

# PORTAGER

*A Natural Place to Move*



## A Message from Mayor Patricia M. Randall

The word “home” represents so many things, as it is used as a noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. Baseball’s objective is to come home: “Home plate,” “home run,” “safe at home,” etc. Home base can be a starting point and ending point. Rooting for the home team and the hometown kid are forever popular.

Returning home at the end of the day, a vacation, or for the holidays conjures feelings of warmth and safety. Work-from-home has soared in popularity post-COVID, offering an alternative to commuting to the traditional office environment. Home-style cooking depicts an aroma-filled experience just like mom used to make.

Home day care offers a smaller, more intimate childcare option. “Homely atmosphere” is preferable to being referred to as “homely in appearance.” A homemaker is an identity option for those who work to make their house a home, care for their children, cook, clean and, essentially, do it all. When one feels “at home” they feel a sense of inclusion, safety, and peace.

Home is many things to many people. It is the place you live, and the place you love.

Emotionally, home is intimately tied to our sense of identity and self definition. It is where we establish a sense of who we are and where we fit in this world. The personal space of home becomes intertwined with our emotional experiences, memories, and personal history shaping our perception of ourselves.

We revere the homes of famous people, both past and

present. The naming of homes confers the importance of these dwelling places. President Lincoln’s home in Springfield, Illinois is a National Historic Site. Mount Vernon and Monticello were home to two past presidents. Graceland has become a pilgrimage for Elvis fans. Do we believe that if we visit the homes of these famous people, we may understand them a bit more? Relate or not relate to them more?

If the American Dream is home ownership, where does that leave those without one?

In Portage, we have 14,261 single-family homes, 1,589 condos, and 5,713 apartments. About 71 percent of our housing stock was constructed prior to 1989, with about 50% built from 1960 to 1989. Less than five percent of our houses have been built within the last ten years. Per the Upjohn Institute’s Housing Study, our new builds have not kept up with rising demand for housing.

This can be attributed to cheaper land in neighboring communities, the high cost of building supplies, and mortgage rates teetering around seven percent. Further keeping new buyers out of the market, per Jaqua Realtors’ research, the average selling price of a home in Portage has increased an average 38 percent in the past four years. All of our rental units have waiting lists, some consisting of several hundred families.

Over the past three years, the city has felt very optimistic that we were doing our part to address the housing crisis on a local level. Working with our developers and threading the needle with various local and state incentives, we approved an impressive number of 1,278 new housing units. Twenty-five percent of these are under construction or completed, with Greenspire’s Tall Timbers leading the way with 180 apartments.

Unfortunately, 46 percent of the housing units approved have been completely withdrawn and 29 percent await funding or further plan revision.

In today’s economy, development is especially hard. Still, developers come to Portage because people of all income levels want to work and live here. Developers are not our enemy; they continue to grow our tax base. Without them, we could not continue to deliver the high level of services our community has come to expect and deserves without raising our millage rate.

The next time you vote to support new school buildings, stuff a back pack with food for the weekend, clean your closets and donate used clothes, feel good about your tax dollars supplying every Michigan child with breakfast and lunch, or donate to your favorite charity, remember that the core issue begins and ends with having a “home.” All of these other things are important, but if a child does not know where they will lay their head at night, the rest is simply an exercise in making ourselves feel philanthropic.

The next time a proposal for new housing is brought forward, even if in your own back yard, along your route to work, or where you enjoy nature on someone else’s land, please ask yourself this question: “Were others excited about MY home being built?”

There is always room for a “win-win.” From site selection through planning and construction, your City Council continues to demonstrate the commitment to working with developers and neighborhoods to achieve it. I’m looking forward to working with you to address the worsening housing crisis in the days and months ahead!

– Patricia M. Randall

## New Ridesharing Service to Launch in City of Portage

### Metro to Introduce On-Demand Pilot Project

There’s a new service in town aimed at helping people get where they want to go, and it promises to do so quickly, easily, and affordably.

Metro Link, a service of Metro, is an app-driven, on-demand rideshare service that combines the best aspects of public transportation with the flexibility of the private on-demand transportation services that have gained popularity in recent years. The pilot service is set to launch April 15 and run through the end of 2025.

“The goal of Metro Link is to use technology to expand access to equitable, flexible public transportation in the Kalamazoo area through extending the reach of Metro’s bus network,” said Metro Executive Director Sean McBride.

Metro Link will provide rides in three distinct service areas, the largest of which is in Portage (see map to the right). Each zone overlaps significantly with existing bus routes, making it easy for a rider to extend a trip to the downtown transportation hub or beyond.

The Metro Link app will be available in the Apple App and Google Play Stores beginning April 10. A rider will be able to book a ride through the app or by calling (269) 388-6373. He or she will be matched with others headed in the same direction in a Metro Link branded vehicle for a quick, efficient shared trip.



The app will also display the option to use the fixed-route bus network for travel to the destination or to take a Metro Link ride and then transfer to a Metro bus.

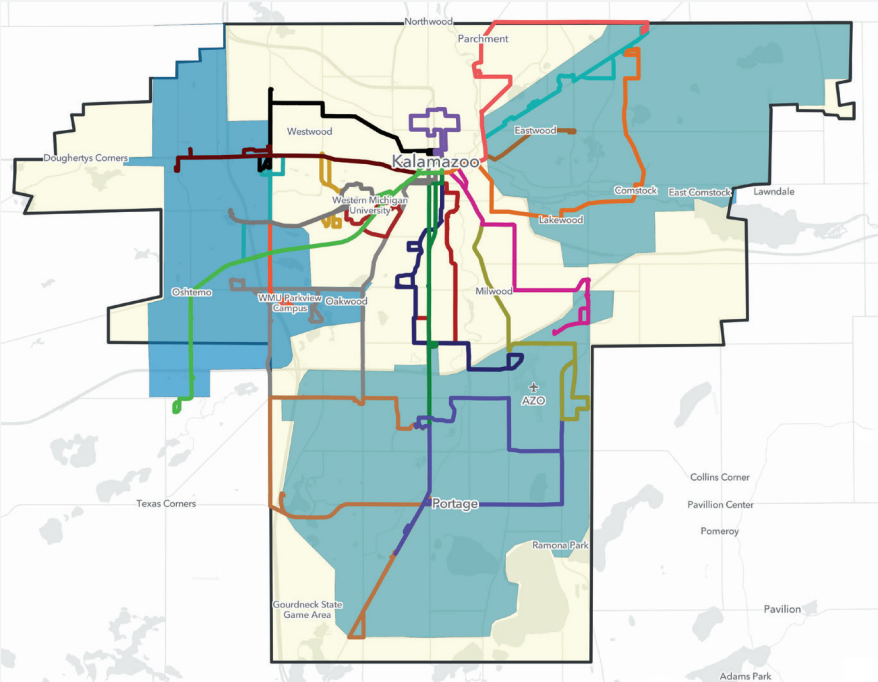
Portage City Council Members Chris Burns and Jim Pearson represent Portage on the Central County Transportation Authority, and both have been champions of this service since it became a topic of conversation more than a year ago. “Portage residents need good transportation to employment, medical services, shopping, and recreation – not to mention voting,” Pearson said. “I’m excited to be able to help our residents gain more access to vital services in our community.”

“A particular strength of this service is that riders can trust the professionally-maintained Metro Link vehicles driven by professionally-trained drivers,” Burns said, adding that Metro Link drivers must adhere to the same drug testing standards as bus drivers.

The base fare the rideshare service will be \$1.50, with discounts for seniors and those with disabilities. Payment can be made by debit or credit card through the Metro Link app when booking the ride.

“This is a pilot program,” McBride said, “and we expect that it will evolve as we learn how riders are using the service.”

Metro Link is the latest service in the emerging global transportation trend of “microtransit,” a segment of the public transit industry marked by the use of small vehicles available on demand through the use of dynamic routing technology. Such a service can cost-effectively offer riders more flexibility than a fixed-route bus network can. Though



Metro Link will provide rides in three distinct service areas, which overlap with existing bus routes.

microtransit isn’t new, it has experienced rapid growth during recent years.

Metro has partnered with Via, a global leader in microtransit. Via provides similar services in 700 markets in 40 countries with a strong presence here in Michigan. Cities such as Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Muskegon each use the firm to expand access to public transportation in those markets.

**Metro serves Kalamazoo, Portage, Parchment, Comstock Township, Kalamazoo Township, Oshtemo Township, and Texas Township with 20 bus routes, 961 bus stops, and a fleet of 46 buses. It also provides the Metro Connect service, a curb-to-curb, ADA-compliant paratransit service, and Metro Share, a van lending program for approved agencies that provide service to senior citizens and individuals with disabilities. Metro Connect and Metro Share are available to the 250,000 residents of Kalamazoo County’s 562 square-mile service area. Metro was founded in 1967.**



# Construction Season Ahead

A local government is responsible for providing many core city services to its citizens. Two of those core services are providing quality roads and municipal utilities. The city maintains 73 miles of major streets, 151 miles of local streets, 52 traffic signal installations, and 58 miles of on-street bike lanes, as well as 263.5 miles of water main, 241.5 miles of sanitary sewer, and 210.5 miles of storm sewer.

As the warm summer weather approaches, the Department of Transportation & Utilities is ramping up road and utility construction projects. The following major street and utility reconstruction projects are planned for this summer.

### 1. Portage Road, Romence Road to Fairfield Drive

The Portage Road Reconstruction Project includes resurfacing of the existing roadway from Romence Road Parkway to Fairfield Road, installation of center island boulevards, upgrades to sidewalk and ADA ramps, replacement of the traffic signals at the East Milham Avenue and Winters Drive intersections, installation of sanitary sewer between East Milham Avenue and 1,000 feet to the north, installation of water main from Helen Avenue to Byrd Drive, streetlights and restoration. Construction is scheduled to begin April 1, 2024.

### 2. Shaver Road, South City Limits to Vanderbilt Avenue

The Shaver Road Reconstruction Project continues from last year with resurfacing of the existing roadway from

south of Captiva Island to Vanderbilt Avenue, and sidewalk installation from Beethoven Avenue to Oakland Drive. A confirmed schedule for this project is not yet available.

### 3. Cooley Drive, West Centre Avenue to Old Centre Avenue

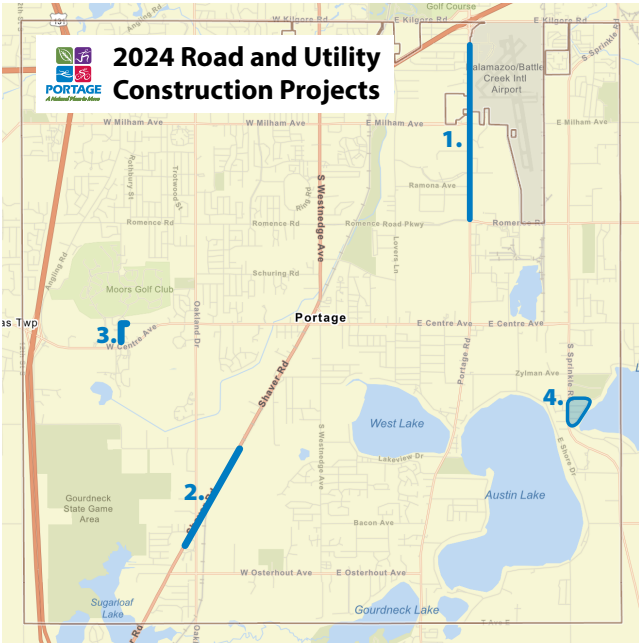
The Cooley Drive Reconstruction Project includes realignment of the existing roadway curve, storm drainage improvements, concrete curb and gutter, sidewalk, new pavement, pavement markings, and signage. Construction is anticipated to begin late summer.

### 4. Ramona Park Subdivision Improvements, Water and Sewer Installation and Street Reconstruction

The Ramona Park Subdivision Improvements project includes the installation of new sanitary sewer and new water main on Gray Street, Mahoney Street, Lum Street and Hayes Street. Storm drainage improvements and street reconstruction will be included for these streets and Waruf Avenue. Construction is scheduled to begin April 1, 2024.

We know that construction projects can be frustrating for drivers and pedestrians. The City of Portage works hard to ensure projects are completed on time and with as few disruptions as possible for residents, businesses, and motorists.

As with all construction projects occurring in or near public roadways, motorists are asked to use caution in work zones.



Please drive carefully around construction workers and remember to *Give ‘em a Break*.

For more information, call the Department of Transportation & Utilities at 329-4422 or visit [portagemi.gov/295](http://portagemi.gov/295) to see the latest in project updates. You can also sign up to receive construction updates by signing up for the city’s Notify Me notification system. Visit [portagemi.gov/list.aspx](http://portagemi.gov/list.aspx) and subscribe to the **Road Construction Updates** category.

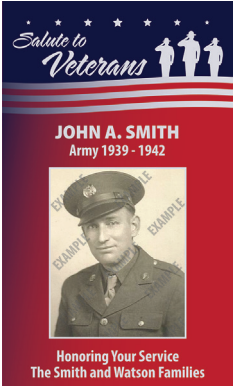
## Help the City Honor Veterans and Active-Duty Military

### 2024 Salute to Veterans

Sponsor a personalized light-pole banner with a photo of your veteran for \$200. The city will display the banners on light poles in Liberty Park from Memorial Day to Labor Day 2024. The banner is yours to keep at the end of the display.



Proceeds from this program will benefit veterans services at the Portage Zhang Senior Center. Visit the City Manager’s web page at [portagemi.gov/170](http://portagemi.gov/170) for complete details.



Hurry! Only 25 banners are available and will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. The deadline to claim a banner and submit a photo of your veteran is April 26, 2024.

## Connect With Us: Notify Me

Stay informed with real-time city updates by subscribing at [portagemi.gov/list.aspx](http://portagemi.gov/list.aspx). Choose the categories you’re interested in to receive notifications directly to your inbox. Recently, updates to email delivery rules have been made, impacting how the we sends notifications. To ensure uninterrupted receipt of notifications, please add **[listserv@civicplus.com](mailto:listserv@civicplus.com)** to your email whitelist or approved sender list.

## Kalamazoo In Bloom Celebrating 40 Years with Bee Hotels and Butterfly Puddlers

Every spring, the City of Portage partners with Kalamazoo In Bloom to beautify the City Centre and the Portage Creek Bicentennial Park (PCBP) Trailhead with vibrant flower beds, whimsical topiaries, and container plantings. This year, Kalamazoo In Bloom celebrates their 40th anniversary and is “Nurturing Nature” with projects that call attention to pollinators.



Three-fourths of the world’s flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world’s food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce. That’s one out of every three bites of food you eat ([USDA.gov](http://usda.gov)). That means pollinators like bees, butterflies and other animals and insects play a vital role in ecosystems and food production.

Kalamazoo In Bloom is taking steps to support bee and butterfly habitats in Portage by installing bee hotels and butterfly puddlers at the PCBP Trailhead this spring. Bee hotels cater to solitary mason and leafcutter bees, providing a safe environment for females to lay eggs during the spring and summer seasons. Unlike hive-dwelling bees that produce honey, these solitary bees are gentle and rarely sting unless provoked. Butterfly puddlers, on the other hand, serve as summer magnets for butterflies, offering them a landing spot to access vital nutrients. Unlike traditional water sources like ponds or birdbaths, which butterflies cannot land on, muddy soil provides the necessary moisture and essential minerals through a process known as “puddling.” This initiative not only supports the local bee and butterfly populations but also promotes biodiversity in the area.

## Flower Planting Volunteer Opportunities

Join us in beautifying the City Centre and the PCBP Trailhead with vibrant summer blooms! We’re calling for volunteers to help us with two crucial tasks that will create a stunning display for residents and visitors alike to enjoy.

### Flower Planting Days

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 10, and Wednesday, May 15, through Friday, May 17, from 9 AM to 12 PM. We need your green thumbs to plant annual flowers and mulch the flower beds at City Centre and the PCBP trailhead. Don’t forget to bring along your trowel, gloves, and bucket if you have them, although we’ll have extras on hand. Registering in advance is encouraged at [kalamazooinbloom.org/events](http://kalamazooinbloom.org/events), where you can also find details on parking and meeting locations for each day. Check-in and on-site registration will begin at 9 AM. Water and snacks will be provided by Kalamazoo in Bloom!



### Adopt-a-Bed

For those with a green thumb and a bit more time to spare, consider joining our Adopt-a-Bed program. Volunteers in this program will “adopt a bed” in the Portage City Centre area and care for it throughout the season by weeding and deadheading as needed. Kalamazoo in Bloom gardeners will handle the watering, and as a thank you, bed adopters will be recognized with their names displayed on a flower bed sign all summer long.

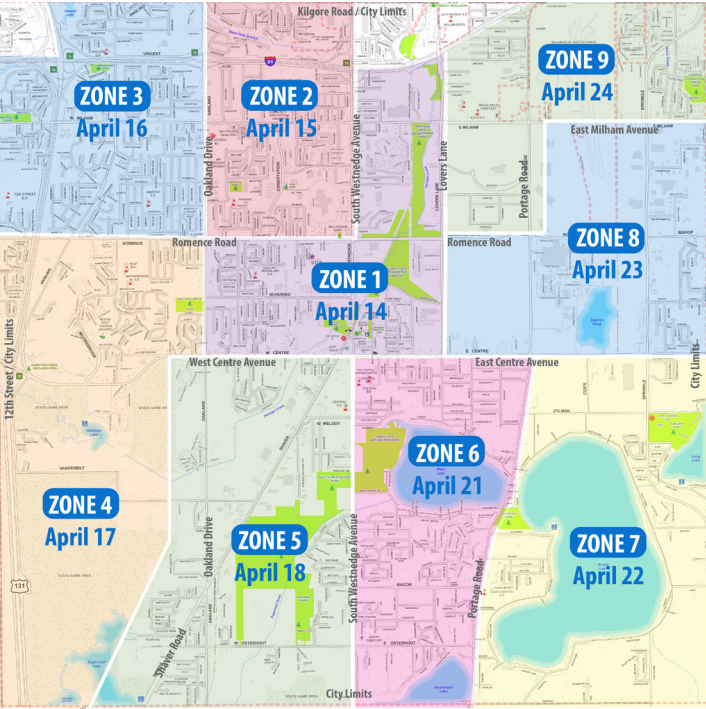
To sign up for either of these rewarding opportunities or to get more information, visit [kalamazooinbloom.org/events](http://kalamazooinbloom.org/events) or call Kalamazoo in Bloom at 548-6232.

## Spring Hydrant Flushing Schedule

The city’s utility contractor, Veolia, will conduct fire hydrant flushing beginning the evening of Sunday, April 14 through April 25. The map to the right indicates dates hydrant flushing will take place in each area of the city. Most hydrants will be flushed between 11 PM on the date indicated and 7:30 AM the following morning to avoid high-traffic hours. This is a tentative schedule; it may be necessary for this work to be performed outside an assigned day or area to provide the best possible results.

Hydrant flushing helps improve water quality by removing sediment that accumulates in the water system and provides the opportunity to test proper operation of the fire hydrants and the water pumping system. Some water discoloration will occur during the flushing process. Residents are urged to check for discoloration prior to using water for laundry or cleaning during this period. Even though water may be somewhat discolored, it is safe to drink.

During the flushing process, large quantities of water are discharged from the hydrants. Motorists should watch for vehicles and workers engaged in this work and reduce speeds accordingly. Please call the City of Portage Water Department (Veolia) at 324-9235 with any questions or concerns.






## Spring Collection Program Reminders

- » The **Spring Cleanup Program**, which includes the collection of unwanted household materials, runs through May 2. Visit [portagemi.gov/283](http://portagemi.gov/283) for collection dates and complete program details.
- » The **Brush & Bagged Leaf Collection Program** runs May 6 - 31. View collection dates and complete program details at [portagemi.gov/280](http://portagemi.gov/280).
- » **Brush & Leaf Drop Off Day** is Saturday, June 1 from 9 AM - 1 PM at the Oakland Drive Compost Facility (10905 Oakland Drive). Visit [portagemi.gov/811](http://portagemi.gov/811) for more information.



# YOUR BACKYARD IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK

 Discover  **KALAMAZOO**

The BikePortage bike rental station is open for the season! Rent a bike for a day at the bike station on the Portage Creek Bicentennial Park Trail, just north of the Celery Flats Pavilion. Download the MOVATIC app from the App Store or Google Play, create an account then follow the prompts to pay on the app and unlock a bike. Bicycles must be returned to the rental location by park close each day. For more information about BikePortage and rental rates, visit  [portagemi.gov/794](http://portagemi.gov/794).

## Geo Mystery Tours - Frog Frenzy

Uncover the secrets of Portage through Geo Mystery Tours. Join the adventure at any time, but expeditions must be completed by the end of the April. Beginning GPS coordinates will be emailed to registered participants at the start of each session or within a week of registration.

- » April 1 - 30
- » Self Guided in Portage Parks
- » FREE (Registration required)

## Step Up Kids Run Club

Kids, step up at the run club to develop running and empowerment skills. Pair healthy running habits with mindset practices week by week to help build physical endurance and support mental health. In the last class, kids have the chance to complete an age-appropriate fitness challenge to earn a medal.

**Session 1: Ages 4-6**

- » Mondays, April 8 - May 13, 4:30 - 5:15 PM
- » Westfield Park (4500 West Milham Avenue)
- » \$60 per participant, per session (Registration required)

**Session 1: Ages 7-12**

- » Mondays, April 8 - May 13, 5:30 - 6:30 PM
- » Westfield Park (4500 West Milham Avenue)
- » \$78 per participant, per session (Registration required)

## Yoga 4 Life

Join personal fitness trainer Josie Moorlag in this monthly yoga class for adults of all experience levels. Yoga is an excellent way to relax, refocus, improve your strength, balance, flexibility, and help manage pain. Students bring their yoga mats and water and wear comfortable exercise clothing. Adults age 18+. Maximum of 20 participants.

- » Tuesdays, April 9 - 30, 7 - 8 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$59 Participant per class (Registration required)

## Birding Workshop

*Presented by the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo*


Enjoy a presentation from Russ Schipper of the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo. Discover different types of birds and see taxidermy birds up close. This program is designed for students ages 8 to 12. Space is limited for this program with a maximum 35 participants.

- » Saturday, April 13, 10 - 11 AM
- » Schrier Park (850 West Osterhout Avenue)
- » \$10 per participant (Registration required)



# Portage Parks & Recreation Events, Camps & Classes

1,000 Acres. 20 Parks. One City.

To find out more and register online, visit  [mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov) and click the REGISTER NOW! button.

REGISTER NOW!

## Kids Fix It! Bike Workshop: Here Comes Summer

Don't let a broken bike stop your summer fun. Learn the ABCs of bicycle maintenance in this hands-on program for kids 6 to 12 years old. Mechanics from Pedal Bicycle provide instructional support and bike-specific tools to get your wheels on the ground. Participants must provide their own bike, helmet, and chaperone.

- » Saturday, April 13, 9 - 11 AM
- » Millennium Park (280 Romence Road)
- » Rain location: Celery Flats Pavilion (7335 Garden Lane)
- » \$10 per participant (Registration required)



## Park Patrol Orientation

Join the Portage Park Patrol and be part of the ongoing effort to enhance the park experience for everyone. Participants will delve into the responsibilities of Park Patrol volunteers and the Park Patrol Code of Conduct, complete a participation waiver, and view a Park Patrol orientation presentation. This is a valuable opportunity for both returning volunteers and newcomers to connect with Portage Parks & Recreation staff. Establish meaningful points of contact to address concerns, learn effective ways to report maintenance issues to city staff, and be a proactive force in enhancing the park experience for everyone. Snacks and coffee will be provided and returning Park Patrol members will be honored with new badges, acknowledging their continued dedication and service to the community.

- » Saturday, April 13, 2 - 3 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE (Registration required)

## John Ball Zoo: Wild Things

Learn about where the wild things are! Join John Ball Zoo to learn about animals in their "Growing Up Wild: Zoo to You" presentation. Meet wild critters up close. Space for this program is limited, so make sure to sign up today. Please arrive 15 minutes before the program to be seated. Children 3 years or younger enjoy FREE admission. Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a chaperone.

- » Saturday, April 20, 2 - 3 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per person, including chaperones (Registration required)




## Garlic Mustard Pull Orientation Class

Attend the Garlic Mustard Pull Orientation Class to register for the Garlic Mustard Pull. The class is required for all participants, ensuring proper identification of garlic mustard. Attendance in the orientation class is required to be eligible for winnings. The Garlic Mustard Pull begins in May!

- » Saturday, April 20, 10 AM - 12 PM
- » West Lake Nature Preserve (9001 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE (Registration required)

## Adult Softball Leagues

Join our adult slow pitch softball league, where the thrill of the game meets the camaraderie of community. Catering to both co-ed teams on Mondays and Tuesdays and men's teams on Wednesdays and Thursdays, our league provides a fantastic opportunity for players of all skill levels to engage in friendly competition. Whether you're a seasoned softball enthusiast or a newcomer looking for a fun way to stay active, our league offers a welcoming and inclusive environment. Experience the joy of softball in the heart of our city. Sign up today at  [CityBallPortage.com](http://CityBallPortage.com) and be part of the excitement!

- » April 22 - June 21
- » Registration ends April 14



## Hike with a Biologist: Adventures with Amphibians

Join the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) on a walk through the Gourdneck State Game Area to learn about frogs and toads. While all ages are welcome, this program will require walking off-trail and on old footpaths. Please wear closed-toe shoes, weather-appropriate clothing, sunscreen, and bug spray. No bathroom amenities on site.

- » Friday, April 26, 6 - 7:30 PM
- » Gourdneck State Game Area (Hampton Lake Trail entrance off Centre Avenue)
- » FREE (Registration required)



## Adult Pickleball Beginner Clinic Registration

See what all the hype is about! New Pickleball players will learn how to play the game with a few basic game strategies and drills. Participants must bring their own paddle. Pickleballs will be provided. Adults 18+. Maximum 45 participants.

- » Thursday, May 23, 5:30 - 7 PM
- » Ramona Park (8600 South Sprinkle Road)
- » \$40 per participant (Registration required)
- » **REGISTRATION OPEN APRIL 22 - MAY 22**

## Adult Pickleball League Registration

Register for the first of two six-week summer pickleball leagues for competitive, intermediate, or recreational players. If you're not sure of your skill level, check out USA Pickleball or call Portage Parks & Recreation at 329-4522.

- » Ramona Park (8600 South Sprinkle Road)
- » \$35 per participant (Registration required)

**Competitive**

- » Tuesdays, May 28 - July 9, 6:30 - 7 PM
- » **REGISTRATION OPEN APRIL 22 - MAY 17**

**Intermediate**

- » Wednesdays, May 29 - July 10, 6:30 - 7 PM
- » **REGISTRATION OPEN APRIL 22 - MAY 17**

**Recreational**

- » Thursdays, May 30 - July 18, 6:30 - 7 PM
- » **REGISTRATION OPEN APRIL 24 - MAY 19**

No games June 18

No games June 19

No games June 20 & July 4

# Gearing Up for Market Season Opportunities for Musicians and Vendors

As the 2024 market season approaches, Portage is buzzing with excitement for a summer filled with music, art, and community gatherings. Portage Parks & Recreation is now accepting applications from talented musicians and creative arts & craft vendors to participate in the upcoming summer markets.


### Share Your Music at the Sunday Market

The renowned Portage Farmers Market invites musicians to showcase their talents at the weekly Sunday market, performing from 11 AM to 1 PM. With an impressive annual footfall of approximately 30,000 customers, this market provides a fantastic platform for musicians to connect with new audiences and share their music.

Held at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) every Sunday from May 5 to October 13, the Portage Farmers Market is a vibrant hub of local produce, artisanal goods, and lively performances. Family-friendly musicians eager to perform at this dynamic market can submit their applications at  [farmersmarket.portagemi.gov](http://farmersmarket.portagemi.gov).

### Be a Vendor at the Arts & Crafts Market

Calling all artisans, makers, and crafters! The Portage Arts & Crafts Market is now accepting vendor applications for its upcoming event on Friday, May 24, from 4:30 to 7 PM. This market coincides with the first Friday at the Flats of the summer, creating a bustling atmosphere of creativity, music, food, and fun.

The Arts & Crafts Market, located at the Celery Flats Historical Area aims to support and empower artisan entrepreneurs while offering customers a delightful shopping experience filled with unique handmade products. If your business aligns with this vision, visit  [portagemi.gov/643](http://portagemi.gov/643) to review the 2024 Portage Arts & Crafts Market Rules & Guidelines and submit your application.

Applications for both opportunities can also be obtained in person at Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane), by emailing [farmmkt@portagemi.gov](mailto:farmmkt@portagemi.gov), or by calling 329-4421.

Don't miss out on the chance to be part of Portage's vibrant market scene this summer! Apply now and be a part of a thriving community of artists, musicians, and local businesses.

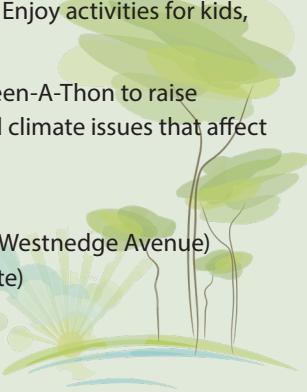
# 16th Annual Green-A-Thon

## Portage Youth Advisory Committee Hosts Earth Day Celebration

The Portage Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) will host the 16th Annual Green-A-Thon to celebrate Earth Day as part of opening day of the Portage Farmers Market on Sunday, May 5. Visit the YAC booth to pick out a free tree seedling in honor of Arbor Day and learn about small-scale composting and recycling. Enjoy activities for kids, demonstrations, and giveaways.

The YAC presents the annual Green-A-Thon to raise awareness of environmental and climate issues that affect the citizens of Portage.

- » May 5, 2024, 9 AM - 1 PM
- » Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE admission (Parking off-site)







APRIL 2024

PORTAGER

YOU HAVE MORE FRIENDS THAN YOU KNOW

“Bits of Business” Expo

Join us at the PZSC for an engaging event tailored for mature adults. Meet with over 60 representatives from local organizations and businesses offering resources for seniors. Whether you’re looking for ways to stay active, find caregiver resources, housing, or services for independent living, there’s something for everyone. Shuttle service to/from surrounding parking lots is available from 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Special thanks to our sponsors, the Area Agency on Aging and Nazareth Center Assisted Living.

- » Friday, April 26, 9 AM - 1 PM
- » FREE and open to the public (No registration required)

Senior Prom

Experience the magic of Paris at the Portage Zhang Senior Center! Create unforgettable memories at our Night in Paris event. Dress to impress and dance the night away with live entertainment at this special semi-formal soiree. The ticket includes delectable hors d’oeuvres, a drink ticket, a professional photographer to capture your moments, and plenty of fun. Don’t miss out on this enchanting evening!

- » Friday, April 19, 6 - 9 PM
- » \$25 per ticket (Registration required)



Portage Zhang Senior Center Events, Activities & Classes

Explore More. Have Fun. Live Well.

Find us at 203 East Centre Avenue | [mypzsc.portagemi.gov](http://mypzsc.portagemi.gov) | To find out more or to register, call 329-4555

Experience a vital, vibrant community offering a wide variety of services and activities that match the needs of active older adults. Membership at the PZSC is open to anyone over the age of 50. Portage residency is not required. All events are held at the Portage Zhang Senior Center unless otherwise noted.

PZSC Cars & Cocktails Car Show

SEEKING VEHICLE ENTRIES!

Join us for an exciting evening at PZSC Cars & Cocktails Car Show! We welcome anyone with cars, trucks, or motorcycles to register for this event, which is open to the public. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards the annual Veterans Day Breakfast at the Air Zoo in November. Attendees can enjoy two cash bars, two performers, bottled water, pop, food, and snacks for a small fee. We are grateful to Lest We Forget Our Vets, Inc. for their support of this event. To register a vehicle visit [pzsccarsandcocktails.eventbrite.com](http://pzsccarsandcocktails.eventbrite.com) or call 548-4052.

- » Friday, May 17, 4 - 7 PM
- » FREE and open to the public to attend (Registration required)
- » \$5 entry fee per competing car (Registration required)

Spring “Bruncheon”

We’re shaking things up for May! Join us at the PZSC for this special bruncheon in lieu of our regular luncheon. What better way to connect with old friends AND make new ones? Enjoy a savory egg bake, French toast casserole, fruit, sausage patties, and a seasonal trifle for dessert. Vineyard Assisted Living generously sponsors this event.

- » Friday, May 3, 10 AM - 12 PM
- » \$12 Members / \$14 Non-Members (Registration required by April 26)

PZSC Social Golf League

The PZSC Social Golf League, a mixed social golf league where you only pay for the days you play, is exclusively for PZSC members. Join the league any time and never worry about finding a substitute player. We’ll find one if you don’t have a foursome. The rate includes a senior discount and can be paid to the States Golf Course each day you play. The league fees can be paid to the PZSC Reception Desk or Alta Dekema, League Coordinator, at the course by the second week of play.

- » Thursdays, May 2 - August 29, Arrive: 8:30 AM / Tee Off: 9 AM
- » States Golf Course (20 East W Avenue, Vicksburg)
- » PZSC one-time league fee: \$15
- » \$12 - 9 holes / \$9 half-cart (Registration required)

PZSC Bicycle Club

Group Leaders: Bob Strader and George Colyer

The PZSC Bicycle Club begins its new season with an informative meeting open to current PZSC Bicycle Club members and those interested in joining. PZSC membership is a requirement for joining the club. Ride times vary depending on the date and destination – watch for the 2024 Bicycle Club Schedule at [mypzsc.portagemi.gov](http://mypzsc.portagemi.gov) and at the reception desk. Sign up to receive Bicycle Club emails with important updates at the reception desk or call 329-4555.

- » Club Meeting: April 24, 9 AM
- » Rides: Wednesdays, May 1 – October 9
- » FREE (PZSC Membership required)

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Apply for Board & Commission Openings by May 3

Serve the community as a member of an advisory board to the City Council. Each with unique duties, memberships, qualifications, and terms, some boards meet regularly while others meet intermittently. Residents volunteer their time, energy, expertise, and insight to help keep Portage *A Natural Place to Move!*

The City Council will interview applicants and make appointments to boards and commissions in May. Citizens are encouraged to apply for consideration. The Construction Board of Appeals, EDC/TIFA & BRA, Human Services Board, Historic District Commission, Planning Commission, Senior Citizens Advisory Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals have immediate openings. In addition, the Youth Advisory Committee is open to active students ages 13 to 18 in the Portage area. Learn more about the YAC at [portagemi.gov/440](http://portagemi.gov/440).

View complete details about the 14 boards and commission and apply online at [portagemi.gov/151](http://portagemi.gov/151). The deadline to apply for vacant positions is Friday, May 3. Contact the Office of the City Clerk at 329-4511 with any questions.

Portage City Council

Portage City Council meetings are held twice a month on Tuesdays at 6 PM at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) in Council Chambers and are always open to the public.

The City Manager

The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city. Citizens are encouraged to contact the City Manager with concerns or complaints about city services by visiting [reportit.portagemi.gov](http://reportit.portagemi.gov) or by calling Complaint Resolution at 329-4404.

Televised City Meetings

City Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings can be viewed live on Spectrum channel 995 and AT&T channel 99. All meetings can be viewed via live streaming at [portagemi.gov/205](http://portagemi.gov/205).

APRIL 2024

4	7:00 PM	Planning Commission Meeting
8	7:00 PM	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
9	6:00 PM	City Council Meeting
18	7:00 PM	Planning Commission Meeting
23	6:00 PM	City Council Meeting

The Portager

The *Portager* is the official publication of the City of Portage, used to inform residents of city services and events, as well as city projects that have significance to Portage citizens. The newsletter is published monthly and delivered to every mailbox in the 49002 and 49024 zip codes.

This month’s front and back cover photo features the Celery Flats Pavilion.

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