



the Breeze

Official news from the City of **portland** the
of possibilities.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Teen Library Lounge

Bell/Whittington Public Library

Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

For details, visit their [Facebook page](#).

Adult Coloring Session

Bell/Whittington Public Library

Wed., March 4, 6 p.m.

For details, visit their [Facebook page](#).

Mystery Book Club

Bell/Whittington Public Library

Thu., March 5, 6:30 p.m.

For details, visit their [Facebook page](#).

Portland Farmers Market

Joe Burke Pavilion

(2003 Billy G. Webb Dr.)

Sat., March 7, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

For details, call 361.777.4670.

Bubble Fest

Bell/Whittington Public Library

Special Musical Guest: Miss Ariel

Tue., March 10, 10:00 a.m.

For details, visit their [Facebook page](#).

Portland Opry

Portland Community Center

Thu., March 12, 7 p.m.

(Doors open at 6 p.m.)

\$7 per person

For details, call 361.777.4670.

CITY OF PORTLAND

1900 Billy G. Webb Drive

Portland, Texas 78374

Phone: (361) 777-4500

Fax: (361) 777-4501

Comments or Questions:

webmaster@portlandtx.com

portland the
of possibilities.

20 STATE
20 OF THE CITY

STATE OF THE CITY: NEW BUSINESSES, NEW PROJECTS

Mayor Cathy Skurow began this year's State of the City by detailing the city's growth in measures other cities might envy—a healthy 2.5% annual population increase, an eight percent annual growth in sales tax revenues, and new developments and investments coming to Portland. All are strong indicators of success for any city.

Some of the highlights of the State of the City included:

Public Safety

Noting that the City makes public safety a priority, Mayor Skurow pointed out that the number of both violent crimes and non-violent crimes went down in Portland in 2019. This is especially

significant during a time of growth in population and an increase in traffic through the city.

New Businesses

Several new restaurants were confirmed or announced at the State of the City. A Chick-fil-A will come to Portland at the site of the old K-Mart. (The K-Mart building will be torn down.) Developers behind the project also plan to add new buildings in the shopping center for even more retail and restaurant offerings.

Portland has also been chosen as a location for the new Olive Garden flagship, featuring a new open layout

...continued on page 2

WINDFEST BLOWING INTO TOWN IN APRIL

Windfest returns to Portland on April 3-5. This is Portland's longest-running festival, drawing visitors locally and from around the Coastal Bend region. The annual event offers entertainment, great rides, a marketplace, and phenomenal food. For details, visit the Portland Chamber of Commerce website at PortlandTX.org.

STATE OF THE CITY *continued...*

with upscale finishes and new menu offerings. The city will also welcome Bill Miller BBQ, Texas Submarine Chicken and Burger, Poseidon Sushi, as well as several new hotels Candlewood Suites, Avid Hotels, and Staybridge Inn and Suites.

Planning for the Future

Portland is known for planning and several of the City's planning initiatives were showcased. The City's recent land annexation was undertaken to ensure that space is available for future population growth and to protect the city from industrial encroachment. Also discussed was the Comprehensive Planning process, which addresses thoroughfares, parks and open spaces, housing, public facilities, and land use through the year 2040. The City is also working closely with the County to lead the effort to establish a Regional Industrial Master Plan. The goal of the plan is to identify locations where industry is best suited and create incentives and controls to steer industry to those locations.

Revitalizing a Historical Area

Revitalization and redevelopment of existing and underdeveloped areas was a significant topic of the State of the City. In 2019, the City Council took the first steps toward revitalizing Portland's original town center, an area south of 181 from Broadway to 2nd Avenue, and from Moore Avenue to Wildcat Drive. The vision is to develop a vibrant, active, mixed-use, walkable district to connect citizens and to support Portland's business community. Design consultants are working now to develop plans, goals, and objectives for revitalization.

Changes on the Bays

Along with plans for the Chris Andrews Boating Center on Nueces Bay, the State of the City also highlighted one of the most anticipated developments of 2020—the Indian Point Pavilion project. This project will update Indian Point Pier with the addition of an artistic shade structure, landscaping, and lighting to create a landmark that celebrates the coast and nature.

Other topics included maintaining and building the city's infrastructure with improvements to city streets and sidewalks, plus plans for a new library, expansion of the Portland Aquatic Center, and a new fire station.

The State of the City is now available online. It can be accessed at PortlandTX.com. Look for it under CITY SPOTLIGHT on the homepage.

SPRING BREAK KIDZ DAYZ

For parents looking for safe, fun, and affordable childcare during Spring Break, the City of Portland Parks & Recreation Department offers Kidz Dayz. It's an all-day recreation program featuring arts and crafts, organized recreational play, games, prizes, and a lot of fun. The program is open to children 5-12 years of age, in kindergarten through 5th grade.

Kidz Dayz takes place at T.M. Clark Elementary, 2250 Memorial Parkway. A morning and afternoon snack will be provided. Participants must bring their own lunch.

Hours for Kidz Dayz are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The cost is \$20 per day. Registration is available online at PortlandTX.com. Spring Break for the Gregory-Portland ISD is March 9-13. For more details, call 361.777.4670.

BOOK CLUBS BRING BENEFITS

The Bell/Whittington Public Library offers a monthly Mystery Book Club, as well as a Teen Book Club. Selected titles are available for free at the library and can be picked up in advance of the book club meetings to allow ample time to read the book.

Reading is great for people of all ages, but attending a book club can provide additional benefits:

- Motivates members to finish the book
- Decreases stress
- Gain new friends and get involved with the community
- Gain new perspectives
- Boosts teamwork skills
- Improves your own writing skills

The Mystery Book Club meets the first Thursday of each month. The Teen Book Club is typically held the fourth Thursday of each month. It is open to students in 7th-12th grades. Both book clubs meet at the library.

AARP OFFERING TAX AIDE

The AARP is offering their annual Tax Aide program at the Bell/Whittington Public Library. The program provides free tax assistance.

The service is available to everyone and will be offered Fridays, through Friday, April 3. Hours are 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., but slots fill quickly so plan to arrive early.

AARP's Tax Aide is offered on a first-come, first-served basis; appointments are not available. The Bell/Whittington Public Library is located at 2400 Memorial Parkway. For details, call the AARP representative at 361.775.1122.