

PORTAGER

A Natural Place to Move



A Message from Mayor Patricia M. Randall

"A House divided ... cannot stand."
– Abraham Lincoln
Civility is in you. Pass it on.

So reads the sign in front of me at the Denver airport as I prepare to board my flight home. Leaving two small grandchildren behind is never easy. As I blink away the tears, thoughts shift to returning to my life in Portage and begin focusing on this column, I appreciate Lincoln's words. I have never seen a photo of this man smiling. He obviously had a lot on his plate.

This October could use a little civility, with some leftover (hopefully) for November.

The results of this November's election will be most impactful for our country. Confidence in local elections is critical. Pre-election is the perfect time to take a closer look at the Office of the City Clerk responsible for coordinating the Portage election process.

Our staff in the Office of the City Clerk has a combined 48 years of experience working in local government, with 28 of those years dedicated to elections. Both the City Clerk

and the Deputy City Clerk have achieved some of the highest level of professional qualifications: Certification by both the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. They worked side-by-side during the historic, unprecedented voter turnout of the 2022 Mid-term and 2020 November elections.

Both the Clerk and her Deputy fully grasp the importance of their job, and they do it well.

With a field of 200 volunteers – each trained per the State of Michigan's mandate – the upcoming election this November 5th will be a long day for poll workers, the candidates, and the American people awaiting results. The State of Michigan uses paper ballots to record voter selections and then tabulates the totals with optical scanners. The City of Portage uses the DS200 Tabulator and ExpressVote Machines from Elections Systems & Software in each of our 19 precincts.

In-person voting within each precinct will be tracked via the DS200 Tabulator. The ExpressVote is an ADA compliant voter assist terminal with a detachable tactile navigation keyboard, including braille and raised/shaped keys. This offers ballot options in both audio and visual formats, and allows for a total independent voting experience. All precinct voting has been located outside of our public school buildings since 2022. We are grateful for the many

locations that allow voting in their buildings, as it is surely disruptive to their normal day.

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, absentee voting has quadrupled. Approximately 25% of our voters choose to vote absentee. These ballots are counted at City Hall using DS450s "High-Throughput" Scanner/Tabulators. Each machine is capable of counting 200-plus ballots a minute. Per state law, all tabulator equipment is put through accuracy testing prior to every election.

Over the past six years, there have been many voter-approved changes to Michigan elections, including same-day registration, early voting, and the addition of more drop boxes. For more specifics, please check out portagemi.gov/922.

Back to my grandchildren: Three new teeth have popped up, one had their first haircut and also learned to navigate a slide in both directions. Each is a memorable milestone that I wish I was present for. Raising small children can be all-consuming as the day revolves around sleep time for both the children and the parents, as every grandparent remembers. The choices we have this Election Day will make a difference in their world. It is important to remember that "civility" will be critical, regardless of the outcome.

– Patricia M. Randall

Building a Better Portage

The City of Portage extends a sincere thank you to our residents and visitors for their patience during this busy construction season. These projects are key to enhancing infrastructure, safety, and recreational spaces, ensuring a better future for all. Below is an update on the progress of several major projects and their benefits to our community.

City Hall Renovations

Improving Functionality, Access, and Efficiency

As part of the city's ongoing efforts to improve public facilities, upgrades are underway at City Hall, including parking lot and roof renovations. These enhancements will ensure the building remains accessible, efficient, and safe for years to come.

» **City Hall Parking Lot:** Phase 1 included the removal and replacement of trees, curbs, and asphalt in the upper parking lot, along with new sidewalk installation and irrigation updates. Phase 2, now underway, features landscaping upgrades, sidewalk improvements, new asphalt in the lower lot, and the installation of heated sidewalks at the main entrance. Completion is scheduled for early November.



Portage City Hall parking lot and roof improvements

City Hall Roof:

Following the installation of new shingles, solar panels will be added, reducing operational costs while advancing sustainability and energy resilience.

Parks Revitalization

Upgrading Our Natural Spaces

Several park improvement projects are underway, each designed to enhance the natural beauty and functionality of Portage's outdoor spaces:

» **Lakeview Park:** Shoreline stabilization, a new boardwalk, expanded fishing docks, and an Inspiration Garden are part of Phase 1



New boardwalk being constructed at Lakeview Park

of Lakeview Park's revitalization. This phase is set to be finished by spring.

» **Lexington Green Park:** New trails, lighting, a pavilion, restroom facilities, and playground equipment are to be installed. Partially funded by a \$500,000 Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant, this project is expected to be complete by spring.



Trail construction at Lexington Green Park

» **East Central Trail:** This one-mile bike-and-pedestrian-friendly trail connecting Celery Flats to Portage Road provides a safer, scenic route for cyclists and pedestrians. Completion is planned for spring.

» **Future Projects:** Upcoming developments include the three-mile Austin Lake Trail, which will run from Zylman Avenue along the east side of Austin Lake to the southern Portage city limits, Phase 2 of Lakeview Park, and a new Portage Farmers Market, conveniently located in the City Centre. These projects will begin next year.

Road Construction

Enhancing Safety and Mobility

The city has undertaken several road construction projects to improve traffic flow, upgrade safety features, and enhance pedestrian access. These efforts are vital to maintaining a high-quality transportation network for residents, visitors, and businesses.



Portage Road is complete and open to traffic.

» **Portage Road – Romence Road to Fairfield Drive:** This project involved resurfacing the road, installing center island boulevards, upgrading sidewalks to ADA standards, and adding new traffic signals at key intersections. Improvements also included installing sanitary sewer and water main in certain sections.

» **Shaver Road – South City Limits to Vanderbilt Avenue:** Resurfacing, a new pedestrian crossing at Oakland Drive, and sidewalk installations have enhanced safety and accessibility.

» **Cooley Drive – West Centre Avenue to Old Centre Avenue:**

This reconstruction project includes gas main replacement, storm drainage improvements, and roadway realignment, with completion expected in October.



New storm sewers were installed as part of the Cooley Drive project

» **Romence Road Railroad Crossing Replacement:**

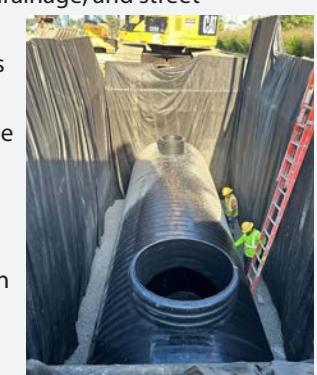
The deteriorated railroad crossing on Romence between Portage Road and Sprinkle Road has been replaced. The city also installed concrete panels to accommodate a future non-motorized trail.

Infrastructure Upgrades

Improving Neighborhoods and Major Corridors

The City of Portage is dedicated to enhancing both residential neighborhoods and high-traffic areas through essential infrastructure improvements. These projects focus on upgrading sewer systems, water management, and reducing flood risks in key areas of the city.

» **Ramona Park Subdivision Improvements:** Sanitary sewers, water mains, storm drainage, and street reconstruction have been completed for several streets in the Ramona Park area. Final paving is expected to be complete in October.



A new storm sewer relief system will alleviate flooding along the South Westnedge Commercial Corridor

» **South Westnedge Avenue Storm Sewer Relief:**

A new storm sewer system has been installed at the intersection of South Westnedge Avenue and J.L. Hudson Drive to prevent flooding in the high-traffic corridor.

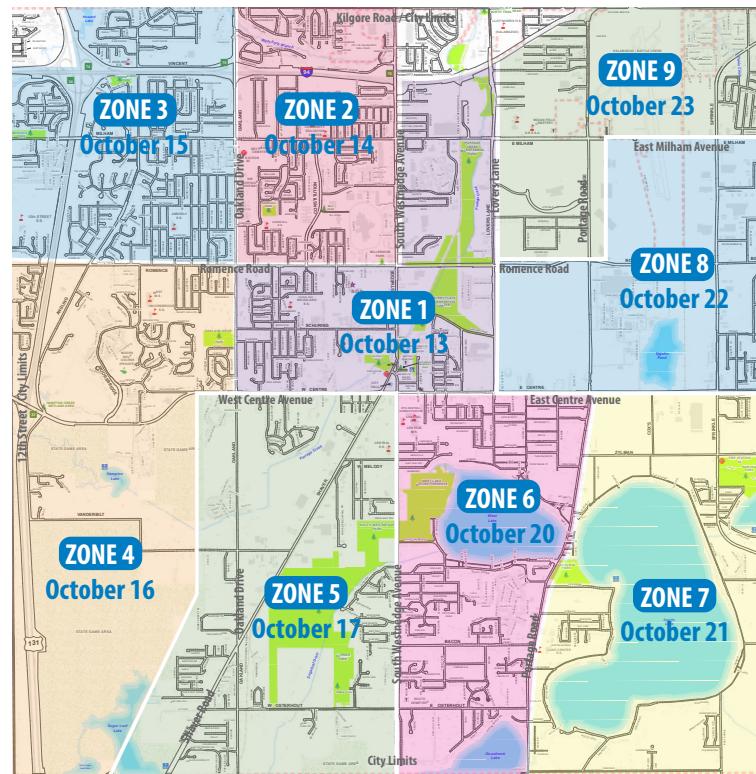
Thank you for your patience and support as we work to build a better Portage. These improvements are vital investments in the future of our community, ensuring that Portage remains a safe, vibrant, and enjoyable place to live, work, and visit. We are excited for the positive impact these projects will bring, and we look forward to sharing more updates as we continue to make Portage *A Natural Place to Move!*

Fall Hydrant Flushing Schedule

The city's utility contractor, Veolia, will conduct fire hydrant flushing beginning the evening of Sunday, October 13 through Thursday, October 24. 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.



Fall Collection Reminders

- » The **Curbside Brush Collection Program**, which includes the collection brush and branches, runs through the week of October 21. Visit portagemi.gov/280 for collection dates and complete program details.
- » **Brush & Leaf Drop Off Day** is Saturday, October 26 from 9 AM - 1 PM at the Oakland Drive Compost Facility (10905 Oakland Drive). Visit portagemi.gov/811 for more information.
- » The **Fall Leaf Pickup Program** kicks off on October 28. To better accommodate leaf volumes, the city has modified the zone map to include eight zones instead of the previous seven zones. Visit portagemi.gov/282 for program details, a collection map and a handy address locator tool.



A Good Shake Could Save Your Mailbox This Winter

Snowplow operators in the City of Portage take great care to avoid damaging mailboxes during snow removal. However, the force of the snow being pushed by the plow can occasionally cause damage to mailboxes, even when drivers are operating carefully.



Saturday, October 26 is "Shake Your Mailbox Day." The City of Portage Department of Public Works reminds you to take a few minutes to make sure that your mailbox can withstand the snow. Tighten the screws that secure your mailbox to the post, replace loose hinges on the mailbox door, and ensure that the post is secure in the ground. Now is also a good time to replace or add reflective house numbers to ensure that first responders can easily find your home in an emergency.

We've Got Spirit! Yes We Do!



Nearly six decades ago, a cross-town rivalry was born – one that has captivated our community like no other.

The excitement surrounding the football game between the Portage Northern Huskies and the Portage Central Mustangs is unmatched, drawing fans from near and far.

To celebrate this annual showdown, we will proudly display flags representing both teams along South Westnedge Avenue during the week of October 7, showcasing our unwavering hometown pride. This vibrant display has been generously sponsored by First National Bank of Michigan.

"First National Bank of Michigan is proud to support the Portage community and a spirited rivalry," said Dan Bitzer, President & CEO of First National Bank of Michigan. "As a local bank, being part of the community is at the heart of what we do. Good luck to both teams!"

Join us for the thrilling game on Friday, October 11, at 7 PM at Huskie Stadium. Come out and cheer for your favorite team as they vie for the coveted Kavanaugh Trophy! Let's make this a night to remember and show our true spirit!



"Tricked Out Home" Halloween Decorating Contest

Are you ready to get

into the Halloween

spirit? Enter your

Halloween-themed

house in our "Tricked

Out Home" Halloween

Decorating Contest.



To enter, find the post on

our Facebook page

[@CityofportageMI](#)

and upload a photo of

your "tricked out home" along with your address. Or email

your photo and entry to publicinformation@portagemi.gov. The

entry deadline is Tuesday, October 22 at 11:59 PM EST.

Judging will take place from October 23 to 27.

Each house that enters will be included on an interactive map so that everyone can experience the HORROR of the season. The first-place, second-place, and third-place winners will be selected and announced on Facebook on Tuesday, October 29. The winners will also be awarded a special certificate and prize, in person, at the November 6 Portage City Council Meeting.

YOU HAVE MORE FRIENDS THAN YOU KNOW

Annual Holiday Bazaar & Bake Sale

Kick off the festive season with a day of holiday cheer at the Annual Holiday Bazaar & Bake Sale. Enjoy unique handcrafted gifts, holiday decorations, and delicious baked goods made by local artisans. Browse our festive stalls and support local crafters while searching for that perfect one-of-a-kind gift or indulging in seasonal treats. From hand-knitted items to homemade pies, there's something for everyone. Don't miss this chance to celebrate the holiday season with friends and family. Admission is free, and all are welcome! Interested in becoming a vendor or donating baked goods? Call 329-4554.

- » Saturday, November 2, 9 AM - 2 PM
- » FREE - Open to the public (No registration required)

Exploring Grief Through Books and Movies

"Tuesdays with Morrie"



This quarterly workshop will explore themes of grief, loss, and resilience through books and movies. Each 4-week session will focus on a specific book or movie. Participants will watch portions of the selected movie as a group and then engage in a group discussion led by a Centrica Care Navigators grief counselor.

- » Mondays, October 14 - November 4, 10 - 11 AM
- » FREE - Open to the public (Registration required)

Portage Zhang Senior Center Events, Activities & Classes

Explore More. Have Fun. Live Well.

Find us at 203 East Centre Avenue | mypsc.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.

Gray Skies Ahead: Navigating Disaster

Preparedness for the Golden Years



Join us on a journey to resilience with our Disaster Preparedness Curriculum for Older Adults. This comprehensive program is designed to empower older citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to confidently navigate natural and human-made disasters.

Session 1: Understanding Disasters

Deepen your understanding of various types of disasters and learn about the critical importance of being prepared.

Session 2: Creating a Personal Preparedness Plan

Tailor your own disaster preparedness plan with expert guidance. Consider the unique needs of older adults during such times.

Session 3: Building Your Disaster Kit

Learn about and assemble your essential disaster response kit with input from organizations like the Red Cross.

Session 4: Communication and Evacuation Plans

Master the art of creating efficient communication plans and familiarizing yourself with local evacuation routes.

- » Mondays, October 14 - November 4, 2:30 - 4:30 PM

» FREE for PZSC Members (Registration required)

Beastly Bash Halloween Costume Dance Party

Gear up for a night of chills and thrills at our Halloween Costume Dance Party! Show off your best costume and dance the night away to live DJ beats and enjoy appetizers, drinks, refreshments, and cocktails (for purchase). Start planning for the best costume contest now!

- » Thursday, October 17, 5 - 7 PM
- » \$15 - Open to the public age 50+ (Registration required)

Veterans Day Breakfast at the Air Zoo

We are delighted to continue our exciting partnership with the Air Zoo for a memorable Veterans Day breakfast event. Immerse yourself in a morning of unity, exclusive guests, and the opportunity to experience all the wonders the Air Zoo offers. After breakfast, take your time to explore the incredible exhibits and engage in meaningful conversations with fellow veterans. This event is open to all veterans and their guests (membership not required). Please note: There will be no Veterans Group Luncheon at the PZSC in November.



- » Friday, November 8, 8 - 9 AM
- » Air Zoo (6151 Portage Road)
- » FREE for veterans / Guests \$20 (Registration required)

YOUR BACKYARD IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK

I Love Portage Essay Contest

Students of Portage – do you have a passion for the City of Portage? Tell us about it! Mayor Randall and Portage City Council may select you to “flip the switch” to light the annual holiday lights at the Portage City Centre on Saturday, December 7. Submit a one-page essay and tell us why you love living in Portage, what your favorite places to visit are and why, and what makes Portage *A Natural Place to Move!* Entries should include your name, mailing address, phone number, grade in school, and school name. You must attend a Portage school to qualify. **The entry deadline is Friday, November 1 by 5 PM.** City Council will read all the submitted essays and determine the winner (or winners). The winning author(s) will have the opportunity to read their essay at the holiday festivities at the 2024 Traditional Holiday & Tree Lighting Celebration on Saturday, December 7.

Please submit your entry to:

Portage Parks & Recreation
320 Library Lane
Portage, MI 49002

Or email your entry to mypark@portagemi.gov

Holiday Card & Tree Walk

Every year, families, businesses, civic groups, and organizations come together to create a festive wonderland during the annual Holiday Card & Tree Walk. Help transform Celery Flats into a dazzling display of holiday cheer!

Holiday Cards

Get creative and craft a personalized seasonal card. Your card should depict a winter, non-denominational holiday theme, painted on a 4'x8' sheet of plywood (at least 1/2" thick) and painted white on the backside. Ensure it's weatherproof for outdoor display. These festive cards will be installed in an upright position at the Celery Flats Historical Area. Deliver your completed card to the Department of Public Works by November 4 for installation.

- » Card Drop Off: October 1 - November 4
- » Card Pick Up: January 13 - January 20, 2025
- » Department of Public Works (7719 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE (Registration required by November 1)

Holiday Trees

Decorate a holiday tree in the Celery Flats Historical Area to spread the joy and celebrate the season. The city will provide a tree strung with lights; use your own decorations and artistic flair to show Portage your holiday spirit. Reserve your tree online or in person while supplies last. Don't miss this chance to contribute to the festive atmosphere.

- » Decorate your tree from November 25 - December 1
- » Decoration pick-up from January 2 - 6, 2025
- » FREE (Registration required by November 1 while supplies last)

Black History Month Local Artist Display Call to Artists

The inaugural Black History Month Local Artist Display will be an exhibition of visual arts featuring local artists. Submissions can include paintings, prints, photographs, mosaics, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, wood turnings, mixed media, and more. To be eligible, artists must be current residents of Portage, Michigan and their artwork must reflect the themes of honoring “Black History Month” or “Black Futures in Portage.” **Apply by completing an application online at mypark.portagemi.gov by November 19 at 5:30 PM.** Artwork images must be 300 DPI or higher. Winners will need a minimum of five works that adhere to the themes for the exhibition. Prizes will be awarded by the Portage Parks Foundation for first place (\$500), 2nd place (\$250), and 3rd place (\$100). For additional information, contact Portage Parks & Recreation at (269) 329-4522.



Portage Parks & Recreation Events, Camps & Classes

1,000 Acres. 20 Parks. One City.

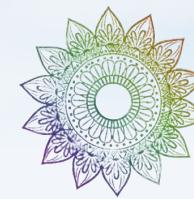
To find out more and register online, visit mypark.portagemi.gov and click the REGISTER NOW! button.

REGISTER NOW!

Introduction to Reiki

Explore the fundamentals of Reiki and learn how to apply this healing art to enhance your well-being. In this four-week course, Reiki instructor Dawn Coeur, will teach students practical stress management techniques, enhance emotional well-being, and maintain boundaries. This program also includes a discussion about ethical Reiki practice techniques. Introduction to Reiki is designed for participants ages 18 and up.

- » Tuesdays, October 8 - 29, 6 - 8 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$75 per participant (Registration required by October 7)



INTERDIMENSIONAL
WELLNESS
Dawn Coeur

Portage Pups & Pumpkins Paw-ty

Dress up your fur baby for an evening of paw-some activities designed for dogs! Meet at South Westnedge Dog Park to show off your Halloween beast for fun, puppy snacks, and games.



- » Tuesday, October 8, 3:30 - 5:30 PM
- » South Westnedge Dog Park (9010 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE (Registration required by October 7)

Creative Corners: Thrifted Ghost Painting

Try your hand at the latest trend, thrifited ghost painting. Add a touch of eerie charm to celebrate the spooky season! Using re-purposed paintings, add ghosts, ghouls, and your favorite Halloween characters to make a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. Tailored to students with special needs and artists of all abilities, Creative Corners students follow a lead artist through each project while adding their personal touch. Participants are encouraged to bring a chaperone (no fee). Please wear clothing that can get messy. The fee covers art supplies and tools. Artworks designed during this program may be featured in future art exhibits.

- » Wednesday, October 16, 6 - 7 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per participant (Registration required)

Monster Mash & Scooby-Doo Movie

It's time for the much-anticipated Monster Mash featuring a Scooby-Doo theme where you'll find merry-not-scary magic shows, pumpkin carving demos, a live DJ, and carnival-style food. Show off your favorite Halloween costume at this family-friendly event. After the festivities, enjoy a drive-in-movie showing of Scooby-Doo, starting around dusk. Parking for the movie begins at 5:30 PM on a first-come, first-served basis.



- » Saturday, October 19, 3 - 7 PM
- » Ramona Park (8600 South Sprinkle Road)
- » FREE (No registration required)

Growing the Arts in Portage

The Portage Cultural Arts Committee is making steady progress in its mission to “Cultivate the Arts within the greater Portage community.” The committee is made up of volunteers with a variety of arts backgrounds or an interest in enhancing arts in Portage. The committee meets bi-monthly to plan outreach, public art, theatre and other opportunities for the community. To become part of the Portage Cultural Arts committee, receive updates about upcoming events and keep up with what's happening, sign up at portagemi.gov/416 and share your interest in the arts.

- » Wednesday, November 20, 6 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)

Leaf-A-Legacy

Tree Donation Program

Reforestation is a big task that needs community support. Your donation to the “Leaf-A-Legacy” program will help plant trees in Portage parks, especially areas hit hard by the May 7 tornado, like Celery Flats and Bicentennial Park. Only native trees, selected by our forester, will be planted where needed most. Every donation receives a personalized donor certificate, with additional benefits based on giving levels. Our goal is to plant 400 trees in two years, helping restore wildlife habitats and improve air and water quality. Donations are tax-deductible and can be made via cash, check, or online at portageparksfoundation.org.

Tree Planting Project

“Leaf” a legacy for the next generation and help us reach our goal of planting 400 trees in the next two years in our parks. Plant a tree at Celery Flats with your neighbors, family, and friends. Please wear close-toed shoes or boots and be prepared to work outside for a minimum of two hours. Live music, food, and drink will be available during this activity. Supplies and instructions for tree planting will be provided.

- » Sunday, October 27, 10 AM - 12 PM
- » Celery Flats (7335 Garden Lane)
- » FREE (On-site registration required from 9 - 10 AM)

LEAF-A-LEGACY SPONSORS



Portage Farmers Market Good to the Last Drop!

We're coming to the end of farmers market season here in Portage. The last day is October 13. But between now and then, there's still so much to see, taste, hear, and experience at the Portage Farmers Market.

Whether you love lettuce that was picked the day before you bought it, gourmet mushrooms that you can't find at the grocery store, or apple cider that was pressed just a few miles away, the Portage Farmers Market has delicious food grown by local farmers who care about bringing you a quality product. Stock up on potatoes for your holiday table and squash that will keep you cheerful through winter.



As usual, we'll have hot coffee, amazing baked goods, and much more at the market. We'll feature local musicians Mike Talbot and Panda Pete. Also not to miss are our diverse array of artists and craftspeople, who are eager to help you start your holiday shopping!

The Portage Farmers Market is *Fresh. Rain or Shine* every Sunday through October 13 from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Portage Zhang Senior Center (203 East Centre Avenue). For more information, follow us on Facebook [@PortageMarketMI](https://www.facebook.com/PortageMarketMI) or Instagram [@PortageMarket](https://www.instagram.com/PortageMarket), visit farmersmarket.portagemi.gov, email farmmkt@portagemi.gov or call 329-4421. To learn more about using SNAP/EBT, Double Up Food Bucks, or Senior Project Fresh at the market, stop by the Market Manager booth at the market on Sundays.



Fresh. Rain or Shine.

PORTAGER

Are You Ready to Vote on November 5?

There's about a month before the General Election. Presidential Elections tend to bring larger voting crowds, so now is the time to make sure you are registered and get ready to vote.

How do I know if I'm registered to vote?

Visit mi.gov/vote to determine if you are accurately registered. If you're not registered or need to update your information, you can do so online through October 21. After October 21 (including on Election Day), you can stop in at the City Clerk's Office with your proof of residency and register or update your information.

What's on my ballot?

Visit mi.gov/vote to view your ballot. The November election ballot has both partisan and non-partisan sections.

The **PARTISAN** section contains candidates for federal, state, and county elected offices. You may vote this section either straight ticket, split ticket, or mixed ticket.

Straight ticket: Vote the party of your choice. Nothing further need be done in the partisan section.

Split ticket: You may vote a straight ticket AND vote for individual candidates of your choice.

Mixed ticket: Vote for the individual candidates of your choice in each office.

The **NON-PARTISAN** section includes judgeships, community college trustees, school board members, and district library board members. Some races in this section allow you to vote for more than one candidate, so pay attention to the number of choices you're permitted.

Where can I find information about candidates, proposals, etc.?

vote411.org kalcounty.com/clerk/elections_voting
votesmart.org michigan.gov/sos/elections

How do I vote?

Michigan voters have **THREE OPTIONS** to vote, and voters are welcome to use any one of them.

1. VOTE AT HOME - ABSENTEE

All registered voters in Michigan have the option to vote by mail using an absentee ballot delivered to their home. Voters with a Michigan ID can request an absentee ballot online at mi.gov/vote. All registered voters can request an absentee ballot person at the City Clerk's Office. Online applications may be submitted until 5 PM the Friday before Election Day, while in-person requests may be made at the Clerk's Office until 4 PM the day before Election Day. Absentee ballots are available and distributed beginning 40 days before the election.

BE ADVISED: The United States Postal Service will not forward your ballot to a location other than your registered address. If you wish to receive your absentee ballot at a different address, alert the City Clerk's Office early by calling 329-4511.

Voters have several options to securely return their completed and **SIGNED** absentee ballot. Absentee ballots must be received by the City Clerk by 8 PM on Election Day to be counted.

Mail: Voters should allow at least seven days for returning their absentee ballot by mail. Mail your ballot by Tuesday, October 29 to ensure it is received by the City Clerk's Office by Election Day.

Absentee Ballot Drop Box: Voters can conveniently drop off their completed absentee ballot at any of the following locations: City Hall, Fire Station No. 2, or Fire Station No. 3. Please ensure your ballot is placed in the drop box by 8 PM on Election Day for it to be counted.

In Person: Voters can return their completed absentee ballot to the City Clerk's Office by Election Day or can choose

to tabulate their absentee ballot at an early voting site or Election Day precinct.

2. EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING

Voters have nine consecutive days of early voting, beginning two Saturdays before Election Day and ending the Sunday before Election Day. Early Voting operates like a precinct on Election Day – vote your ballot and then feed it into a tabulator. Early voting sites are set up in four locations throughout Kalamazoo County, all of which can accommodate Portage voters.



1. WMU's Fetzer Center: 2251 Business Court, Kalamazoo,
2. Douglass Community Center: 1000 West Paterson Street, Kalamazoo
3. Kalamazoo County Expo Center: 2900 Lake Street, Kalamazoo
4. Portage Parks & Recreation: 320 Library Lane, Portage

3. ELECTION DAY VOTING

Voters who prefer to vote on Election Day can stop by their precinct on Election Day. Polls will be open from 7 AM to 8 PM. Before you head to the polls, verify your polling location online at mi.gov/vote or by calling the City Clerk's Office at 329-4511.

REMEMBER: Some voting locations have moved since the last Presidential Election, so where you vote may have changed. Visit mi.gov/vote to determine your precinct location.

Make sure you're registered and review your ballot before Election Day to ensure a smooth voting experience. Whether you vote early, by absentee, or on Election Day, your voice matters! Call the City Clerk at 329-4511 with any questions.



7900 South Westnedge Avenue
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160
portagemi.gov | (269) 329-4400

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO, MI
PERMIT NO. 33



The City of Portage does not set a specific date or time for trick-or-treating.

Please check with your neighbors or neighborhood association and use your best judgment.

Have fun and be safe!

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.



Mayor Patricia M. Randall
(269) 329-4400
patricia.randall@portagemi.gov



Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson
(269) 303-5459
councilmemberjp@portagemi.gov



Nicole Miller
(269) 924-1901
nicole.miller@portagemi.gov



Terry R. Urban
(269) 323-8160
terry.urban@portagemi.gov

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 or by calling Complaint Resolution at 329-4404.



Chris Burns
(708) 710-3102
chris.burns@portagemi.gov



Vic Ledbetter
(269) 330-6404
vic.ledbetter@portagemi.gov



Jihan Ain Young
(269) 759-0323
jihan.young@portagemi.gov



Patrick McGinnis, City Manager
(269) 329-4400
mcginnip@portagemi.gov

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.

OCTOBER 2024

3	7:00 PM	Planning Commission Meeting
8	6:00 PM	City Council Meeting
14	7:00 PM	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
17	7:00 PM	Planning Commission Meeting
22	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 Eliason Nature Reserve.

PORTRAGER Editor
Mary Beth Block | blockm@portagemi.gov