traffic
Room for expansion
Room for expansion E. Centre St. needs zone change
Safety
School administration
School budget cuts
School reputation, more accountable administration. I think we've lost ground due to poor choices in role of superintendents
School system- not enough classroom and teachers for growing population
Schools
Schools
Schools
Schools with good instructors

Seriously I'm not a nut about taxes but \$500 a month in property taxes is absurd

Slow growth

Snow removal

Snow removal

Snow removal

Snow removal and sandinal saltina of roads in winter

Snow removal strategy

Some roads continue to deteriorate

Speaking as a sr. citizen, high taxes

Stagnant growth in population

Staying relevant with everything going on in Kalamazoo like to see improvements to football and baseball feels at PCHS

Street conditions, pot holes

Street congestion

Street improvement

Streets

Student drinking (and parents allow it!)

Supporting non-motorized transportation throughout the city (ink Westnedge) walking, biking, etc.

Sustaining major and local businesses

Tax revenue. It's always about the money. Please keep your standards high

Taxation, business regulations, conditions of roads

Taxes

Taxes

Taxes

Taxes

Taxes and streets

Taxes and the cost of water

Taxes are too high

Taxes increasing

Taxes on seniors

Taxes, city council

Teacher, schools

The city is aging and will need to have improvements made while dealing with low tax base. People are making less

The city planning commission and their obsession with expanding (rezoning) business properties at the expense of existing residential areas

The crime and danger that is unavoidable with the growing and dispensing of medical marijuana!

The economy

The economy along with small business trying to stay in business

The increase in students and their cars. The school busses aging and falling apart

The loss of big businesses with large empty buildings such as the building at Romence and Portage Rds.

The need to increase taxes for additional services

The traffic on Westnedge can only get worse with all the growth along the road

To maintain property values. To keep our young fresh vibrant growing community feel and not go down the same path as Kalamazoo

To not rise taxes!

Too high of taxes

Too high taxes

Too many apartments

Too many people

Too many people and traffic

Too many road signs, too many empty buildings

Too much growth

Too much growth. Do we really need another restaurant?!

Too many taxes! 2 of my friends moved because they couldn't afford it anymore. We are at that point also.

Too much uncontrolled growth. Too many big box stores and franchises

Tourist attractions

Traffic

Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic
Traffic and clean water
Traffic and pollution
Traffic and zoning
Traffic at peak times
Traffic concerns
Traffic control
Traffic control and speeding, red light running
Traffic flow
Traffic flow
Traffic flow
Traffic from increased businesses along Romence and Westnedge, street repair and maintenance
Traffic law enforcement, (speeds, disobeying stop lights and road rage laws need to be much stiffer and larger fines so people quit those violations and loss of driving privileges)
Traffic on major streets
Traffic on roads
Traffic on S. Westnedge
Traffic on Westnedge
Traffic patterns
Traffic problems, wildlife
Traffic schools
Traffic, more dedicated right hand turn lanes
Transportation
Transportation and human services
Uncontrolled expansion
Unsure
Unzoned urban sprawl

Up keep of neighborhood

Urban expansion leaving vacant businesses

Use of cars for transportation (traffic, pollution, global warming)

Vacant buildings

Value of home goes down and taxes go up

Water

Water and road conditions

Ways to distribute tax revenue, while continuing tax restraint

We are totally dependent on Stryker- if we don't diversify our businesses, if they pull out we could turn into another Battle Creek

We need huge tax base- either a manufacturing co to come in- retail is dying and the mall is a huge tax base but w/ shopping online-retail is changing we need to bring business here

Westnedge traffic

Westnedge traffic

With state funding support changing as well as taxing business we need to bring he business both large and small to the table and tell us just what they need from the city or school so they can grow and how we should fund it

Working within the budget

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

American multiracial/ European

American Mexican

Indian- India

Mother of 1/2 Hispanic kids

Pakistan origin

Western European

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

Duplex

Senior apartment building

Single family home rental

Sr. Townhome

Town house/ rental

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

AT&T

AT&T

AT&T

AT&T blue

ATT

ATT

AT&T

AT&T

AT&T

ATT

ATT Uverse

ATT Uverse

AT&T Uverse

AT&T Uverse

ATT U-verse

ATT-Uverse

None

Uverse

Uverse

Uverse

Uverse

Uverse fiber optic

Verizon

We need competition to lower cable TV, Internet fees. Open the market. Over 100/month for TV, Internet is ridiculous esp for a city to expand business and growth of venue

Wireless AT&T

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

19 not since you reopened Fire #3 back to days. City should look at prices of asphalt-IE: if the price per ton is increased due to city keeping the millings, they have Asphalt cement in them therefore raw material has to be used. Should concenter seal coating to preserve road instead of HMA everything. Boulevards should not be constructed- cost to maintain, mowing watering, concrete repairs. Snow removal, street sweeping has a lot to be desired!

#11. Re-Spring Clean-up - why does Kalamazoo have it monthly and Portage annually.
16. Most pavements are okay in Portage but curbs in Ridgebrook neighborhood are a mess (where they exist at all). Deer population is going to have to be controlled!

#15. Street snow removal: The dissatisfaction comes when the streets are very navigable... all the driveways have been cleaned: then they come through trying to clear the curbs and it all flies 2' to 3' up the driveway. Usually wet, heavy snow which is impossible to shovel. Left on/ near the curb it would have melted with the sun. 16. How satisfied are you with the condition of the pavement in Portage: Mr. Weiver needs to properly fix the road that runs alongside Celebration Cinemas.... it has been treacherous far too long. 28. Has to condition of your neighborhood changed in the last five years?: Yes...some folks parking vehicles on the lawn, boats on trailers half on & off the driveway, large trailers that transport vehicles parked on the street, even a bus (photo enclosed) etc. Also, parking in the wrong direction for the side of the St. the vehicle is on etc. 31-37: I feel like you are asking me if it is okay to raise taxes. On a single family dwelling in Portage, I am paying close to \$3,000 in taxes...add heat, electricity, water, all on retirement income. Will it ever be enough? 31: For a dog park...who is going to handle the dog fights? I see so many folks walking their pets and it is very clear they are not the pack leader. Unbalanced dogs are detrimental to the energy of the pack. How will the park be monitored? 32: For the improvement of drinking water... see enclosure. If other states can eliminate fluoride, so can we! Should that cost more?

* see no. 21. Maintain standards in schools (and this has nothing to do with teachers' salaries)

12th street needs additional sidewalks from Centre to Milhams Circle to ensure children safety as well as bikes and runner/ walkers

A comment-- I want to praise and give a "thumbs up" to the Portage policeman who handled a minor traffic accident I was involved in last December. He was friendly, patient, professional toward all of us while sorting out the situation during a very cold and wintery day. A concern-- I live on Norfolk Circle where there are several penal units. I've noticed an increase in junk on the lawns of some of the properties including-- cars on lawns, chairs, boats, garbage, etc.

A short time ago I became very ill and my husband called 911 The PFD responded very quickly and were so very kind and helpful! Then came the ambulance-- also very kind and were

so helpful. We must preserve our fire dept. and emergency responders!

Again very important to me to have street lights installed on Waruf ave. Thank you

All police need CIT mental health training. Portage if not now should support the 211 system and Gryphons services. Oakland St needs to have more lanes. Portage officials should meet in a public forum with Kalamazoo City officials 2x/year. Portage school system should not have any commercial contracts with for profit companies. Traffic on Oakland too short a green light. Police should work with residents for an effective neighborhood watch system in all locals.

Although we haven't used the cultural and environmental services, we think they are important to a healthy community and growth. Snow removal last winter was a challenge but our services have dropped over last 5 years. Need more prompt and frequent clearing. Transportation, current Sr. Centre and 911 are just fine. We greatly appreciate the opportunity for public input and the time and effort so many put into city leadership. Thank you!

Am concerned about the increased of unsupervised kids loitering around in residential areas late at night, specifically around Centre st. an oak side dr. and Newell's Ln.

Appreciated the road program this spring. I would suggest the traffic lights are an issue. It is frustrating to see all these lights with cameras that are meant to improve traffic flow, yet the routinely stop one direction (with traffic) for nothing. Makes me feel like they don't actually work which is money wasted. Westnedge in general works well but many other streets seem to have their days.

As a resident of Austin Lake, was unaware of meetings of Governmental Lake Board- felt whole process was/is a joke- Ed Seckley should be removed from Board as he is no longer on council- travesty of justice

As stated earlier, poor road construction management. Why tear up Westnedge and Portage Rds. at the same time and just before school starts in the fall? Poor planning on management. Why put in curb dividers on Portage Rd at Zylman Rd and in front of Danne's Party Store? It's a waste of money and time. They are a road hazard as people will forget they are there, especially in the winter with snowy and foggy weather conditions. Big mistake on planning. - Snow plows need to come through neighborhoods sooner waiting twenty four hours to come through once after a huge snowfall is unacceptable.

Assessment of property and vacant lots in older neighborhoods

Back off on Traffic islands. Too costly on maintenance. 2. Get rid of the deer herd. Dangerous to traffic. Use archers and ignore the overzealous animal lovers

Bad reputation on too much gov't and arrogant employees and inspectors. Reduce taxes-- privatize services.

Bette water would be great

Better building code- requires developers to install more street lights. Zoning located next to residential/ commercial--a wood fence between does not last long enough. Street cleaning prior to start to rain weather- sewers cannot handle all the sand from winter. No more round-about-drivers play "chicken" in the circle. Better permit system for "bon fires" in yards on weekends. Slower speed limit on 12th street- Centre to Milham. Enforce lawn care law. Enforce

sidewalk snow removal law.

Better policing of speeders/ aggressive drivers/ traffic laws

Bikeways along the roads need maintenance: holes, branches, debris. The bike lane in front of Lake Center Elementary school was eliminated and it is more dangerous to ride. The lake access across from my property (where the pump station is located on Woodlawn) at Austin lake has been rendered inaccessible with planting of pine trees down the middle, planting large decorative grass and storing docks on property. This was one reason I purchased property but now in order to reach the lake I would have to go on to private property. I don't understand why Portage would limit access to the lake like this.

Branch and brush pickups have been subcontracted and quality has declined significantly. No longer can you predict the week they show. Recycle pick-ups are also subcontracted and although timely, the provider is disrespectful of the plastic bins and where they are thrown. These services could be reduced to every other week and save city costs. Timing of traffic lights should be reviewed regularly. Lights on Westnedge could be better timed for a better flow. Short lights at Center/Angling and Center/Moorsbridge need adjusting.

Came here as a company transfer-- It's a great place to live!

Camera's light intersection do not work properly have called traffic engineering and no response on request. Water/ sewer are too costly.

Cars with illegal tinted windows travel at least 10 miles over the speed limit on Portage road near Upjohn's. Like to see speed trap in front of Applebee's, no one observes the 25 mph school zones on Milham and Center

City council person and all and her supporters are taking this city in the wrong direction. She has cost this city 10s of thousands of dollars for her personal vendetta against the city assessor office and has help run important people out of city hall (including city manager Evans). Council needs to focus on the city interests and not their own interests. Enforce current ordinances. Pan handlers at all exits into the city is not a good image to those visiting or living here. Fix the roads

City government is working against each other not with each other

City wide Internet access would be helpful and city could use it as communication tool

City will likely continue to grow in part due to proximity to outstanding Portage schools and WMU as well as location of business/ light industries on I94. 1) Finding a healthy balance of zoning allowing residential and business will be important. 2) Try to add parkways to Milham between Oakland and Westnedge. Add parkway south from I94 and Westnedge to Centre. Corner green space is a plus @ Oakland Milham and Oakland and Romence. Leave southwest corner of Oakland and Centre green!

Clean up the side walk from the park on portage lake center school

Comments: The courtesy and helpfulness of all city employees, grocery & retail stores staff and restaurant workers is very much appreciated. It's a pleasure to live, shop & dine in Portage, MI. Concerns: 1) constantly changing tap water color at my Greenspire Apt. Complex is unsettling- sometimes yellow, sometimes brown tints, always sediments. 2) Witnessed many

accidents on Centre Avenue this past winter. We need more sand or ice removal, at icy intersections.

Compared to other communities in SW Michigan Portage lays down very excessive amounts of road salt during the winter. There is a liquid spray available that does a much better job why isn't that used? Sometimes the salt is so thick I feel like I'm driving down a gravel road!

Concern is increasing taxes. As population grows older it is difficult to support the many services, even though having them is nice.

Concerned with number of motorhomes, trailers, flatbeds etc. on the streets, driveways and front lawns. Concerned with snow removal only on one side of the street and the center. Other side almost continually blocked for 5' with the one side of the street, southwest. The WHOLE streets needs snow removal, please!

Continue policies inviting citizen input and promoting transparency. -keep looking for ways to work on cross jurisdictional resource/ idea sharing

Continue with the services offered and bring back others which have been cut by budget (canoes, etc.). Maintain quality neighborhoods. Seems that people aren't taking pride in appearance of homes and lawns

Cost of water and sewer are way too high the cost needs to be lowered

Curbside recycling in an easy roll out container. Residential snow removal must improve there is no reason to have people get stuck on the street when the main roads are clear and have been clear for 12 hours or more. Also stoplights on Westnedge at non-busy intersections should be flashing during the early morning hours.

Damaged and or abandoned housing- no change in many months or years

Deer...is a big problem in Portage. I worry about all the wet lands and lakes with the growth of homes- the water has to go somewhere...and I believe my neighborhood is affected-by growth-and the movement of dirt building Sam's, and all outlet stores-where is the water going.

Do something about the deer population. They eat all gardens (flower and vegetable) and poop all over the yard. 1. I bow hunt to kill or 2. Trap and transport

Don't raise taxes. S. Westnedge traffic lights should be timed between Kilgore and Center so if going speed limit don't have to stop. The problem with the collection/pick-up programs is that they destroy yards and don't come when they say they are.

Drug problems in schools needs to be addressed

Electrical infrastructure in our neighborhood is old outdated. We have several power outages every year which is confined to half of our street this is an isolated issue which needs resolution (Fairfield Rd)

Empty stores and office space-- good use of K Mat into Hobby Lobby and Dick's Sporting Goods-- good use of the old Sam's Club building-- need to find business for old Sporting store by Harding's on Westnedge

Encourage more job growth

Enough expansion of trails- fixes the roads. PNHS needs a football field. Haverhill,

Amberly and Central are going to need attention sooner than later. A public outdoor pool, community pool would a great boost toward water safety and pleasure in the summer (lessons etc.). As proud as we can be of our parks and trails- honestly - repave MLK drive or re-name it. It is shameful. It was a miserable winter and maybe worse will come. Let's get lines buried, to prevent outages and protect local businesses.

Entrance fees to Ramona Park should be higher for non-residents and hours should be increased. It's getting too busy! Please look into a fall junk pick-up. Be more proactive in investigation for meth houses- 3 alone found/ exploded in my neighborhood in the past year or so.

Even with increased taxes; I support improving the landscaping along S. Westnedge. I support the creation of more off-road bike paths. I support burying power and telephone lines. Road maintenance and snow removal need to remain priorities. Keep the leaf pick-up, it is good. Failure to reuse land after housing or business vacated, "smugness" esp. toward Kalamazoo
Fall junk pickup

Fix the road by Menards off of construction by the movies

Focus groups could assist in your panning. Do such standing formal or Ad hoc groups currently help you? Do you have statements? What about Brownfilled areas? Thank you for this opportunity to participate in you survey. Transportation services are not well advertised for seniors and handicapped. What is available?

For years now I have thought that we need a traffic light at this intersection of Westnedge and melody. Ever since Meijer and Wal-Mart traffic has increased!!! There have been several accidents/near misses at that intersection. For the school children and myself trying to cross is very difficult and dangerous! Please make this an upcoming issue! My other concern is: residents keeping their sidewalks cleared of snow and ice in a timely manner. Thank you

Full employment solves many problems by simultaneously increasing our tax base and reducing demand for some city services. Therefore, a focus on workforce development to ensure employability and infrastructure to ensure attracting new employers are critical objectives.

Garbage pickup should not be let to the lowest bidder so he is only one truck on the pickup day instead of 4 or 5 running he same routes (using more fuel, causing more traffic) this could be economical to the city and more profitable to the garbage companies.

Gateway signage and welcome, supply community service to bed care of city hall flower beds, establish shuffle board courts near library for group competition; utilize celery flats and Centennial Park for entertainment / festivals

Get rid of free services such as transportation etc...Spend the money on drinking water and road conditions. Handouts encourage poor work habits and attract bums. Get rid of them all!
Great place to live-- very happy here

H2o rates about doubled in the last few years yet drinking H2o is not great.

Having moved here 2 1/2 years ago from very far to the west- I am amazed and happy with the city services. We are very fortunate to have these services for the costs to the citizens. I

think then are many citizens here that don't realize how good we have it in this beautiful city

Here is a wish list: flow side streets earlier--cars get stuck in snow. Our water leaves a yellow color in white bowls and makes us believe there is something wrong with it. Have more active social media presence to publicize the city issues and events (Facebook). There is a lot of construction going on around town. Have a place where we can check to see what new businesses are coming (social media/ Facebook preferred). During holiday shopping season Westnedge is extremely congested. Have police help direct traffic and move it along.

Hire a city manager who: has vision, understand economics, is a people person

I am delighted with the prompt response when I have questions or concerns. Our city is very clean and appealing to the eye.

I am 53 years old. I would like to retire in twenty years. But I have no idea how my 401k and SS will ever pay the property taxes and utilities. I wish I would be allowed to have a well put in and just pay a sewer bill. Water prices are bull shit.

I am 83 and it would be a welcome service to have a bobcat (?) clean out the snow plow residue from the driveway, and mailbox access for a fee

I am 88 years old and lived here since 1958. Portage is a good place to live and the senior center is great.

I am active military and move to a new city and new part of town every three years. You have a nice city, but are cautious of how ambitious you get with taxes and services

I am elderly and really don't get out and about that much

I am on a very limited income as many senior citizens are. I have lived in this home for 43 years and when my husband, I and my kids moved here the taxes were about \$300. I am a widow now and pay \$1,800 a year. I wish that there could be some kind of senior discount for seniors owning their home. There are discounts for everything else.

I am terribly disturbed by the number of garbage truck/ companies that are deployed daily. I would much rather pay more in city taxes to have one or two garbage companies per area rather than four or five. It's wasteful. (Pardon the pun).

I am very concerned about the agenda 21 AKA's exec order white house rural Council (or) Sustainable (Community development) and local initiatives support corps (LISC) and ICLEI. This all sounds appealing and good but it is the takeover of private properties with rural council elect order 13515 I sent info to the mayor on these subjects. Very dangerous manipulation of Feds to control more and more property!!

I am very concerned about the several individuals who are begging at all of our lights and even those who have their children sitting with them. Please, can anything be done to help them? The lights and entrances to the Wal-Mart area is very confusing and needs to be re-designed to make it more safe. Thank you for letting me speak.

I am very proud to be a resident of Portage, MI

I am very satisfied with my decision to move to the Portage area. Every business I need is so close and easy to get to. All my dealings with the township or service agencies have been very

positive. The senior center and library are above expectations. The police and fire fighters are among the best. I wish that they would get more respect for the great job they do!

I appreciate the availability to stores, church, medical services, and social events

I appreciated the overall direction of the local government. However, my interaction with government employees left me with the feeling/ belief that they do not represent me, have any desire to understand my position or concern and are just trying to attack me as though I'm a villain trying to get away with something. Based on these experiences I do not trust Portage government.

I believe the level of maint has diminished in all things and I believe it is due to lack of funds. The reason people and businesses moved to portage for many years was the high level of maintenance portage supplied in all areas!

I believe the Portage Public Library is a wonderful and important resource in our community!

I continually see poor driving on city streets. The corner of Centre st. and Oakland Drive at 5pm is terrible. I probably see average of 10 cars a week travel through red lights at that intersection. I think public safety should review this area of concern before someone gets killed.

I do have a concern about a hoarding situation that exists at 1413 Eddington

I do not walk alone anymore in the mornings (early AM) like I used to due to some pretty questionable people that live in our neighborhood anymore. Worry about our property values! When people put broken furniture or other items on the park way with a free sign...diminishes curb appeal of neighborhood. Neighbors do not adhere on times to put yard waste out. May sit out for weeks or more! These people need to be cited

I feel safe living here. I like being so close to services. The parks and the bike trails are a great benefit.

I find it truly amazing that our neighborhood side streets remain without city water and sewer hook-up. We have lived in Portage in the same house for 29 years and still no city water or sewer hook-up and yet wherever we drive there are roads being improved, new businesses, new strip malls, etc.

I had to add a whole house water filter to remove minerals that were clogging shower heads and discoloring glasses. Traffic is not bad, but drivers are. I would like to see more traffic enforcement being done. You asked about a dog park, I do not see where we really need one. Most homes have yards that your pet can use. We had 3 dogs at a time for years and never needed a dog park. We used open areas and school yards plus our yard

I have been proud of living in Portage in a single family home for the past 40 of 47 years

I have been very satisfied living in Portage for the past 49 years!

I have lived in Portage for 5 years and enjoy the proximity to Kalamazoo for cultural events and being close to my Dr's, church, grandchildren's good schools, shopping and dining. I enjoy the Sr. Center for their trips, and other offerings. I think the bike trails, parks, lakes and library are all top notch! I can see why the city won the award for Best City! (For its size? anyway it was a good award!)

I have seen over the past 36 years in Portage a loss of civic pride. Too many residents believe rules exist for others, not themselves. Many people use our streets and sewers for dumping of almost anything. I understand economic conditions have contributed too many homes in need of basic maintenance- this situation reduces home values and makes Portage less attractive to new residents and businesses

I have to use a walker and I find it almost impossible because of the broken black top on the edge of the road--it's about 300 feet to a side walk. I live on Evergreen between Milham and Pfizer.

I like it that Portage at least cares! We enjoy living here very much. Thank you!

I like the size of Portage. Good churches, fast response to emergencies, good traffic flow

I live on Romence (at Angling) it is clearly posted this is not a through street yet, on average, I have 7-10 people a day use my driveway as a turn a round- one day it was 18. Many are on cell phones and a few drive straight through the intersection without stopping. Some speed through here even though it is posted 25 MPH only to come racing back through failing to realize this is a dead end. We have children playing here but it does not seem to concern them. Our street was recently repaved-nice job. However our storm drain still backs up and cause's a rather large and deep puddle. It was bad in winters past as it would freeze over and make for a real hazard.

I love living here. I can't afford to stay, however, if there are tax increases. I am on a fixed monthly income. I like the "clean look" of the city. I'm not impressed with so many road construction sites done at the same time. Resurfacing the detour route with S. Westnedge (south of Center) is closed??? A bit much!

I love Portage

I love the city of Portage. It is a very family oriented city. Great parks, beaches, bike trails and year round activities offered to participate in such as band shell concerts, etc.

I moved 1 mile south everything is the same for water use or less my bill doubled 65.00-140.00 why? Can't get an answer. No leaks, meter never moves with all water shut off. Need more trash pickups Please fwd. to water dept.

I put schools as one of the best features but it appears to me there is a lot of dissatisfaction among parents because of over assessments and confusing programs. Also, it appears that there is little to no communication between teachers and administration. It used to be that teachers were encouraged to have opinions and input. Now a teacher's job is in jeopardy if he/she has a differing opinion of the Portage administration. All signs of possible deterioration of a good school district and the fall of a good housing market.

I really like living in Portage. Moderate increase in taxes would not be a serious concern to maintain the quality of life in Portage

I think cable services are too high. I think the city should help reduce this expense.

I think it has been rewarding as a tax payer to see such a wonderful commitment made to education. I don't mind seeing money put into things that will better the young people that go to school in Portage. On my dream list would be to have a Portage Promise like the city of Kalamazoo has. Perhaps one day.

I think the city of Portage does an exceptional job overall. I do think there should be a "slum lord" regulation, however, as my only complaint is 9609 Woodlawn Dr.!

I think the following would benefit residents: 1 it would be less expensive per household if there were a single predetermined trash/ recycling company. 2 an outdoor swimming pool would be an excellent physical and social opportunity for the youth of Portage and encourage further family activity 3 there is a lack of cable/phone/ Internet competition in portage and the cost is high. Efforts to increase competition would result in lower cost per household. 4 students at North, middle and high schools loiter in the street at Van Houssen. However, there are no good walking lanes or sidewalks. Van Houssen is a high foot traffic street before and after school, especially for the community high schoolers.

I understand snow removal service have so much time to keep our roads drivable, but, do they have to go full speed and knock mailboxes off the post, where you have to look for it in the snow and fall over it because it is buried in the snow somewhere, and snow is in the driveway piled high, you cannot get out. That is a hazard to me

I understand the senior discount that was taken away from us will be starting up again. But I heard it was only good for 5 years, then I'll have to re-apply and that I won't be notified when the 5 years is up. This doesn't sound very Portage resident friendly, to me.

I was traveling for work when our home alarm went off. My wife and 2 year old son were home alone. It was almost an hour - on a week night- for the police to arrive. Not acceptable. We need to draw business not related to Stryker. If you put all your eggs in one basket, you have the potential for disaster- and my wife is Director at Stryker- great company, but troublesome for potential disaster

I would like Portage Northern to have their own football facility

I would like to see a bike lane on Portage Rd. Stop raising utility costs, water and sewer primarily. Better and faster snow removal on secondary roads. Overall I am happy to be living in Portage but it is becoming more expensive that living in the outlying areas.

I would like to see bigger incentives for local businesses (tax breaks) and also have portage support more local startup businesses

I would like to see more cable companies besides Charter to be available - (to keep costs down) .As for road maintenance, (especially on Westnedge and Portage Rd). I think it would be much better if they are not worked on at the same time, Westnedge is closed for me now, and I have to use Portage Rd to go North which is a mess also, I hope someone can come up with solutions- I know it's probably not easy

I would like to see the city develop a long-term plan for integration with Kalamazoo city and for addressing increased ethnic and socioeconomic diversity

I would like to see the city purchase the land along the portage creek behind Walgreens (corner of Centre of south Westnedge aver) while it is still mostly open land. It could be open green space leading to the portage band shell. It would be a great park area and would help give the city a village center. City hall is across the street.

I would like to thank the mayor and the portage city council for their very hard work and

dedication to making Portage a great place to live and work.

I would like you to go back to single stream recycling

I would very much like to propose extension on the Portage Bikeway to connect with the Kalamazoo River trail started ASAP! I think the Portage Bikeway is the highlight of the city, and would greatly benefit along with Kalamazoo County in joining the two trails!!

I'd like to see our American flags back on the flag poles. Better snow removal on my street

If not listed in the Portage newsletter, please include the city website address in the Portage newsletter

Implement complete streets. Vehicle traffic flow is not the most important issue in every case. There should be more safe and enjoyable routes throughout the city for bikes and pedestrians. Traffic calming in neighborhoods and key crossing is important. Bikes and pedestrian should be welcomed not just tolerated. Trails, such as millennium and the ones in Lake View Park are great! But they need to be linked up better-- across Portage Road and across Centre St. for example. Thank you

In 2012 repair was done on West Centre Ave. The man hole was never replaced properly. I have talked with-- James Hudson, Kendra Given, Jerome Rowland (Several times). Last information was they were waiting for the...to break. This has been two years since the banging continues each time a vehicle drives over it--could you please do something about this?

In general, a very nice place to live, abundance of shopping and recreation opportunities. In regards to shopping, be nice if there were stores that carried clothing for Senior Women and haven't talked to one older woman who thinks that the stores at Crossroads mall are worthwhile to this group.

In heavy snow city plow restricts me from mailbox. City water is slightly rusty.

In the last few years we have heard with increasing frequency that the city of Portage has become very hard to work with for small businesses. The atmosphere has created discouragement among small businesses starting up or looking to expand. Also, that the city inspectors are way too hard on little businesses. We were also told that Costco had been thinking of building in Portage but that the city of Portage was too difficult to deal with that they are now building their new store on Stadium/ Drake in Kalamazoo. If this is true, then I am very disappointed in our government.

In today's world we need to re-think priorities. Seniors, middle, and lower class are taxed to the limit and they have great concerns over just making ends meet with the rising cost of everything. These increases seem to occur on a daily basis. Cities need to keep up with police, fire, and cleanliness. Now is not the time to try and keep up with the wealthy!

Invite and support more competition Telecommunications Co's into Portage. This will increase business and reduce cost, commerce. Improve education standards. Paying over \$140 a month for telecommunication is a weight on the business in Portage. Monopolies are never good.

Is the current form of city government outdated?? Can portage maintain/ increase quality of education in face of limited resources?

It is a pleasure to live here

It is nice area to live in. I like it here and feel safe without Police Force!

It seems odd hat a city survey given in 2014 would be done with pen and paper and checking boxes

It seems that the working relationship between city council members and between the city council and city administration is strained at times. Do not know what cause city manager to resign suddenly- does not look good

It would be good if there were more bikeways and if the Bicentennial bike way connect with the Kurt

It would be nice to see a policeman in the neighborhood once in a while. Never see one at all (Westfield Plat) day +night

It would be real nice if Portage Northern had a football Field. Instead of 2 schools with the worst foot field around West Michigan. Worse than class B and C schools.

I've lived here 22 years, raised my children and enjoy the parks, lakes, trails, and other activities (HS plays, sports) lower taxes and reasonable service w/good schools are crucial for a city to thrive. Hope we don't stray.

I've lived in portage for 13 years. My children all had a great education. I wish there was more help for seniors on a fixed income. Over all I'm glad to be a portage resident. Thank you Just keep doing what you are doing. Don't interfere too much
Keep up the good work!

Keep up what we are doing, except we need to make sure tax aggressor is doing his job. Property values are down tax stars the same

Keeping our education system on top. Be able to retain our good teachers and treat them with respect. Continue to provide adequate fire, police and snow removal services. Don't let taxes reach so high they become only affordable to the rich

Keeping Pfizer, Stryker together large tax base companies in Portage- maintaining above average police and fire protection

Lack of police on duty/ available. Poor roads (Kilgore between Portage and Sprinkle). River, pond, steam cleanup. I have a very polluted pond and stream behind me. So full of junk it does not flow-- very stagnant and ugly.

Limit strip malls to need

Listen carefully to citizen input regarding matters deemed relevant/ important to them or their neighborhood

Look into taxes for super seniors

Looking forward to the completion of the bike trail in the Eliason Preserve. Upgrade commercial properties on S. Westnedge between Schuring Rd. and Centre St.

Love the emphasis on education in our public schools, the continuing education opportunities, library, and social events put on by city. Love our parks and nature. Hope we incorporate that into city planning/landscaping, etc. Dog Park would be great. Love the one on U

ave

Lowering property taxes for senior citizens

Middle class citizens are already struggling to make both ends meet. Please don't raise any more taxes

More bike paths please. I like having a wildlife refuge in Portage. I would be extremely disappointed if it ever were to be developed.

More soccer fields and tennis courts in city parks

More speed officers on Lours Lane unnecessary waste such as "dead end" sign like you have on our street where the pavement ends in the woods with mature trees you can't go any further without the sign. This is a senseless of sign material and the crew to install the sign. Instead send these crews out and fix some of the craters where people drive and destroy their cars

Moved to crossroads village 6 years ago. Not real familiar with parks and services yet! (No computer) Good place to live!

My driveway gets rendered inaccessible several times by the carelessness of the snow removal crew. Also they are slow in clearing in the street area below Kilgore.

My taxes go up every year. I have never had a child in any Portage school. As a senior you are making consider moving away from my home. Please address in your newsletter. Most of my street seniors are in the same situation.

My water bill seems to be increasing more than I would expect. Especially due to the fact that I live alone and try to watch my water usage. Could the senior citizen discount be reinstated?

My wife and I would like to see the sidewalks on major thoroughfares plowed in the winter by the city. Yes, this will mean higher taxes. However, the sidewalks are an important means of transport for many of the poor! Portage having plowed sidewalks will also improve the health of our citizens in the winter months. Plowed sidewalks will encourage the citizens to get outside and move around. We would also like to see the publically owned pools (those in the schools) open to the public during appropriate hours

N/A

NC

Need a stoplight/widening at Shaver and Vanderbilt Ave. We are concerned about the development around the state game area. It's slowly eroding until nothing is left! This natural area was appealing to us when we chose to move to Portage

Need to do something about deer population. We plant flowers, bushes, tomatoes and try to have nice gardens. But the deer come at night and eat them. Speed levels are not controlled. Most vehicles exceed the posted limits.

Need to eliminate people standing on corners by highway begging with signs

No efficient transportation in Portage. No usage of senior citizens in government oversight and employment opportunities

Non-emergency contact for police department

None

None

None

None

None at this time

None at this time

Not sure

On Center Lake we requested an opportunity to relocate the Slalom Sla course to be in the front of the City Park- we were declined and not even given a hearing- told that we interfere with park peers. This is absolutely false and a number of families who pay a significant amount of taxes were denied the right to use the Lake in the most important manner for us- very disappointed- am considering moving eventually

On too many streets that are repaved the man hole covers are set deeper than needed so that snow plows do not hit them. For example on Romence Road between Oakland and Angling. Almost like pot holes.

One of our neighborhoods does not clean up its front yard. Was told to do it but couldn't care less. We all are paying dues especially for that. The neighborhood is in oak shoes Dr. off the way to the roundabout. The neighbors think he is doing it on purpose. We are not very happy and the board has been working on it but he couldn't care less. We don't know if you can do something about it. We like our neighborhood clean. The house is always full of cars in the drive way, the garage doors are always open and very messy. Sorry we don't like it. Thank you

Other than the fact I love this town. I'm happy here, feel useful here, support the hard working farmers. Love 12th St. sr. school. Thankful were not all cement and buildings we have nature lots of it left, community supports with each other. Just thankful

Our condominium home does not receive curbside junk removal or tree and limb pickup because of being located on a private street. If the neighborhood association could locate a lot to facilitate the pickup, would the city of portage consider picking it up, the same as on public streets?

Our overall economic level for portage citizens is decreasing and this is impacting many respects of life in our city--negatively

Our ratings as one of the best cities in MI (or US). High level of education of citizens. Low taxes. One of the lowest in the state for larger cities. Great schools. Tree city. Many great venues for entertainment, sport and recreation (Includes Kzoo)

Patrol school areas to keep kids from loitering after dark. Strictly enforce fireworks ordinance

Paving projects and boulevard projects are being performed on the streets that are not in dire need. Portage Rd by the lakes was not in need of improvement and has in fact had multiple improvements in the last several years yet other streets are in horrible disrepair (i.e., the road between Menards and celebration cinema) Instead of adding unneeded boulevards how about fixing existing pavements? There is much time spent on portage Rd. but never a bike lane?

Perhaps a splash pa or mini-waterpark or all-aged children. Thanks for caring enough to

send this survey!

Playground equipment taken out in spring in 2 parks never replaced.

Please don't raise taxes. Please list all the services you provided in 2015 in your website and Portage Newsletter, let the residents in Portage discuss and involve in

Please fix MLK Street by crossroad mall it needs it bad with the mall, star, movie, restaurant all close by

Please look at sink holes in the road and when your tax payers call please listen don't just put cones in front of the house for 3 months. We/ I love my/ our neighborhood but the roads and service are not up to expectation

Please put individuals on the planning commission who a) have concern or people/ citizens not solely for business expansion and b) who have no relationships to area land developers

Please reinstate the survey rental service. Like have it available weekends and or 2-3 days a week. Road closure/detours: when road closures are required for improvements try to get the work done ASAP like starting earlier and working Saturdays and longer working hours, i.e. Westledge project should have started the day school was out. The PSL needs an addition i.e. 2nd story with elevator. Newsletter; to reduce costs, use less color and less expensive paper

Please stagger construction projects so that two main north/south through lanes are not under construction at the same time

Plow hollow wood drive off angling away from driveway/ mailbox side. It takes an extra pass due to street width. Why not make that center pass away from driveways?

Political candidate's bank rolled by billionaires in GR. City commissions that wear blinders. Mediocre restaurants-- promote small quality, restaurant not chains

Portage has been a great place to live and raise our children and grandchildren. We have all done well in Portage. Keep up the good work you are doing.

Portage is a good place to live because: a government sensitive to the needs of the citizens, the lack of political fighting, the maintenance of a park like environment, the positive level of volunteerism

Portage is a good place to live. We could do a better job keeping our streets maintained. It would be nice to see the Portage Senior Center given some attention. Space for programs is a problem. Let's keep our tax base affordable, so average wage earners can afford to live and enjoy our community

Portage is a great place to live and raise a family. Great school system, parks, lakes, recreation. Suggestions: 2nd trash pickup in fall, lots of strip malls with no businesses

Portage is a wonderful place to educate and raise children. There are many beautiful parks to show children the beauty of nature

Portage is very business unfriendly. They put up every obstacle they can to impede business!

Portage needs to expand facilities that promote healthy lifestyle. Bike trails, parks, outdoor and indoor recreation facilities i.e. tennis courts, aquatic center etc. It was the school

system that made us choose portage. There is huge value in maintaining and improving this in order to attract young families.

Portage's city center is gorgeously landscaped. However, each year the city spends significant funds on annual-variety flowers. A well planned planting of perennials could not only reduce the amount spent on the city center plantings, it would allow for greater variety (trees shrubs etc.) of plantings and the funds saved could be used to add plantings in other areas (commercial etc.) Volunteers could still be utilized to maintain/ care of the perennial plants. Portage was once a tree city and could be again! People wouldn't need to move to Mattawan Schoolcraft, Texas Twp., etc. to escape the urban sprawl, thus decreasing city of portage's tax base.

Quality of water-- needs addressing.

Question #18: I have been told by the chief and police dept. sqt that there is only four patrolling officers on duty at one time. 1 each in each 1/4 of the city. I fear that we have a serious problem with traffic because of a lack of strong enforcement. Speeding (especially in school zones) running stop signs, running red lights. No officers to catch them!

Questions my family has been asking: How do we get neighbors involved with one another? How do we get families physically active in meaningful/ including ways? What could bring together neighborhoods?

Quit spending money on Sprinklers and watering public areas. Why water grass it then needs to be mowed. Plant native species that are drought resistant.

Railroad crossing at Center and Shaver, we need gates. Also at the same intersection driving N, on Shaver turning right on Centre. Many drivers turn on red and in front of Police Station from Westnedge W, to Westnedge N, On Centre Street, at Lovers Lane, West the speed is 35MPH many drivers still are at 45 MPH. and going east the same. The curbs on Copper Oaks really are in bad shape I live at 8147 Copperoaks if someone wants to contact me call (269) 321-9315 ask for Rich.

Ramona Park is a very fun, useful part of our community. However, the rules there are way too strict. We should be able to at least eat on the beach as long as we clean up.

RE: Question 16-- Our road is terrible, but is scheduled to be repaved, so in a month the answer will change. Nobody likes paying taxes, but compared to other communities I am familiar with, Portage deserves an "A+" for level and quality of services. We miss the canoe livery, but I could see how it could become a money loser.

Really miss the city bike ride in the fall. Would love to see a bike lane put in on shaver from Oakland/ Shaver intersection to city center

Recently I was talking with another Portage-- He had a problem with bot being notified about a "retention" pond being put against his property. When he called the city, they said he should have been notified-- their mistake, this should not have happened!!! Also, I had a problem with the water dept. about meter rates-- not being notified about different rates for different size meters--found out after the meter was installed-- Should have been told "prior" to installation. Also, I have a very strong disagreement about being charged (rate) for meter size regardless of

H2O usage. Told that the rate is set because I have "capacity" of meter--not how much H2O of use which is immaterial.

Recycling program should be expanded-- not easy to recycle certain items, control deer population, would like to see fluoride removed from city water; newer research shows it's detrimental to health!

Reduce some services with minor pay cuts, have city employees take minor pay cuts except police and fire, water quality is important but rates have increased faster than inflation. Our water department may need an evaluation of the way funds are being used.

Reduce speed limit on Sprinkle Rd between Meredith and Milham 45

Residents should be very responsible for keeping storm sewer grates cleaned out-- Most of these in our area are plugged with leaves, branches, etc.

Road repairs will become a large problem. Neighborhood blight becoming more evident. A bit more police patrols needed in neighborhoods

Satisfied as is!

Schools? Enough? Library is good

Seek continually to improve quality of service allowing residents to suggest improvements. Enforce lawn and landscape policies in residential zones. Maintain stores with business not letting empty stores/ businesses exist. Equitable signing enforced-- (Still have a problem on Oakland with Daycare (Green Roof) Day care not getting fair treatment with reroof child care across the street---makes no sense!

Snow plows the cul-de-sac from left to right to avoid dumping snow on driveway

Snow plowing is done "miles" from the curb! I know it's to protect mail boxes, but I think it could be done better. I live in a cul-de-sac and it's the last to be plowed, I missed work last winter because I couldn't get out of my sub-division

Snow removal-- I understand primary roads need to be kept open but at a certain point they need to work on secondary. Not everyone has four wheel drive and what's the use of keeping main roads open if you can't get to them. One swipe or so is better than nothing. The people who do recycle need to cover their bins because their recyclables blow all down the street. Better ordinances about dead trees on property. Owners who let their dogs bark uncontrollably.

Snow removal in our area was horrible last winter. We live on a cul-de-sac and it wasn't plowed on many occasions for almost a week

Snow removal last year was so horrible! They took too long to remove even Westnedge. Very very unsafe! And they did not hardly salt. Safety first! Let people take their own junk to the junk yard and pay for it. Like most places, why am I paying for something I don't use/ participate? Same with brush removal? I am paying for these and I don't use/ need them. We are taxed on too many things, we don't use/ want. I would rather safer, salted, plowed roads. And the senior center is fine. I have been there many times and there is maybe 6 people there. They don't need a new place! Again, more taxes for something we don't use/ want. We like Potage but it is getting unaffordable to the average family. Potage does not need NEW everything! We haven't gotten a pay raise in 7 years but taxes keep going up, we just can't give anymore. Please stop the

increases

Snow removal should be prompt, we should have better restaurants and stores, we need lights on streets, and overall I love portage! Please help Kalamazoo-- Battle Creek airport so they do not cancel flights all the time! U turns without U turn light should be discouraged to decrease traffic accidents

Snow removal strategy in neighborhood

Snow removal this past winter was awful! I realize there was a lot of snow but it's ridiculous that my street did not get plowed for 2-3 days while the major streets were clear. I'm not able to use those streets if I'm snowed in so you are clearing those streets for people who don't pay city taxes

Snowplows regularly throw a great deal of heavy, difficult to remove snow on the sidewalk I'm expected to keep clear. They are also hard on mailboxes

Snowplows

Social dances (free style, ball room) mixed crowd

Some need to be told to clean up their yards of cars and shrubs that need trimming

Some of the questions were hard for me to answer because I am unable to get out much as I am taking care of my mother 24/7. And some of the services do not apply to those of us that live in a mobile park.

Sometimes you need to recognize more government services are not the answer. Keep the schools strong. Most of the rest are not that important

Speeding on side streets, people not keeping houses and yards in good repair. Greater enforcement of people running red traffic lights

Sprinkle Rd is a dangerous street for riding bikes and walking. I would like to see the city build a bike path from Gray Street to Zylman Rd. along Sprinkle Rd. on the Ramona Property to tie in with the beautiful bike and walking path around Stryker. It would be very useful for the residents from the neighborhood to be able to ride or walk to access the Stryker path safely, without having to go on Sprinkle Rd. I hope you will look into this. Thank you

Stop putting in boulevards causes difficulty in snow removal and access to homes and exits from business.

Streets need to be repaired or paved. More police patrols in neighborhoods so police can connect with people who live there

Streets- they just replaced my driveway curb- did an excellent job! A+

Streets, water

Stricter enforcement of traffic laws needed. I.e.: speeding on main through fares. Running red lights.

Subdivision roads are terrible although have been notified we are on the list for repairs. Traffic slow on Westnedge

Taxes are high- try to do more with what you have. Lower taxes w/out loosing anything.

Encourage more citizen support and groups

Taxing industry should not be any more than homes that pay tax. People working in portage are paying tax. Taxes should be the same percent of value of building as home. P.S. No I don't own a business. Thank you for letting me participate.

Thank you for working with the schools to have a police presence there. I think it is making a difference

Thank you!

That the city water has a better taste to is so that we did not have to purchase bottled water to drink!

The brush/ trash/ junk/ leaf pick up program and enforcement and the county hazardous waste center is nice; however I would like to see an annual or biannual hazardous waste collection at a location in portage for residents to safely dispose of such items as mattresses, old computer/ electronics, and like items for recycling purposes. I envision a fee for such a service. This could occur in the summer at a central location for drop off of such items. Just a thought!

The city has done a great job managing legacy cost. Traffic flow on Westnedge continues to improve, however the police have to do a better job enforcing vehicles to not use the turn lane as a merging lane. Also enforcement of ban on texting. Improve neighborhood code enforcement to maintain quality neighborhoods.

The city should be much more proactive as new areas develop. As an example, the shopping Centre at Oakland and Centre, a fairly recent addition, is a Hodge-pod of colors and designs that could have been more aesthetically developed. They city should consider guidelines for new or redeveloped areas. A good example of careful planning is Santa Barbara, CA.

The condition of Osterhout Ave is unacceptable given the number of people who use it.

The corner of shaver ave and Centre ave surely gets busy. Walgreen's store is there. It is sometimes dangerous being in that parking lot and attempting to drive onto Centre aver

The court should not have been closed consolidating 9.2 District court into 8th district court years ago was based on the promise we would always have a court in Portage. The city council seems to rely too heavily on recommendations from city staff (i.e. economic development staff especially). It seems project is "rubber stamped" by the council and while public input is gathered- often times the decisions appear pre-determined

The decision to begin construction on S. Westnedge late in the summer and not have it done before schools started was ridiculous. My children don't receive bussing and have to walk out of their way in order to get to and from school. The traffic, including school busses, have been cutting through the neighborhood making it more dangerous for the kids. Have you seen how some of those teens drive?! And the construction begins on Portage Rd before Westnedge is done?! Why aren't these guys working 6 days a week to get this mess done?

The drug issues need to be addressed, snow removal better, better flow of traffic, and this holiday on Westnedge. Too many accidents. Code compliance following up on complaints

The library is super. I don't want to see its hours shortened. Would like to see a bigger senior center. #15 Snow removal was a problem-- especially last ear. I live on a corner and

sometimes I feel as though the plowers dig out the whole street and deposit it at my corner! Also they have taken out sprinkle heads with the plow.

The loss of Maurice Evans is significant. It will be hard to replace a man with that integrity and skill.

The mayor drives his pontoon boat too fast on West Lake. Slow down and smell the roses, Pete!
The median landscaping by the Milham post office looks very unkempt

The patchwork repaving of Angling Rd between Romence and Centre has to be a huge waste of money in that a little gets done every year and the road condition doesn't improve.

The Portage public schools in my opinion are over built and excessive taxes are the result. Citizens as me on a fixed income, at times it is hard to make ends meet.

The potage newsletter is well done! Special pickups (brush, household junk, etc.) are vital to suburban living, happy for curbside recycling, snow/leaf removal is excellent.

There is a strong need to support the portage senior center through a millage effort in the near future due to increase of 50+ year old citizens and greater need for increased services. The role of citizen advisory board members is quite important to the city of Portage. I believe the advisory boards' input to the city's needs and activities is underestimated.

There are quite a few houses in our neighborhood that do not mow or shovel. It would be nice to have more compliance in that area. The schools are excellent and need to be marketed.

There is a real problem with follow-up and follow thru when citizens report abandoned homes. I personally have experienced this with my next door neighbor who hasn't lived in her home for over 5 years. My address is 1701 Whitby.

There seems to be a few groups who ride through neighborhoods at night--motorcycle and car-- always late after 10 pm-- with either/ and loud exhaust-- music. They don't live thee but it is disturbing to residents, Angling Rd from Centre to Milham is always noisy and some cars race through--dangerous, noisy, disturbing. Speed trapper speed bumps would help. A noise ordinance might help as well.

This is a great community with many things to do. We chose to live here and will for many years to come. Keep doing what you are doing in city government. It has been wonderful
This is performance. Don't even bother asking.

Too many fireworks over the 4th of July other than the scheduled program at the ball park. We would like a nice, big, fruit and vegetable market in Portage.

Too many snowplow passes on the same side of street using my street as a turn around?
Erecting a wall at the end of my driveway. I counted 5x and only 2x on the other side
Traffic light at Cooley and Centre. Dead animal removal on roadside. Constant Pothole repair!

Try to keep the drama in city gov't to a minimum. Seems like at any given time either City Council or the School Board is misbehaving. It makes portage look bad! Keep up city services, even if taxes are raised slightly. Cooperation with and sharing service with Kalamazoo can be a good thing

Turn light at Westnedge and Romence not working. Hard making left turn off Westnedge.

No turn light on Red at Center and Westnedge going North on Westnedge. They have been out for a long time.

Tax dollars could be saved by limiting snowplowing on side streets to only greater than 3-4 inches. Sometimes the contractor widens the plowed area during lesser snowfall times and this serves only to damage lawn edges and bottom of driveways. The fee to get into Ramona Park for those who already pay Portage city taxes is too high! No resident should pay, put property tax payers should not-- they already pay.

Very concerned with question #27, city government has been contacted many times over and over about the same problem at this same address without any consequences for the homeowner!!! Not acceptable!!!!

Water and sewer see to be very expensive

Water bills- too high. Trying to diversify population

Water fees are so high-- over \$100 for 2 people

We are pleased with everything. Thank you

We feel it is taking too long to enforce neighborhood codes. We have neighbors who repair cars all the time and we think there are a number of people living in the house and most are not family. We know some neighbors have report this to city authorities.

We find it very frustrating to see a left turn lamp on SB Westnedge @ Garden Lane and it very rarely used. There has to be a way for it to be on a sensor if the lane hasn't been cleared. Especially Saturdays it can be hard to turn. Also the left turn lamps on NB Westnedge and NB Oakland both @ Milham has solid red after green arrow and (at least Oakland) could be a green yield. It's frustrating to get up to that light and have to wait through the whole thing. We noticed this last winter how park pathways were getting plowed before streets sometimes. Not a very wise way to spend resources. We like how road repairs were complete at many intersections not just patches. Has a more complete feel.

We frequent the excellent portage public library and hope they can maintain their services

We like Portage. We feel safe and love the schools and neighborhoods and use the bike trails.

We live on a dead end street (Stonehenge Dr.) at the bottom of a hill. We are 4th priority for plowing. However, there are times when we cannot get out due to the snow. It would be wonderful if we could just get a plow to open a single lane so we could get out. Just a quick pass on the hill would be enough.

We moved to portage for the excellent schools and have never looked back. That was 2004-- we love living in Portage, MI.

We must continue to grow and serve the public. Keeping schools current so families will stay or move here. Too many area communities have decayed because of loss of businesses and local wealth. We must not forget!

We need a better bike path that goes all the way to Meijer's on Shaver Road

We need property tax relief for seniors living on a fixed income. Especially needed for surviving spouses.

We need to work towards increased services for seniors and preschool age residents. We also need to address the homeless problem that is developing within our city.

We really appreciate how responsive Portage employees & helpful they are whenever we have questions. We are very concerned about speeding car traffic on Primrose Land and end street. There is very little traffic patrol present on these and the street is constantly being used as a shortcut by PCH students and "amateur sports car enthusiasts" it's just a matter of time with all the young children and parked camping trailers and boats before there will be a fatality which could be prevented. Thank you, we love Portage and are concerned about this.

We very much enjoy and appreciate living in Portage. Overall, we do think it's a great place to live- big enough, but not too big and close-but not too close to bigger cities like Grand Rapids. Living in Portage also gives us access to 2 wonderful hospitals- Borgess and Bronson. We have also appreciated the city leadership over the years.

We would like sidewalks added in the Amberly School neighborhood. (Rothbury)

What happened to the canoe people by city hall; not a fan of the butterfly. I know cost is a concern but miss the band shell events. They were nice family event. I also miss the flowers by city hall and the library; again I understand the cost factor but since we don't have an actual downtown it was a pleasant town center for visitors and all of us. Also current recycling could be improved. Current recycling people are not very courteous. Container is thrown anywhere and has to be retrieved. Also wish we could expand and improve current program.

When you have complaints in neighborhoods follow up on them. Don't just ignore or drop them. Listen to people in neighborhoods or concerns that concern them. They pay taxes too!

Who picked out the cheap looking plastic city signs- welcome to Portage- they didn't need to be changed that cost us money and they look cheap. Fill up the empty strip malls and vacant buildings before you let other ones go in. I know that asphalt is tax dollars and trees are not but empty stores makes the city look bad. What happened to being the tree city? Get the city workers out there to unplug drains so we don't have flooded streets. Bring in some bigger businesses instead of all this retail-retail comes and goes

Why does the city charge such a high cost to hook-up to city water? Years ago homes were built where no city water was available-- so they installed wells. The city grew. Now when water is available in the street the city gouges its customers. Shame on the city!

Why must I have: special assessment property taxes water/ sewer ALL DUE in September? I have lived at Austen Lake more than 40 years and NEVER has one area had to pay more money than the rest of lake owners! Until NOW-- the special assessment only for people in the cove.

Why would anyone in their right mind have road construction projects taking place on Westnedge ave and Portage road as is going on now? It is absolutely ridiculous! Some road construction employees have also state that they can't believe it!!! Why would you not fix one first and when done do the other? Logical??

Would like more leaf/ sticks pick up. Sometimes the timing is off... Someone needs to pressure the crossroad mall owners to repave the roads around the mall and by the cinema

Would like the light at Portage and Bender rd. to return to flashing for early morning commute (before 6 or 7am)

Would like to have monthly household junk pickups or at least a second annual pickup. Also an increase in street lights is needed.

Would like to see a 2nd big trash pickup perhaps each fall. Live on a street with the bike path it is usually filled with gravel, sticks, etc.--would like to see more routine street sweeping of bike paths-- it is a safety issue. Also would like to see better clean up after fall leaf pick up. City website seems not always up to date. We have many, many loud vehicles (stereo) going down our road. Is there any noise enforcement? It can rattle the windows... Very disappointed in the ending of Parks and Rec programs for kids, theaters, concerts, etc.

Would like to see a broader recycling program- with less sorting. Make junk pick-ups easier methods of dispose of hazard waste and medicines. Only 1 red box in police station

Would like to see additionally curbside pickups

Would like to see more activities at the band shell

Would like to see/hear more about Portage/Kalamazoo relations from the positive perspective. So many opportunities to collaborate with our communities toward improvements and safety. Perhaps some "stoplight" features can be highlighted on a monthly basis. Sometimes feels like there is a competition rather than cooperation with community events and overall politics

Would love to see the return of apple fest and other cultural/ recreational offerings that have been eliminated. I also strongly support portage's "opt-in" with the new county transportation authority/ mileage.

You are going overboard on the beautification of potage. Stick to the basics. Those islands you put in the middle of the streets are not helpful but detrimental

You do not maintain our neighborhood as well as "rich" neighborhoods-sidewalks-streetlights, etc.

You gals/guys are doing a wonderful job! Keep up the good work

You need to consider building round-a-bouts. Portage& Bishop rds. would be a great spot. Takes way too long to drive across town. Somebody needs to travel to Europe and see how traffic is done.

You need to lower the speed limit around Austin Lake to 25 MPH like the other lakes in the city. Now that it is listed as part of the bike trail here in town it needs signs and police control to reduce the speed limit before someone gets hurt. Tons of people are out here, we live here and we need to be protected. Maybe just one danger zone.

Your survey doesn't address neighbors with noisy dogs during the day

Your taxes should be fixed at the time of purchase. You should not be forced out of your home due to taxation. You should also not be penalized for property improvements. One person may spend 6,000 on vacation. If I make a 6,000 improvement to my property I will be taxed for the rest of my life and potentially have to consider moving. The water rates are ridiculous

compared to other municipalities

Zoning and the location of business to fit the needs of the public (no city center feel). Lack of sidewalks to encourage more walking and less driving-- reduce pollution. More emphasis on public transportation. More off road bike trails like what is on Romence to encourage bike travel to work locations. I have had to ride along Sprinkle which is very dangerous. City ordinance enforced to regulate firework usage in neighborhoods with the exception of Jul 4.