



NEWSLETTER

City of Portage



2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

New Faces

We were excited to announce the additions of our new Mayor, Matt Fiene, and our new City Administrator, Justin Schoenemann, in 2025. They both add a wealth of knowledge and a fresh perspective to our City staff!

New Developments

The City of Portage has started facility-wide upgrades to the Waste Water Treatment Plant. We are also excited about the ongoing housing and business developments going on around town!

Recreation Opportunities

Be sure to check out the TONS of recreational opportunities highlighted in this newsletter. From programs and facilities in the Park & Rec Department, to hiking the Ice Age Trail, there's something for everyone in Portage!



Mayor Matt Fiene

As your Mayor, I want to take this opportunity to share a clear and straightforward update on where our city stands, what we accomplished last year, and what lies ahead in 2026. While this address is traditionally delivered to the City Council, I believe it is just as important that every resident understands what's happening in our community. There are real reasons for optimism in Portage. There are also challenges. But I am confident that, working together, we are moving in the right direction. Before we look to the future, I would like to reflect a bit on the past year.

Last year was not without obstacles. We worked through a tight budget process, faced some negative publicity over the summer, and navigated continued high interest rates that made projects more expensive. Despite that, our city staff and council remained focused and professional. Together, we made meaningful progress.

One major step forward was hiring our new City Administrator, Justin. He has brought fresh energy and a strong commitment to responsiveness and accountability. We are also continuing our search for a new Director of Development and Planning – an important position that will help guide Portage's long-term growth. This year, we are launching a new online utility payment portal that will make it easier and more convenient for residents to manage their utility accounts.

Last year was a good year for investment and growth in our community. If you drove through downtown last summer, you certainly noticed the construction. While it caused inconvenience, those improvements were long overdue – and the results are already visible. Our downtown looks refreshed and positioned for continued activity and growth. We also welcomed several new and expanding businesses:

- ▶ Domino's Pizza
- ▶ Taino Bambu
- ▶ Hachi Hachi Sushi
- ▶ 1873 Grille (under new ownership)
- ▶ Legacy's Sports Bar (under new ownership)

Tommy's Express Car Wash broke ground last fall, and the Portage School District began construction on new facilities. Downtown renovations continue, including improvements to the former drugstore building and the new event center next to the Chamber of Commerce. Most recently, Rhyme purchased the former Energizer building and is making a substantial investment in Portage. They are currently renovating and moving equipment into the facility, with plans to begin operations later this spring. This represents significant new economic activity and confidence in our community.

This year, there are a few road projects I wanted to highlight. Maintaining strong infrastructure is one of the most important responsibilities of local government. This year, we will reconstruct East Pleasant Street and Boeck Road in the Industrial Park. These projects are essential to maintaining safe roads while being responsible with long-term debt. Construction is also underway on our new Wastewater Treatment Plant – one of the largest infrastructure investments in our city's history. These upgrades are critical to protecting public health, supporting future development, and meeting environmental standards.



I also wanted to share some information on code enforcement and building related questions. Many residents have expressed concerns about properties falling into disrepair. Safe, well-maintained neighborhoods are something every resident deserves. We identified that responsibility for code enforcement was spread across multiple departments, which sometimes led to inconsistent communication and follow-up. To fix that, we have created a monthly Code Enforcement Task Force. This team now clearly tracks complaints, enforcement actions, and follow-ups to ensure issues don't fall through the cracks. Over time, this will result in more consistent and fair enforcement.

We are also reviewing our current permit fees and fine structure. In some cases, penalties are not strong enough to prevent repeat violations. This year, I will ask the Council to consider a "repeated violator ordinance," which would allow daily fines for landlords or property owners who repeatedly fail to correct violations. This is not about punishment. It is about fairness – protecting responsible property owners and preserving the quality of our neighborhoods.

In April, the school district will hold an operational referendum. While opinions vary, I believe strong schools are essential to a strong city. I have been in ongoing discussions with district leadership about future planning, including shared services, redevelopment opportunities, and long-term cooperation between the city and schools. In November, voters will participate in the gubernatorial election and other state-level races. Regardless of political outcomes, I will continue advocating for Portage on key issues such as state aid, levy limits, and transportation funding.

Over the past year, I have been doing a lot of research on the housing affordability questions people asked me during my campaign. Housing affordability is a growing concern in many communities, including ours. This year, we will review parts of our zoning code that may unintentionally increase housing costs – such as setback requirements that limit how homes can be built on lots.

We will also explore expanding our zero lot line ordinance to allow small multi-family options like 4-plexes and 6-plexes. In addition, we will discuss allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) – small, separate living spaces located on the same property as a main home. These can provide flexible, affordable housing options while maintaining neighborhood character. Any proposed changes will be discussed publicly, with input from residents.

Good government also means efficient government. We will review our council committee structure and meeting formats to allow for deeper discussion where needed, while maintaining efficiency. At the same time, we will begin developing a five-year financial plan to better understand our long-term budget outlook and prepare responsibly for the future. Looking ahead, this year brings both responsibility and opportunity.

We are:

- ▶ Investing in roads and utilities
- ▶ Encouraging responsible business growth
- ▶ Improving how city government operates
- ▶ Strengthening neighborhoods
- ▶ Working to expand housing options

None of this happens alone. It requires partnership between city leaders, staff, business owners, and residents. If we remain focused and disciplined, I am confident that 2026 will be a year of measurable progress for Portage.

Thank you for being engaged, informed, and committed to our community.

2026 Elections

- ▶ Spring Election – April 7, 2026
- ▶ Partisan Primary Election – August 11, 2026
- ▶ General Election – November 3, 2026



Check out MyVote Wisconsin, <https://myvote.wi.gov>

- ▶ Register to vote
- ▶ Update name or address
- ▶ Check voting status and history
- ▶ Find polling location
- ▶ Request an absentee ballot
- ▶ See what is on ballot
- ▶ Hours for in-person absentee voting

Photo ID Required at the Polls:

Photo ID is required at the polls. Plan now to make sure you have an acceptable photo ID to vote. Free State Photo ID available. Portage DMV open Tuesday and Thursday 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Check out <https://bringit.wi.gov> for more information.

Spring Election Information – April 7, 2026

Deadlines to Register:

- ▶ By mail or online: March 18, 2026
- ▶ In City Clerk’s office: April 3, 2026
- ▶ May register at the polls on Election Day

Deadline to Request Absentee Ballot:

- ▶ Regular and Overseas Electors: April 2, 2026
- ▶ Indefinitely Confined Electors and Military Electors: April 3, 2026

Please request ballots by mail early and make sure to mail back by March 31. If the ballot is not at the polls by 8:00 p.m. Election Day, the ballot will NOT be counted



In-Person Absentee Voting Hours – Municipal Building, 115 West Pleasant St.

- ▶ March 24 – 26, 2026 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- ▶ March 27, 2026 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- ▶ March 30 – April 2, 2026 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- ▶ April 3, 2026 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Polling Place Hours (April 7) – Portage Fire Station, 119 West Pleasant St.

- ▶ 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



Annual Property Revaluation

Every year, properties in the city are re-assessed to market value. An annual revaluation ensures all assessed values reflect current market values. Assessed values will rise and fall to reflect the previous year's market. The Assessor will use comparable sales from last year to best determine the new assessed value.

If there is a change in your property assessment, a notice will be mailed in the middle of April. If you have questions about the value the Assessor placed on your property, be sure to follow the instructions regarding *Open Book*. Visit <https://accurateassessor.com/>. *Open Book* will be held by either by email or in-person. Follow the steps below:

► **Email:** Go to <https://accurateassessor.com/> and click “Open Book Assistant.” Select “Portage” follow the prompts, and select “Email Response.” An assessor will reply via email.

► **In-person:** (appointments strongly encourage)

Municipal Building, 115 West Pleasant St.

Wednesday, May 6, 2026, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 7, 2026, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

To schedule an appointment, go to <https://accurateassessor.com/> and click on “Open Book Assistant”

Appeal Deadline: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 by 5:30 p.m.

(if after *Open Book* discussion, you still disagree with your assessment)

Board of Review: Thursday, June 18, 2026, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Portage

Submit the “Objection to Real Property Assessment (PA-115A)” form to City Clerk in-person or via email.

Accurate Assessor telephone 920-749-8098, email info@accuratesassessor.com

Notice to Destroy Weeds

The City requires that all noxious weeds be destroyed prior to the time in which such plants would mature to the bloom or flower state. The growth of noxious weeds in excess of eight inches in height from the ground surface shall be prohibited within the city corporate limits. Noxious weeds shall include any weed, grass or similar plant growth which, if allowed to pollinate, would cause or produce hay fever in human beings or would cause a skin rash through contact with the skin.

Are chickens and ducks allowed in the City?

Residents are allowed to keep up to six (6) chickens and ducks in their rear yards; but you must have a Chicken and Duck Permit in order to do so. You can find the complete regulations and application on the City website.

How do I get my tax bill?

- ▶ By Mail: Tax Bills are mailed annually mid-December
- ▶ Online: Real Estate Tax Parcel (columbia.wi.us)
 - ▶ You can also obtain your tax receipt online. Select 'Information' and then select the year.
- ▶ 1st Installments are due to the **City Treasurer** by January 31st each year
- ▶ 2nd Installments are due to the **County Treasurer's office** by July 31st each year

Name Change

If you need to make a name change on your tax bill, you will need to contact Columbia County Register of Deeds. (www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/registerofdeeds/)

Address Change

If you need to make a billing address change on your tax bill, please write the new billing address on the tax bill stub and include a copy of the stub when making your payment.

Lottery and Gaming Credit (LGC) Available

Are you a WI Resident and your home is your **primary residence**? Then you may qualify for the LGC. If you do not see the credit on your tax bill, please go to the DOR Online filing application - [Lottery and Gaming Credit Form Selection](#). Property owners must submit a complete application, with the appropriate documentation, to DOR by October 1, 2026 to have it appear on the current year tax bill.

Portage Taxi

The City contracts with Go Riteway for shared ride taxi service (SRT). This is a collaboration between the City, Go Riteway, and the State of Wisconsin DOT. To schedule a ride, contact Go Riteway at 608-742-4700.

Information on the taxi hours and other service-related information can be found on the following page of the City website: www.portagewi.gov/taxi-1

City Budget and Financial Audit

The City publishes its annual budget and audited financial statements, which can be found on the city website. (www.portagewi.gov/finance-director)

Water & Sewer Utility Billing

Please provide the Utility Department with your phone number! We have been working to collect phone numbers in case of a utility emergency! Please write on your next payment or email it to us at billing@portagewi.gov

New Payment Processing

The City is looking to move from PSN to our software providers Community Portal, and payments through Zift. We will keep everyone posted as to the timeframe as you will need to re-register for automatic payments via credit card (current ACH will remain as is.) We are very excited about this new, enhanced user experience!

We would like to welcome Andrew Saiia to our staff as our new Utility Account Clerk. Andrew started with the City on March 19th and will be the main point of contact for questions related to utility accounts and billing. Our office is always available for questions or concerns related to the City Finances or Utility Bills. Please feel free to contact us via phone, email, or stop in!

Jennifer Becker – Finance Director/Treasurer
Tonya Long – Deputy Treasurer/Utility Accountant
Andrew Saiia – Utility Account Clerk

As we begin a new year, we take a moment to reflect on the accomplishments of Portage Fire Rescue. In 2025, our Agency responded to 2,704 emergency calls, marking a year of growth and significant milestones. Most notably, we successfully transitioned to providing full emergency medical services (EMS) for our community. In January, our agency officially assumed full responsibility for EMS response, an historic achievement that represents a major advancement in the care we provide for our residents and the surrounding townships.

This milestone was made possible through months of careful planning, coordination, and the dedication of our firefighters, officers, city leadership, and support staff. The members of our Agency are the backbone of our organization, allowing us to strive for excellence in everything we do. Currently, the Agency is composed of 44 members: 24 full-time, 19 paid-on-call, and our administrative assistant. Through collaboration and strategic preparation, we ensured a smooth transition while maintaining uninterrupted, high-quality patient care.

Over the past year, Portage Fire Rescue has continued to respond to a growing number of fire and medical emergencies, while adapting to the expansion of our EMS program. As call volumes and service demands evolve, we have remained flexible, enhancing staffing models, advancing training, and strategically deploying resources to ensure timely, effective responses.

With our expanded team in place, we can staff all required ambulances, improve system reliability, and reduce response times, ensuring advanced medical care reaches residents quickly when seconds matter most. Our Firefighter/Paramedics and EMTs stand ready to deliver lifesaving treatment, provide compassionate care, and respond professionally to a wide range of emergencies.

The integration and growth of our EMS capabilities represent a significant step forward in how we serve the community. From the moment we arrive on scene, we are committed to providing comprehensive emergency care, protecting lives, and supporting the safety and well-being of all who live and work in Portage.

**What does a Portage Paid-on-Call Firefighter do?
Could I do this?
Where do I even start?**

Portage paid-on-call firefighters live their everyday lives, and when the community needs them, they **step up and answer the call**. Our team comes from a wide variety of **backgrounds, professions, and interests**, and we would welcome **YOUR unique contribution** to the team. As a paid-on-call firefighter, you gain exposure to experiences **unique to the fire service**, connect with the community, grow professionally, and build **lasting friendships**, all part of the rewarding life of a Portage paid-on-call firefighter.





Fire Safety Reminders

Portage Fire Rescue encourages all residents to replace the batteries in their Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms. We have AA batteries available at the fire station, generously donated by Energizer. If you need assistance installing the batteries in your alarms, please contact us at (608) 742-2172. We will be happy to schedule a time to come out and help ensure your home stays safe.

Burn Permits

The City of Portage requires a burn permit for all open burning, except for approved outdoor recreational fire pits or fireplaces. Permits can be obtained on the Portage Fire Rescue website or by stopping at the fire station during regular business hours. Residents who live outside the City of Portage and wish to conduct open burning must obtain authorization through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Burn permits can be secured online at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/forestfire/permits> or by calling 1-888-947-2876. Before burning, always check current conditions and follow all safety guidelines to help protect property, neighbors, and our community.

Thank you to all our fire and EMS personnel for your unwavering dedication. Your teamwork is the foundation of our success, and we are proud to continue serving the Portage community with excellence.

Stay safe and thank you for trusting us to serve you.
Portage Fire Rescue

Stay up to date
with Portage
Fire Rescue



Unearth A Story

This is the 2026 theme for the Portage Public Library summer library program. Register the entire family. The library offers a reading program for adults, teens and children. The more you read this summer, the more chances to win prizes! The Kickoff Celebration will be held on May 28, 2026 at 6 p.m. at Pauquette Park. Magician Zack Percell will present his family-friendly "Reading is Magic" show. Register at the park or at the library any time after May 28. The Summer Library Program runs June 1-July 18. Join us to be a part of the fun this summer!



Children's Department

The Children's Department has a wide variety of programs for children ages Birth to Grade 5. Sign up for story time for the little ones, or join us for one of our engaging and educational programs. After School Blast, Pre-K Friday, Block Party, Pokémon Club and Music Together! are just some of the programs offered at the library.



Teens

Teens and Young Adults have their own space at the library. Stop by to enjoy board games, relax and read a new YA book, or hang out with friends. The library offers monthly programs for teens in Grades 6-12. Teen Reading Challenges with prizes are offered both in summer and winter.



Portage Public Library
253 W. Edgewater St.
Portage, WI 53901

608-742-4959

Summer Lunch Program

The Summer Lunch Program will officially begin Monday, June 1, 2026 and end on Friday, August 21, 2026. As the program celebrates thirteen years of offering free lunches to children, join the library in welcoming kids of all ages for a free meal Monday through Friday. Other locations for the Summer Lunch Program, besides the library include: Goodyear Park (Splash Pad), Lincoln Park, and Sanborn Park. Stay tuned for exact times for each location.

Digital cards

Never forget your library card again! You can now access your library card through the LinkCAT app with your digital library card! Stop in to ask us how.

Adult Programs

Adult Programs are available every month at the library. We offer a wide variety of programs including Euchre Club, Bingo, Zumba, Chair Yoga, Arts & Crafts and Mystery Lovers Book Club. Adults can also participate in our summer and winter reading challenges to win fun prizes! A monthly calendar of programs and events is available at www.portagelibrary.us or in the library. Library programs are always free of charge and open to everyone in our community.

Technology Assistance

Need help with your Smartphone? Do you have questions about your tablet or laptop computer? Sign up for a Technology Assistance appointment available at the library on the first Tuesday of month. We will work one-on-one with you to solve your technology problems. We offer 15-minute appointments between 1-2 p.m. Please bring your device with you. Register in advance by contacting programs@portagelibrary.us or 608-742-4959.



Big news for LINKcat users!

This spring, South Central Library System libraries (including ours!) are rolling out a new system behind the scenes—bringing improved features, stronger security, and new ways to manage your library account in one place!

Learn what's coming and when at <https://help.linkcat.info/>.



Book Bag Subscription Service

Love to read but don't have time to browse library shelves for your next favorite book? Join the growing numbers of library patrons participating in our Book Bag Subscription service! Sign up today and you'll receive professionally curated book selections that are hand-picked just for you and ready for pick up once a month. Each month you'll receive three books, selected just for you based on your reading preferences, plus a surprise gift! To begin your book subscription, register on the library's website or at the library.

Sanderson Room

The historical materials in the Sanderson Room have been cataloged. All content is now searchable in our library catalog and shelved according to subject. Portage is brimming with historical data and glimpses into our past. Stop by the library and explore the writings of Zona Gale, the proceedings from city and county meetings, and the development that has shaped Portage. Below is a list of categories in the Sanderson Room. Don't forget that the local newspaper, the now Portage Daily Register, is digitized and available from our website back to 1855.

- Wisconsin Government and History
 - Columbia County Government and History
 - Local Family Genealogies
 - Library History
 - Portage Government and History
 - Portage Junior High Yearbooks 1978-1980, 1982, 1984-2007
 - Portage High School Yearbooks 1920-2025
 - Local Cemeteries and Obituaries
 - Land Atlases & Plat Maps
- Wisconsin Authors & Biographies
 - John Barth
 - Henry Bothin
 - Byron H. Comstock
 - John Baptiste DuBay
 - Zona Gale
 - Juliette Kinzie
 - Margery Latimer
 - John Muir
 - Robert Farrington Sanderson
 - Emmons Taylor
 - Frederick Jackson Turner



Activity Guide

Be sure to check out our annual Activity Guide! This can be found on our website, portage.recdesk.com. We have tons of fun recreation opportunities coming up!

Rolling Prairie Conservancy & Dog Park

We are excited to open our NEW Conservancy & Dog Park located in the Rolling Prairie subdivision on the north side of town. This new facility features 20 acres of prairie with walking trails, as well as 7 acres of fenced-in dog areas! The official opening of this facility will be announced later this spring, once the grass has a chance to establish.

We Are Hiring

Our department is hiring for a handful of positions this summer, including Youth Recreation Staff, Seasonal Park Maintenance Staff, and Seasonal Park Mower Staff. If interested or to find out more, please visit our website at portage.recdesk.com or stop by our office!

Park Shelters & Bathrooms

Our outdoor Park Shelters are available to rent for your next event! Check out our website for pricing and availability. Our Park Shelter Bathrooms are scheduled to open on May 1st, per City Ordinance.

Community Room

Our new facility at 401 Cemetery Road features a 1500 square foot Community Room, which can be rented for private parties and events! Dates are filling up quickly, so be sure to book your next event soon. More information can be found on our website or in our office.



The Portage Police Department is excited for Spring and the daytime hours lasting a little longer. With this comes more planned activities and events that we get to share and engage in with the community. I challenge you to get to know your officers and make it a point to talk to them and know them by name. You'll find out what I already know because I work intimately with them every day and see the service they provide. These men and women of the Portage Police Department are exceptional. They truly care and they work hard every day to make this city a better place to live and visit.

With the anticipation of Captain Dan Garrigan retiring in a few months we are actively in the process to restructure the command staff and hire an additional sworn officer. Dan leaves with an unbelievable amount of knowledge and experience that I have relied on and will miss. Knowing that everyone's shift eventually comes to an end, we have prepared for this moment through succession planning and will have a smooth transition as this will create a domino effect on other position opportunities.

In 2026, the department switched to a 12hr shift rotation and incorporated "Officer in Charge" assignments. Switching to 12hr shifts allows officers to have every other weekend off and more scheduled staff on at one time. This change has been well received by staff and makes our department more desirable for employment.

In regards to staffing, we have a full roster "on paper" but understand that there are many other obligations and variables in play. We currently have two officers attending the police academy with an anticipated graduation in mid-May and another officer fulfilling military commitments. Again, the 12hr shifts have improved the overtime demands due to more staff assigned to a particular shift.

We celebrated our 7th Annual Awards Ceremony in January in which several officers, volunteers, and citizens were recognized for their law enforcement efforts in 2025. Awards included:

- 3yr & 10yr VIP tenure awards
- 5yr and 10yr Department tenure awards
- 7 Team Effort Awards
- 3 Meritorious Service Awards
 - (crossing guards, Fred Galley, Sgt. Mike Schutz)
- 1 Distinguished Service Award (Officer Evan Hedlund)
- 1 Legacy Award (Retired LT. Penny Kiefer)
- Team Member of the Year- Officer Evan Hedlund



Captain Dan Garrigan



Evan Hedlund

For more information on our department, its operations, and activity I encourage you to review our annual reports located on our website at www.portagewi.gov/police and follow us on our social media platforms. The 2025 Annual Report is in the finishing stages and should be available soon.



<https://www.facebook.com/PortagePD/>



[instagram.com/portage_policedepartment](https://www.instagram.com/portage_policedepartment)



x.com/PolicePortage

There are many ways you and/or your business can connect with the police department. We offer a Citizens Police Academy, Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) program, and ride-alongs. We host an annual Kids Day in June and National Night Out in August. We conduct threat/risk assessments, teach citizen response to active threats, and Stop the Bleed courses. All of these services are at no-cost and we welcome participation as it strengthens your abilities, your business, our connection, and this community.

With spring on the forefront and snow becoming a memory, this reminds us of cleaning up the yard and properly disposing of discarded items. Do not place debris on the boulevards or at the recycling center by the old City Garage on Washington Street. This site is strictly a recycling center. . This area is monitored and you can be subjected to a fine. See the Public Works Department page for more information on disposing of waste, as well as the City of Portage Spring Clean Up event.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the City of Portage.

Respectfully,
Keith J. Klafke
Chief of Police



[Scan or click here to visit the City of Portage website](http://www.portagewi.gov)



Spring Clean-Up: May 2, 2026, 8:00am – 2:00pm at the former Public Works Garage located at 616 Washington Street

Brush/Leaf/Clipping Collection: Brush Collection will take place the week of April 6, May 4, June 1, August 3, September 14, October 5, and November 2. There will be no pickup in July. Brush needs to be out in your boulevard by **7am Monday morning** to be picked up that week. Leaf bags and grass clippings must be separated from the brush and be out by **7am Monday morning** as well. All pickups will take place in the boulevard. There will be no pickups within alleyways. Leaf and grass bags may be collected separately from our brush collection outside of April through November, all other collections will take place in conjunction with our normally scheduled pickup. The Airport Road brush site is open for resident drop off of brush, leaves and grass clippings. In addition to the Airport Road site, the City also offers residents the ability to dispose of larger wood waste at the Currie Road site. Residents dropping off larger wood waste are required to fill out a waiver at City Hall prior to accessing this site. Both drop off sites are not to be used by commercial contractors. Guidelines for brush, bagged leaves, and grass clipping collection and drop off requirements can be found on our City website at <https://portage.municipalimpact.com/brush-and-grass-collection>. Items not in compliance will not be collected. The City does not accept animal waste.



Recycling: Columbia County Recycling is the City of Portage's contractor for garbage and recycling collection. Please visit our City website for information on what can and can't be recycled at <https://portage.municipalimpact.com/garbage-and-recycling>. Additionally, the City maintains a drop-off center for residents to use for household recyclables as a supplement to curbside collection on Washington Street. Please note, this drop-off site is monitored by video surveillance to ensure drop-off guidelines are followed. Guidelines for drop off are posted on-site.



Water Utility: To ensure utility customers continue to receive quality drinking water, crews will be flushing hydrants between April 20 - May 15, 2026. During this period, you may experience some discoloration in your water. If this happens, simply run your faucet with cold water until the water clears. Following flushing, Water Utility crews will begin valve maintenance which will also cause discoloration at times. Additionally, Water Utility crews will continue to perform meter swaps and cross connection surveys in 2026, these will be scheduled with property owners in advance.



Waste Water Utility: City Staff will begin jetting sanitary sewer mains beginning in spring. Following the jetting operations, you may experience odors coming from your drain traps. To alleviate this issue, please run water to refill these traps.

The City began facility-wide upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant in late 2025. This project will be ongoing through 2028. The project includes the removal and installation of several process components throughout the plant. The City has contracted with Strand Engineering and Staab Construction for this project. Additionally, the project is funded through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources', *Clean Water Fund Program*.



Sanitary Collection System Reminder: If you have a sanitary back-up outside of the normal City Hall hours of operation please call (608)742-2171. City Hall is open between 8:00AM-4:30PM, Monday through Thursday, and 8:00AM-12:30PM Fridays.

2026 Road Construction/Improvement Projects:

- **2026 Sidewalk Improvement Project:** The City will be making improvements to sidewalk crossing ramps along the County Highway CX corridor making them ADA accessible. This project is a requirement ahead of the future CTH CX resurfacing project being completed in coordination with the Columbia County Highway Department. The project will include the removal and replacement of sidewalk ramps throughout the corridor.
- **Pavement Rehabilitation:** The City will be resurfacing Boeck Road from STH-16 to the railroad tracks (located south of STH-16). This project will include roadway excavation and pavement resurfacing within the limits of the existing road shoulders. This project will be partially funded with Wheel Tax revenues along with State Aid through the Local Road Improvement Program.



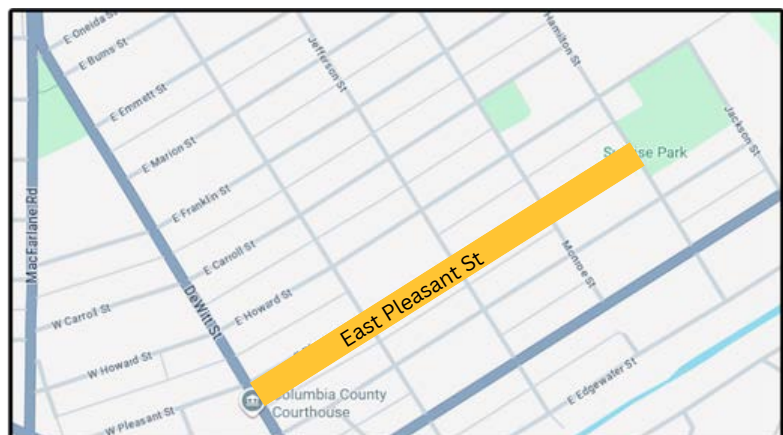
2026 Road Construction/Improvement Projects:

- **Street Chip Sealing:** Annually, the City contracts to have designated streets in which the pavement is in relatively good shape, structurally sound and does not need subgrade or utility improvements. Chip sealing is a cost-effective preventative maintenance method to improve and extend the life of the street before more intensive improvements are needed. Streets that are chip sealed are first sealed with an application of an emulsion (asphalt and water) that adheres to the pavement surface and then a thin layer of aggregate or chips are immediately applied onto the emulsion. This creates an improved road surface that extends the life of the pavement and improves rideability. The cost for this is 100% funded with Wheel Tax revenues. After bids are awarded for designated streets, a map will be posted on the City website with locations of chip sealing.
- **Street Crack Filling:** Recently paved streets are crack filled to reduce water infiltration and reinforce the pavement surface. This comparatively inexpensive preventative maintenance method extends the life of pavements. The process involves sweeping the streets designated for crack filling, followed by crews using hot air lances to incinerate and remove material in the cracks. This is followed by crews applying a hot sealant into the cracks and spraying a solution onto the sealant and applying bio-degradable paper to prevent the sealant from sticking to tires while it cools. The cost for this is 100% funded with Wheel Tax revenues. After bids are awarded for designated streets, a map will be posted on the City website with locations of crack filling this summer.



- **East Pleasant Street Reconstruction (Dewitt Street to Hamilton Street):**

This project involves a full utility reconstruction, which includes storm sewer, water utility, sanitary sewer, curb & gutter spot repairs, and sidewalk spot replacements, followed by new asphalt pavement. The design for this project began in 2025. Should bids fall within the budgeted parameters, the contract will be awarded, and a schedule will follow.



- **Signals Upgrades:** In 2022, the City applied for grant funding through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for the rehabilitation of the traffic signals at the Collins and Slifer Street intersections on New Pinery Road. The City received the grant funding which includes 90% state funding for the rehabilitation. Design work began in early 2024 and following 2 EA unsuccessful bids in 2025, anticipated construction will take place in 2026.

Permitting- Do you require a permit?

If you are planning any of the following, then the answer is YES:

- New dwelling (residential or commercial)
- Detached accessory building (shed, garage, etc.)
- Fence
- Dwelling addition
- Remodel
- Removal of structure (raze)
- Retaining wall
- Swimming pool
- Deck/porch/patio
- Roof
- Siding
- Windows (new or replacement)

**This includes Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC located at or within these locations*



Additionally:

- If you are digging or disturbing the soil you may also require an Erosion Control Permit. In certain cases, approval from the DNR or other State agency may be required
- If you are performing work within or adjacent to the City-owned Right-Of-Way (ROW), you may also require a ROW permit. (Examples include: Driveway, Sidewalk, Etc.)
- Note: please contact DIGGER's Hotline whenever performing any excavation at (800) 242-8511 or 811

Why are Permits required?

- The permitting process is the best way to ensure that the work being done meets the requirements of the City and current ordinances. It also protects current and future property owners, should there be a change to those ordinances or a dispute relative to the work performed

FAILURE TO OBTAIN THE CORRECT PERMIT MAY RESULT IN CHARGING OF DOUBLE PERMIT FEES

Permits are available at City Hall or on the City of Portage website: www.portagewi.gov

CITY INFORMATION

SPRING 2026

Portage City Hall

115 W. Pleasant Street, Portage, WI 53901
608-742-2176

Portage Police Department

117 W. Pleasant Street, Portage, WI 53901
608-742-2174

Portage Fire Department

119 W. Pleasant Street, Portage, WI 53901
608-742-2172

Portage Public Works/Parks/Recreation

401 Cemetery Road, Portage, WI 53901
608-742-2178

Portage Enterprise Center

1800 Kutzke Road, Portage, WI 53901
608-745-0038

Portage Public Library

253 W. Edgewater Street, Portage, WI 53901
608-742-4959

