



Your MiPortland Connection

dda@portland-michigan.org  
miportland.org \* 517-647-5027

FEBRUARY 2026



Local pubs, restaurants, brewery's ~ coffee, flowers, gifts and services!!  
~ The closer to home the better :)

Gifting made easy with our online business directory, [miportland.org/directory](http://miportland.org/directory)  
<<< and Portland PRIME,  
[miportland.org/prime-giftcertificate](http://miportland.org/prime-giftcertificate)

- the Gift of Choices good at over 20 locations
- available 24 / 7 / 365
- keeps \$\$\$ with local businesses who support our community



IF EVERYONE FINDS A WAY TO FEND YOUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY EVENT, BUT NO ONE CAN MANAGE TO GO DOWNTOWN THE REST OF THE YEAR, YOU DON'T HAVE A PARKING PROBLEM, YOU HAVE AN ATTRACTION PROBLEM.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS ARE AN ACT OF PRIDE AND A GIFT TO THE PEOPLE AROUND US.

Portland, as a whole, shows a great deal of pride. Our survey confirms what many already feel: more of that pride needs to be visible in our downtown. That means MiPortland DDA and City leadership focusing time and attention on the only real two tools we actually control—encouraging good behavior and discouraging bad behavior through clear ordinances and standards.



STANDARDS ARE THE GUARDRAILS OF CIVIC PRIDE.

WHAT YOU PERMIT SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.

RESIDENTS TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR COMMUNITY WHEN BUILDING CODES ARE ENFORCED AND PUBLIC SPACES ARE BEAUTIFUL.



CIVIC BULLIES THRIVE WHEN THE COMMUNITY STAYS SILENT, ALLOWING THEM TO PUSH THEIR NEGATIVE AGENDA AND CONTROL THE NARRATIVE.

NO MATTER THE PLACE - SHOP, RESTAURANT, OR STREET - IF IT DOESN'T FEEL WELCOMING AND SOCIAL, PEOPLE WILL MOVE ON.

WHY IS IT THAT GREAT BUSINESSES NEVER HAVE A PARKING PROBLEM, BUT THE GUY OPEN 12 HOURS A WEEK SELLING USED DVDS ALWAYS DOES?



MORE SEATING WON'T IMPROVE A RESTAURANT AND MORE PARKING WON'T IMPROVE DOWNTOWN.

GETTING IN THE WEEDS WON'T FIX YOUR CIVIC PROBLEMS, PULLING THE WEEDS WILL.

MAKING THE HEART OF YOUR TOWN MORE BEAUTIFUL WILL POSITIVELY IMPACT EVERY OTHER FACET OF YOUR COMMUNITY.

The Revitalize, or Die movement may not always be polished, and it can be controversial, but what it lacks in eloquence it makes up for in passion, honesty—and sometimes cold hard truths. Built from the real experiences of cities and towns across the country that have either failed or thrived, Rod brings together decades of insight from more than 31,000 communities. The process is often uncomfortable, and yes, some stakeholders feel agitated. That discomfort is part of the work.

So let's look honestly at a few of the statements to the left. Keep in mind: when a statement references a business, property owner, the community, or the City~DDA it often applies to all.

Why do some stakeholders refuse to participate—or require three to five follow-ups just to commit? Why do a few loud voices focus more on policing others than contributing themselves, often demanding accommodation while diverting energy from progress? Notably, these voices are rarely the ones who are thriving or who instinctively “get it” when it comes to the Revitalize, or Die building community messages.

At the same time, we want to offer a sincere thank-you to those stakeholders who do get it. Those with realistic expectations and

who reach out, participate, and contribute regularly. And to our public, private partnerships; OBP, who has nearly single-handedly built, maintained, and operated downtown music and lighting—at significant personal and financial cost. Portland Area Garden Club, which continues year after year to do more to enhance the beauty of downtown through every season. The DDA must be a strong partner in ensuring this work continues.

What standards do you think will help build pride, what policies do you think will bring more civic engagement? What ordinances should be more firmly addressed? What would you like to contribute to a more vibrant, active, welcoming community?

If you're willing to roll up your sleeves and work alongside others who genuinely care about Portland, please join us at Positively MiPortland meetings ~See you there!

POSITIVELY PORTLAND 2026  
6pm City Hall  
General Rule 2nd Tuesdays

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
13	10	11	14
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG
12	9	14	11
SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
8	13	10	off

## SNOW REMOVAL

City Ordinances require property owners to clear snow from all sidewalks within 10 hours of receiving snow. Let's all pitch in and have a safe winter!



## notes and reminders

## WINTER PARKING

IN ORDER FOR CREWS TO safely clear streets during the winter months and to allow for the easy passage of emergency vehicles the winter parking ban went into effect November 1. Per City Ordinance, NO PARKING is allowed on any City Street between the hours of 2am—6am. If you have any questions, please call the Police Dept. 517-647-2947



### Featuring: KATS & KITTENS      Writer: Kurt Fedewa

**A Second-Hand Store to Love** Step inside Kats and Kittens on Kent Street and you'll quickly realize this isn't your average thrift store. It's a place full of stories—about the items on the shelves and the couple behind the counter.

Chad and Brandy Johnson own and run Kats and Kittens, a second-hand shop in downtown Portland that blends gently used finds with antiques and collectibles. Vintage has always been their thing. "We've always loved old and interesting pieces," Chad said. "When the opportunity came along to open this store, it felt like the perfect way for us to work together. That's something we don't take for granted."

The business began when the Johnsons purchased the inventory of a thrift shop formerly located on Grand River Avenue and moved it to its current home on Kent Street. Today, their merchandise comes from estate sales, donations, and a variety of other sources—part of what keeps the store feeling fresh. "No two days are the same," Chad said. "Every day brings something new, and that's one of the things we enjoy most."

They also enjoy digging into the history behind their finds. Researching items—especially high-quality glassware, which often makes an appearance in the shop—is part of the fun. "We learn a lot, and our customers really appreciate that," Chad said. "It's rewarding to be able to share what we've discovered about a piece." And if variety is what you're looking for, Kats and Kittens delivers.

The shop offers a little bit of everything: musical instruments, stereo equipment, furniture, computer monitors, DVDs, CDs, vinyl records, and more. There's even an entire room dedicated to kids, stocked with age-appropriate movies, toys, children's furniture, and other items just for young shoppers.

The Johnsons say being part of downtown Portland is one of the best parts of running the business. "We really appreciate the downtown area and love being here," Chad said. "We'd love to see more retail shops open—it would be great for local businesses and for the community as a whole. But even now, it feels like home to us."

For Chad and Brandy, Kats and Kittens isn't just a store—it's a shared passion, a daily adventure, and a place where old things find new life.

**147 Kent St. 616-902-4876 [katsandkittens@gmail.com](mailto:katsandkittens@gmail.com)**  
**FB: Kats and Kittens 2nd hand      HOURS: Mon 11-5   Tue-Fri 9-5   Sat 10-4**

**Event Details & Complete Calendar at [miportland.org/events](http://miportland.org/events)**

