

# PORTAGER

*A Natural Place to Move*



## A Message from Mayor Patricia M. Randall

Obviously, the choice of candidates, from the top of the ticket on down, was neither unanimous, harmonious nor non-confrontational, to say the least. But, one thing we can all agree on: it's good to have this election cycle over. A staggering \$16 billion was spent on the presidential election alone. In fact, record-setting dollars were spent on just about every race statewide.

With Michigan being a "swing" state, we were bombarded with targeted political ads (and tactics) on every front. Texts and calls found their way to us through our personal devices. There was an unprecedented stream of commercials on television. Visuals peppered our landscape from billboards to yard signs and every social platform. Hollywood turned out in force. Professional athletes

stepped into the fray. Current and former political leaders shared their views. The messaging came from all sides and didn't stop. There was simply no place to hide!

George Washington, our first President, was sworn into office on April 30, 1789, without spending any money on his bid for the presidency. He wasn't sure he wanted the job. All donations received were in the form of beer. Leaving the world of kings and queens on the other side of the Atlantic, George had to define how the leader of a democracy exercised their power, as well as how to behave in public. He personally chose not to have people bow or kneel in his presence. The massive crowds were so jubilant during his inauguration that his carriage could not return him to his home at the conclusion of the festivities. So, he walked. Describing how he felt in his new role for a new country, he often stated that he walked on "untrdden ground."

Two hundred and thirty-five years later, this campaign cycle felt like we were still on a path not taken before. Like our country made a wrong turn and lost our way. Due

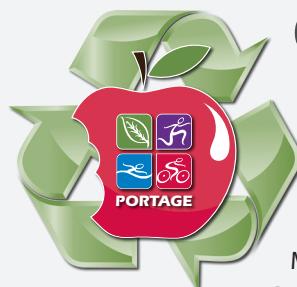
to printing deadlines, I have written this column prior to November 5, Election Day. Upon reflection and forever the optimist, I wonder how many homes could have been built, food purchased, medical care provided, people educated, and debt paid with \$16 billion?

I am ready for a blanket of white snow to cover it all and cleanse our country. I am ready to see commercials featuring majestic Clydesdales, talking ducks, jewelry that professes love and couples exchanging treasured gifts with one another. I am ready to embrace family and friends without Lamaze breathing, while trying to avoid political conversation. I am ready to stop being anxious about all that is out of my control.

Whether your traditions are secular, religious, familial, borrowed or new, may they include someone less fortunate. I wish you, our city and our country peace and joy during this final month of the year.

Happy Holidays and "Forward Together!"

— Patricia M. Randall



## Coming Soon! A New Way To Recycle Food Scraps

The City of Portage is partnering with My Green Michigan to debut a Food Scraps Recycling Pilot\* Program, beginning the week of January 6, 2025. The program, provided to Portage citizens at no additional fee, is tailored to turn food scraps into rich, nutrient-dense soil for the environment. Diverting food waste to composting has additional benefits, including reducing pollution and landfill waste, as well as lowering methane emissions. This pilot program is a part of the city's continuous efforts toward sustainability.

Citizens can easily recycle food scraps using a container at home that fits your needs, such as a lidded bowl, compostable bag, plastic container, countertop bin, or 5-gallon bucket. Simply visit one of the ten convenient drop-off sites on your schedule and deposit your scraps into the 64-gallon lime green bins provided.

My Green Michigan will empty the collection bins every other

Tuesday, beginning Tuesday, January 21, 2025. Food scrap recycling has never been easier and more accessible!

Watch for more information in next month's Portager and online at [portagemi.gov/933](http://portagemi.gov/933).

### Food Scrap Recycling Program Drop-Off Sites

- » Westfield Park: 4500 West Milham Avenue
- » Harbor West Park: 3458 Summersong Path
- » Marlow Street Cul-de-sac (adjacent to Haverhill Elementary)
- » Portage Creek Bicentennial Park: 910 East Milham Avenue
- » Lakeview Park: 9345 Portage Road
- » Oakland Drive Park: 7600 Oakland Drive
- » Ramona Park: 8600 South Sprinkle Road
- » West Lake Nature Preserve: 9001 South Westnedge Avenue
- » Schrier Park: 850 West Osterhout Avenue
- » Lexington Green Park: 4750 Pittsford Street

Questions? Contact the Department of Public Works at 329-4444 or the Office of the City Manager at 329-4400. Curious how those scraps become compost? Visit [mygreenmi.com](http://mygreenmi.com) to learn more.

\*This pilot program will run for one year, after which the city will evaluate results and determine the future of the program.

### If it GROWS it GOES

#### ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS



### When in DOUBT, leave it OUT!

#### NON-ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS



## Curbside Recycling in Portage

The City of Portage continues its commitment to the conservation of natural resources and minimizing the strain on the planet. Since January 2024, the city's Curbside Recycling Program has collected and recycled **more than 2000 TONS of materials**. Picture a parking lot filled with more than 1,300 cars – that's how much waste you've diverted from a landfill!

If you're already participating, thank you for making a difference! Not recycling yet? Keep reading to discover how you can join the effort and help keep Portage clean and green.

Through a voter-approved millage, the City of Portage proudly offers the Curbside Recycling Program, making it easy and convenient for residents to recycle right at their curb. This program is made possible through a partnership with Best Way Disposal, ensuring efficient and reliable collection of recyclable materials.

## Single-Stream Recycling

Mix all accepted recyclable items in a single container. Simply place all of your clean recyclables in the cart together. Be mindful that depositing soiled materials into

the cart can contaminate an entire load of clean recyclable items; compliance with these preparation instructions is essential to the success of the program. The automated recycling collection and sorting process includes GPS capabilities and video detection equipment.

### Enroll In the Program

To participate in the Curbside Recycling Program (new service only), please complete and submit the sign-up form at

[portagemi.gov/284](http://portagemi.gov/284). Residents have a choice of a 96-gallon or 64-gallon wheeled cart. The cart is easy to maneuver to the curb and prevents recyclable materials from being blown around on windy days. Existing participants may order additional carts (fee applies) or a different size cart by calling Best Way Disposal at 388-3300.



Visit [portagemi.gov/284](http://portagemi.gov/284) to learn what materials are recyclable and how to prepare those materials.

### Biweekly Collection

Recycling is collected every two weeks - visit [portagemi.gov/284](http://portagemi.gov/284) to learn your collection day. The wheeled carts provide

adequate space for two weeks' worth of recyclable materials, which means fewer trucks through your neighborhood. More importantly, the collection of materials once every two weeks results in a decrease in fuel consumption and emissions and the wear and tear on city streets.

Wheel the cart to the street by 6 AM on your collection day; position the cart facing toward the street with a 3-foot clearance from other objects (other carts, mailbox, vehicle).

### Drop-Off Recycling

Portage residents may also utilize the Best Way Disposal drop-off facility for a fee of \$5 per cubic yard. All items included in the Curbside Recycling Program are accepted at the drop-off facility located at:

Best Way Disposal  
2606 Miller Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

#### Best Way Disposal Drop-Off Hours

Monday through Friday from 8 AM - 4:30 PM  
Saturdays from 8 AM - 12 PM

#### Questions?

Best Way Disposal Customer Service Center: 388-3300  
City of Portage Recycling Hotline: 329-4416

# City of Portage Snow Removal Program: What You Need to Know

As winter arrives, the City of Portage works diligently to ensure our streets are safe and passable, no matter how severe the snowfall. With 221 miles of city streets to cover, snow removal crews are out as early as 3:30 AM to begin plowing, sanding, and salting.



## How Snow Removal Works

To make the most of city resources and provide maximum benefit to drivers, snow removal is prioritized by traffic levels on city streets:

**Priority I:** Major streets (e.g., South Westnedge Avenue, Oakland Drive, Milham Avenue, Kilgore Road, Shaver Road, Lovers Lane, etc.)

**Priority II:** Feeder streets leading into neighborhoods and roads providing access to schools.

**Priority III:** Interior residential streets.

**Priority IV:** Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets.

During a snowstorm, the focus remains on keeping Priority I and II streets clear, usually completed within 4 to 8 hours. Once those roads are safe, crews move to Priority III and IV streets, which can take up to 48 hours depending on conditions. Bridges, hills, intersections, and curves also receive extra attention throughout a storm to ensure safe passage.

## How You Can Help

Residents play an important role in making snow removal as efficient as possible. Please keep the following city ordinances and state laws in mind:

**Basketball Hoops:** Basketball stands are not permitted in the city right-of-way.

**Street Parking:** From December 1 to March 15, parking is prohibited on city streets between 2 AM and 6 AM (see article below).

**Trash and Recycling:** On collection days, keep bins on the curb and out of the roadway.

**Snow Removal from Private Property:** It is illegal to push snow from driveways, sidewalks, or parking lots onto public streets.

## A Proactive Approach to Snow Removal

Before a snowstorm hits, crews may apply a liquid calcium chloride solution to roadways to prevent snow and ice from bonding to the pavement. This pretreatment makes snow removal faster and more efficient. However, not all storms are suitable for this technique. The Department of Public Works evaluates factors like air and pavement temperatures, humidity, and precipitation rates to determine when pretreatment is appropriate.



The City of Portage snow removal program is designed with safety and efficiency in mind. For more information, or if you have questions, contact the Department of Public Works at 329-4444. Stay safe, and thank you for your cooperation!

## Track Snowplows in Real-Time



SnowPaths is an app that allows users to view the real-time locations of active snowplows deployed during a snow event. The app utilizes Automated Vehicle Location (AVL), Geographic Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies to visually display the snowplow's location. The app also displays the status of plowed city roads on an interactive map. SnowPaths can be accessed at [portagemi.gov/290](http://portagemi.gov/290) and on the MI.Portage app (available in the App Store & Google Play).

## Overnight On-Street Parking Ordinance

Portage residents are asked to abide by the city ordinance that prohibits overnight, on-street parking between the hours of 2 AM and 6 AM from December 1 to March 15.



Observance of this city ordinance allows snowplow operators to safely and efficiently clear city streets of snow. In addition, clear streets promote crime deterrence and offer the police department better visibility while conducting neighborhood patrols.

Vehicle owners who do not comply with this local ordinance may be cited by the Portage Department of Public Safety. Residents and visitors are also reminded that during heavy snow events, snowplows may be out clearing streets during daytime hours as well. Limiting on-street parking during these weather events will expedite the snow removal process.

## Time to Upgrade to Better Service at No Extra Cost!

In recent years, Portage neighborhoods have seen an influx of small yard flags marking underground utilities. These flags signal the installation of new fiber optic lines that promise faster (and hopefully more affordable) internet for all. Alongside this, however, outdated infrastructure has lingered: those familiar, boxy pedestals housing "twisted pairs" of copper lines that provided telephone service for decades. Residents are eager to see the construction completed and the unsightly pedestals removed.



The good news? If you're an AT&T customer, you can help speed up the process by upgrading your service. If you're still receiving internet or telephone service from AT&T through old copper lines, consider switching to AT&T's fiber network. AT&T owns both the copper pedestals and much of the new fiber and is reaching out to customers to facilitate a no-cost upgrade. Not only is the fiber connection faster and more reliable, but AT&T confirms that generally it won't cost more than your current plan.

To upgrade, visit [att.com/fiberupgrade41](http://att.com/fiberupgrade41), call (866) 215-9510, or stop by the AT&T store at 5901 South Westnedge Avenue. The more residents who make the switch, the sooner we can remove those old pedestals and restore our lawns. Enjoy improved service and a cleaner neighborhood – upgrade today!

## January Curbside Brush Collection

The January Curbside Brush Collection includes whole Christmas trees (free of tinsel and ornaments).



The Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection will begin on Monday, January 6. To ensure the collection of your items, residents are asked to have brush and Christmas trees placed at the curb by 7 AM on the Monday of your designated collection week (see map). Each street will be cleared one time, and each zone will be cleared within its designated week. Crews cannot return to pick up items placed out late. If snowfall occurs, residents are asked to clear snow from brush piles and Christmas trees to ensure crews are able to find items for collection.



Complete details regarding the Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection Program can be found at [portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov) or by contacting the Department of Public Works at 329-4444.

## Leaf and Brush Drop Off Days

February 1, 2025, 9 AM - 1 PM

The City of Portage Compost Facility will be open for residents to drop off brush, leaves, and whole Christmas trees (free of decorations and tinsel) from 9 AM to 1 PM on Saturday, February 1. The compost facility is located at 10905 Oakland Drive, just south of West Osterhout Avenue. Department of Public Works staff will be present to direct patrons to the proper locations to drop brush, leaves, and Christmas trees.

## Stay Safe This Holiday Season With These Fire Safety Tips

The holiday season is a time of joy, cherished moments, and celebrations with loved ones. To ensure your festivities remain safe and worry-free, the Portage Department of Public Safety shares important fire safety tips to protect you and your family during this special time of year. "Safety is the best gift we can give ourselves and our loved ones this season," said Deputy Fire Marshal Graham.

### General Holiday Safety

- Choose flame-resistant decorations and keep them away from heat sources like fireplaces or heaters.
- Secure holiday lights with clips instead of nails to avoid damaging cords and reducing fire risks.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children. Never leave candles unattended and ensure they are placed far from flammable decorations.

### Lithium-Ion Battery Safety

- Use only manufacturer-approved chargers and batteries for devices to prevent overheating.
- Avoid charging devices on flammable surfaces, such as beds or couches, and never overcharge.



- Store batteries at room temperature. Do not charge them at temperatures below 32°F or above 105°F.
- If a battery shows signs of overheating, smoke, or odors, stop using it immediately. Move the device away from flammable materials, and call 9-1-1 if necessary.

### Christmas Tree Safety

- If choosing a live tree, select a fresh tree with green needles that don't easily fall off when touched.
- Place your tree at least three feet away from heat sources, including fireplaces, radiators, and candles. Ensure it doesn't block exits.
- Trim the tree trunk by two inches before placing it in the stand to enhance water absorption and replenish the water daily to keep the tree hydrated.
- Inspect holiday lights for damage before use and follow the manufacturer's recommendations for how many strands can be safely connected. Always turn off lights before bed or when leaving home.

### Proper Tree Disposal

A dry tree can quickly become a fire hazard. Dispose of your tree promptly after the holidays during the January Curbside Brush Collection (see article to the left). Bringing in outdoor lights after the season can also prevent electrical hazards and keep your decorations in good shape for next year.

"The holiday spirit shines brightest when everyone stays safe," said Assistant Fire Chief Jed Wild. "From all of us at the Portage Department of Public Safety, we wish you a safe, festive, and peaceful holiday season!"



# YOUR BACKYARD IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK

## Thanks All Around!

On October 27, 2024, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners gathered at the Celery Flats to plant trees to support recovery efforts following the May 7 tornado. This event would not have been possible without the generosity and assistance of the following organizations:

ACT Foundation USA, B&G Discount, Biggby Coffee, Blain's Farm & Fleet, Earth Works Lawn & Landscape, Fresh Thyme Market, Gordon Water Systems, Graphic Packaging International Recycled Paperboard Manufacturing Division, Graphic Packaging International Paperboard Packaging Division and Containerboard Division, The Home Depot, Honor Credit Union, the Kalamazoo Growlers, Kalamazoo Landscape Supply, Lowe's, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Mulder's Nursery, Peace Love and Little Donuts, and Smoothie King.

A heartfelt thank you also goes out to all the volunteers who helped make this tree-planting initiative a success! Together, we are working to restore the beauty and vitality of Portage.

## Traditional Holiday & Tree Lighting Celebration

Celebrate the magic of the season! Start at the annual Tree Lighting Celebration at the Mayor's Tree in the City Centre then follow Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse drawn carriage to Celery Flats. Stuart Manor will host Santa and Mrs. Claus where they will greet children and listen to their holiday wishes. Take a stroll through Celery Flats as you are serenaded

## Portage Parks & Recreation Events, Camps & Classes

### 1,000 Acres. 20 Parks. One City.

The Portage Parks system is multi-faceted with activities and opportunities for families and people of all ages. To find out more and register online, visit [mypad.portagemi.gov](http://mypad.portagemi.gov) and click



REGISTER NOW!

by the PNHS Choir in the Pavilion and Proclamation Brass in the Grain Elevator. Complimentary milk and cookies will be served in the large, heated tent along with children's crafts. Watch ice sculptors and warm yourself by the bonfires while enjoying food from Ibison's Food Truck and hot chocolate and cider provided by the Portage Community Center (donations accepted). Stop at the Schoolhouse to fill out your Santa wish list and drop your letters in the North Pole mailbox.

- » Saturday, December 7, 6 - 8 PM
- » The City Centre and Celery Flats
- » FREE (No Registration Required)

## Portage Holiday Market

Looking for the perfect holiday gift? The Portage Holiday Market is the place to find unique gifts and whimsical stocking stuffers for your friends and family. Shop local and support 50+ vendors selling tasty treats, art, crafts, and other handmade products such as ornaments, apparel, jewelry, blankets, home décor, and more! Browse an array of delectable foods: locally produced meats, pasties, honey and syrup, cheese, jams, holiday cookies, and more!

- » Saturday, December 14, 9 AM - 1 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE and open to the public (No patron fee)

## Winter Break into Action

Students break into action with fun recreational games and activities, sparking the connection between creativity and

activity in this program designed for physical and mental engagement for youth. Programs will be split into two separate, sports-themed segments, starting slow and steady with arts and crafts and building up to physically engaging indoor exercises. Participants develop social skills and foster a healthy sense of competition and collaboration. The fee includes two days and a daily healthy snack. Limit of 20 participants per session.

- » Monday, December 30 & Tuesday, December 31
- » Session 1: 10 AM - 12 PM for 3rd - 5th Graders
- » Session 2: 1 - 3 PM for 6th - 8th Graders
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$60 per participant, per session (Registration required)

## Zoo To You: Animal Habitats

Let the zoo come to you! Learn about the basic needs of animals and how they meet those needs in different habitats, from deserts to wetlands. Meet ambassador animals from John Ball Zoo in these exciting sessions, each session featuring different animals. The presentation begins at 11 AM, so arrive by 10:45 AM to be seated. A chaperone must accompany participants under the age of 18. Children ages 3 or younger may attend for free.

- » Saturday, January 4, 10:45 AM - 12 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per person (Registration required, including chaperones)



## The Ice Rink at Millennium Park

The Ice Rink at Millennium Park opens on Friday, December 13! The large outdoor refrigerated rink features skate rental, sharpening, concessions, restrooms, lockers, an excellent skating surface, and special skating events.

**Daily Hours** (weather permitting)

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Monday - Thursday ..... | Closed    |
| Friday .....            | 3 - 9 PM  |
| Saturday & Sunday ..... | 12 - 6 PM |



### Winter School Holidays: December 20 to January 5

|                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Daily.....                    | 1 - 8 PM |
| December 24 & January 1 ..... | 1 - 6 PM |
| Christmas Day .....           | Closed   |

### Rates

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Open Skating .....                                 | \$5  |
| Skate Rental .....                                 | \$3  |
| Skate Sharpening .....                             | \$5  |
| Ten-punch Skate Card (Expires March 3, 2025) ..... | \$25 |

Each punch good for one:

- » Open Skate
- » Skate Rental
- » Skate Sharpening

### Santa Skate

Join us for a festive afternoon on the ice with Jolly Old Saint Nick! Skate to the sounds of holiday music and enjoy special moments with Santa Claus himself. Don't forget your cameras to capture this fantastic holiday photo opportunity with family and friends.

- » Saturday, December 14, 1 - 3 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)

### Ugly Sweater Party

Come dressed in your ugliest holiday sweater and skate along to your favorite holiday tunes at the ice rink.

- » Friday, December 20, 5 - 9 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)

### New Year's Eve Skate

Celebrate the New Year in a safe and fun environment perfect for teens and families! Spend your New Year's Eve with upbeat music by a local DJ, party lighting after dark, and a special countdown at 7 PM to coincide with New Year's at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, U.K. This is a fantastic opportunity to welcome the New Year together.

- » Tuesday, December 31, 5 - 8 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)

All ice rink activities are weather permitting.

## Show Off Your Holiday Spirit!

Sponsored by Consumers Energy, the **"Decked Out Home" Holiday Decorating Contest** invites Portage residents to light up their neighborhoods with festive holiday displays for a chance to win cash prizes.

Participating is free and easy! Just upload photos of your "decked out home" on our Facebook post [@CityofPortageMI](http://@CityofPortageMI) or email them to [publicinformation@portagemi.gov](mailto:publicinformation@portagemi.gov) by Tuesday, December 16 PM. On December 19, an interactive map and a NEW! community voting link will be shared on Facebook. Voting will run from December 17 to 22 and is limited to one vote per household (IP address).

The winning homes will be announced on Facebook on Friday, December 22, and awarded a prize and a special certificate in person at the January 9 City Council Meeting.

Thanks to our sponsor Consumers Energy for these cash prizes: 1st place - \$200, 2nd place - \$150, 3rd place - \$100.



Complete contest rules can be found at [portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov) in the spotlights section.

## YOU HAVE MORE FRIENDS THAN YOU KNOW

## Ugly Holiday Sweater Dance Party

Dive into the festive spirit with our Ugly Holiday Sweater Party! It's the season to dig out your most hilariously hideous holiday sweaters and hit the dance floor in various colors and patterns as DJ Hurricane spins the tunes. Join us for a night where fashion faux pas are accepted and celebrated. It's the perfect opportunity to raid your closet for the most outrageous and gaudily adorned sweaters/attire. Bring your holiday cheer and prepare for a wonderful time with dancing, laughs, drinks, and fun! Light appetizers, pop, water, and a cash bar are provided.

- » Tuesday, December 17, 5 - 7 PM
- » \$15 Member / Non-member (Registration required)

## Portage Zhang Senior Center Events, Activities & Classes

### Explore More. Have Fun. Live Well.

Find us at 203 East Centre Avenue | [mypad.pzsc.portagemi.gov](http://mypad.pzsc.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 adult.

**Membership and participation 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.

## Holiday Harmony: A PZSC Showcase!

Join us for a delightful afternoon of holiday cheer at the PZSC! Our incredibly talented members will take the stage in a festive showcase that promises to warm your heart and lift your spirits! Performances will include our Hand Chimes Group, BeMoved Dance Fitness, Guitar Club, and Tap Dancing. After the performance, stick around for some cozy refreshments including hot cocoa, coffee, and delicious donuts. This is a perfect opportunity for you to



become acquainted with the group leaders and members within the groups.

- » Friday, December 20, 2 - 3:30 PM
- » FREE and open to the public (Registration required)

## Area Agency on Aging IIIA

Meet with a representative from the Kalamazoo County Area Agency on Aging IIIA Office to get information, referrals or assistance for aging at home. The AAIIIA is a unit of Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services, under the oversight of the Aging and Adult Services Agency of Michigan.

- » Wednesday, January 8, 9AM - 12 PM
- » FREE and open to the public (No registration required)

# PORTAGER

## 2024 Winter Property Taxes

On November 27, the 2024 winter tax bills for the City of Portage were mailed. Payments will be accepted starting Monday, December 2, 2024 and are due by 5 PM on Friday, February 14, 2025.

Property owners should call the Treasury Office at 329-4455 if you don't receive a winter tax bill by December 6, 2024. Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the you of the responsibility for payment of the tax and applicable fees. To quickly access your property tax information and pay online, scan the QR code located on the front of your bill or visit [portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov). Property tax information is updated daily.

### Payment Options

**USPS Mail:** Mail your payment to the City of Portage Treasury Office, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002-5117. Please include your payment and the bottom portion of your tax statement. Payment by check authorizes the city to convert the check to an electronic funds transfer and your bank account may be debited as soon as the same day the city receives the check payment. To avoid a 3% late fee, **mailed payments must be postmarked by the U.S. Post Office on or before February 14, 2025**, and received by the city no later than February 21, 2025. In all late payment disputes, the Portage Treasury Office will rely on the postmark applied by the Postmaster (metered postmarks are not accepted).

**Drop Box:** A 24-hour drop box is located at the south "Exit Only" door of City Hall at 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002. Look for the "Night Drop Box" sign near the curb. Include the bottom portion of your tax statement with your payment. Payments deposited after 7:30 AM



may be processed on the same business day. Payments deposited after 5:30 PM or on weekends are processed on the next business day.

**Online or Phone Payments:** Pay online with a credit/debit card (3% fee, \$2.95 minimum) or E-check payment (\$2.50 fee). Visit [portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov) and click on the Bill Pay icon. Phone payments can be made by calling (844) 943-3997 (3% + \$0.75 fee).



**Auto Pay:** Visit [portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov) and click the "Bill Pay" icon on the home page to set up auto payment of your recurring tax bill. Select "Register" or "Pay Current Taxes" and register your account. Then go to *My Profile > Payment Methods > Add new credit/debit card* OR *Add new bank*. Once you have entered and confirmed your information, select "set up auto-pay." Payment will be debited from your account on the tax due date. A 3% fee, \$2.95 minimum applies when using a credit/debit card; **no fee when using a checking or savings account**.

**Online Banking:** Pay through your financial institution's online bill pay. First, contact your bank to confirm that they honor tax payments through their system. Use your parcel number as your account number. Online banking payments should be scheduled no later than February 4, 2025, to ensure timely delivery of funds to the City of Portage to avoid late fees.

**In Person at City Hall:** Visit the Treasury Office located at Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. The Treasury Office is open Monday to Thursday, 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Friday, 8 AM to 12 PM. City Hall will be closed:

- » Tuesday, December 24      » Wednesday, January 1
- » Wednesday, December 25      » Monday, January 20

All 2024 property taxes that remain unpaid on March 1, 2025, will be turned over to the Kalamazoo County Treasurer for collection where additional fees will be added.

Questions regarding tax bills may be directed to the City of Portage Treasury Office at 329-4455.

## 2025 City Council Meeting Schedule

Portage City Council meetings are held twice a month on Tuesdays at 6 PM in Council Chambers at Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. View agendas and minutes at [portagemi.gov/610](http://portagemi.gov/610) and live-stream meetings at [portagemi.gov/205](http://portagemi.gov/205).

- » Tuesday, January 7
- » Tuesday, January 21
- » Tuesday, February 11
- » Tuesday, February 25
- » Tuesday, March 11
- » Tuesday, March 25
- » Tuesday, April 15
- » Tuesday, April 29
- » Tuesday, May 13
- » Tuesday, May 27
- » Tuesday, June 10
- » Tuesday, June 24
- » Tuesday, July 8
- » Tuesday, July 22
- » Tuesday, August 12
- » Tuesday, August 26
- » Tuesday, September 9
- » Tuesday, September 23
- » Tuesday, October 7
- » Tuesday, October 21
- » Wednesday, November 5\*
- » Tuesday, November 18
- » Tuesday, December 2
- » Tuesday, December 16

## Seasonal Cheer at City Hall

### Take Home a Poinsettia!

Our Poinsettia trees will be in full bloom throughout the Christmas season at City Hall and the Portage Zhang Senior Center, thanks to our generous sponsors: Abonmarche, AVB, and Hinman.



"Take-Down Day" is Monday, December 23. Help us bid farewell to our seasonal decor by stopping by either site before 5 PM to pick up your free poinsettia!



7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160  
[portagemi.gov](http://portagemi.gov) | (269) 329-4400

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

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Portage City Hall and all other non-emergency city offices will be closed on the following dates:

#### Christmas

- » Tuesday, December 24
- » Wednesday, December 25

#### New Year's

- » Wednesday, January 1

#### MLK Jr. Day

- » Monday, January 20

*In the event of a police, fire, or medical emergency, please dial 9-1-1.*



## 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](mailto:patricia.randall@portagemi.gov)



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



Nicole Miller  
(269) 924-1901  
[nicole.miller@portagemi.gov](mailto:nicole.miller@portagemi.gov)



Terry R. Urban  
(269) 323-8160  
[terry.urban@portagemi.gov](mailto:terry.urban@portagemi.gov)



Chris Burns  
(708) 710-3102  
[chris.burns@portagemi.gov](mailto:chris.burns@portagemi.gov)



Vic Ledbetter  
(269) 330-6404  
[vic.ledbetter@portagemi.gov](mailto:vic.ledbetter@portagemi.gov)



Jihan Ain Young  
(269) 759-0323  
[jihan.young@portagemi.gov](mailto:jihan.young@portagemi.gov)



Patrick McGinnis, City Manager  
(269) 329-4400  
[mcginnip@portagemi.gov](mailto: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](http://portagemi.gov/205).

### DECEMBER 2024

|    |         |                             |
|----|---------|-----------------------------|
| 3  | 6:00 PM | City Council Meeting        |
| 5  | 7:00 PM | Planning Commission Meeting |
| 17 | 6:00 PM | City Council Meeting        |
| 19 | 7:00 PM | Planning Commission 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 Schoolhouse decorated for Traditional Holiday.

PORTAGER Editor  
Mary Beth Block | [blockm@portagemi.gov](mailto:blockm@portagemi.gov)