

# Visit Portland To Help Support Local Business

By Michael Ortoski

PORTLAND - Please consider visiting Portland for eats, treats, tours, thrifts, and gifts. During this time of construction on Rt. 611 seperating the two towns.

Fuhrer's Tavern & Grill Our Mission Statement: will provide a comfortable place for locals to come and gather for relaxation, striving to be the bar of choice for the locals in the Portland, PA neighborhood. We will strive to be known as the "Cheers Bar" – Where everybody knows your name and the business will do this by: providing a relaxed atmosphere encouraging patrons to unwind and to be synonymous with country singer Toby Keith's song "I Love This Bar".

Our philosophy is simple: enjoy life and treat others as you would want to be treated. These sound principles apply to all life's situations, both personal and professional. At Fuhrer's Tavern & Grill, these principles are applied to management, employees, customers, and suppliers alike.

Impact of 611 closure: Business is down 25%-30%. Deliveries are also being affected and our vendors are frustrated and will eventually cost us potential revenue. Our bread delivery company has had to absorb an increase of \$30 a week in tolls delivering to us. Food delivery companies are later than normal, and sometimes a day late and are also absorbing the current toll inconvenience. It is only a matter of time that we will feel the impact of their inconveniences.

We have spent the last 2 years building a rapport with Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg businesses and people though charities, helping communities, and the closure of the road has greatly affected those relationships, and now we are suffering because of that. We will have to rebuild what we have worked so hard for these last two years under the conditions we have faced. COVID and the recession are hard enough, but this road closure is pushing us to the brink. We need more support from our local community.

We are not getting the benefit of the Stroudsburg traffic as those in DWG are. We are cut off and they are not. It is obvious. A wall has been built between DWG/Stroudsburg and Portland. There are a few benefactors.

Impacts of I-80 traffic: Locals have taken back roads. People coming down Route 611 South do not merge and vary two lanes until the traffic light. Our customers attempting to make a left onto Main St are stressed by the traffic. Some have expressed they are not willing to patronize us when the traffic is backed up. The inconvenience of the traffic issues is not worth it. A police presence when route 80 issues occur would be encouraging for the overall community.

Port 2 Flavors is a fast-casual dining restaurant, offering various Mexican and Mediterranean cuisine that can be enjoyed at any hour of the day. (MENU) With Portland being one of the first towns you enter when you come to Pennsylvania, you come to appreciate its beauty and potential to become a bustling little town. With a beautiful walking bridge and a fantastic scenic view of the Delaware River, Portland seemed like the perfect spot to open Port 2 Flavors and bring the quiet town back to life.

In March of 2022, Port 2 Flavors opened its doors to the town and was met with overwhelming support from



the community which we are very grateful. Shortly after opening, Route 611 closed for the first time that year leading to a decrease in traffic which at the time affected our business. Experiencing the same situation twice in one year has impacted our business greatly, with sales down 30% during this most recent route 611 road closure.

The detours to combat the road closures have not been met with a well-received response, both by customers and even our door dash and uber eats drivers. A majority of our customers and drivers vocalized that they would rather not pay a toll or not take the longer route as both options are not economical choices.

As we prepare for this new year Port 2 Flavors continues to open its doors and continue the same great service and fresh ingredients to our customers. We are a big advocate of safety first, but it has been devastating for the entire community not to be able to have ease of access to Port 2 Flavors and other businesses. -Yudelky Schomberg

Persimmon Lane LLC Faces Challenges Due to Road Closures and Accidents: We are an Artisan retail business located in Portland that focuses on handmade items created by Amanda, other local artisans and small businesses. We are located in a historic building that has a special place in the community and in my personal history. My parents owned and operated Knott Necessarily Antiques in this building for many years, and I lived in Portland for 15 years before moving to Bangor. I have a strong connection to Portland and to this building, and I



am committed to continuing the legacy of providing high-quality products and services to our customers.

We are facing significant difficulties due to the closure of Route 611 and the frequent accidents on Route 80. Route 611, the only thoroughfare in Portland, has been closed for about a month due to a rockslide. This has diverted traffic away from Portland and caused a decline in foot traffic and sales. We rely on Route 611 to bring customers to our store, and the closure has had a serious impact on our business. We urge PennDOT to expedite the repair work and reopen the road as soon as possible.

The detours for Route 611 have added to the difficulties for our customers and our business. One detour is significantly longer and adds to the travel time, while the other has paid tolls going both ways, which may discourage some customers from visiting us.

In addition, the accidents on Route 80 have caused car congestion in the town center and made it harder for customers to reach Persimmon Lane. The accidents on Route 80 have caused delays and detours, and many people are avoiding the town center altogether. This has added to the difficulties we are already facing due to Route 611 closure.

Persimmon Lane LLC is a small, locally owned business that contributes to the economic and social fabric of Portland. The impact of the road closures and accidents on the business is not just financial, but also affects the community.

We hope that the PennDOT and the public will recognize the importance of our business and support us during this challenging time. We appreciate the patience and loyalty of our customers, and we will do our best to serve them and adapt to the changing circumstances. - Amanda Moyer

Janet's Jems Thrift Shoppe: My dream when I opened this shop was to help bring new businesses to Portland, to help people who cannot afford new items, and to help fire victims, homeless get the things they need.

I opened my business in Portland in 2015 not only because it is close to home, but because I was already part of the community as a volunteer firefighter and emt and I love this small town.

611 closure is affecting my business as lower sales and or some days NO SALES.

Having to pay tolls both directions keeps people on their side, I have offered to pay their tolls even if they don't shop at my store, just to get them to come to Portland because WE ARE OPENED, ALL OF US...May not be many but we are here.

It also affects my state of mind as well, having to worry about if I will be able to make my rent payment. How long can I last with no income. Will this actually take its toll on PORTLAND as a whole. Will any of us survive? So in turn makes me a grumpy person, not too grumpy but more frustrated. For our other businesses, they have to pay employees and I am sure that's hard enough much less not make money.

When Rt 80 is backed up, traffic is a nightmare. It doesn't help our businesses because more of them want to just get home or to their destination, and they just speed past the whole town I am sure without a thought.

We do need signage coming off ALL RAMPS leading to Portland, let people know what's here.

Maybe they need that last minute gift or cookware for the campground, they can see and say, hey let's stop in Portland they have a Thrift Shop and gift store, candy shop, or hey I need smokes, bam, tobacco shop. Anything that lets people know what we have to offer (kind of like what's in DWG). I am willing to volunteer to help with that.

I hope things get worked out and we all can travel though the gap. SAFETY, because I couldn't live with myself if it's rushed, and someone dies from being crushed just to bring customers to town...

If we all work together, we can come with a solution hopefully soon. Janet Futchko

Dunkin' Donuts Our dream to open a Dunkin' Donuts in Portland is to serve our local community. Our sales are significantly down. This is the second time in less than 12 months that the 611 has been closed down. It impacts our ability to keep our doors open and keep our customers. - Dhruv R. Acharya

Portland Auto Repair I am the owner of Portland Auto Repair LLC, the closure of route 611 for security reasons is justified, what does not make sense is the delay in the repair time. By reasonable logic, OUR BUSINESSES are affected. The production has dropped significantly due to low traffic in the Portland area.

We have a duty to pay taxes for the system to work, but we have the right to require prompt and effective compensation for any reason or circumstance, which affects our business in any way, and that is the responsibility of the state or government of Pennsylvania. - Richard Diaz