



## UNIT NINE: My Town in Portage Site History

*Swamp to City* focuses on the growth of a metropolis, Chicago, but the significance of Portage Site extends into the corridor towns as well. Consider doing a local history project on one of the towns comprising the Illinois-Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Civic Authority, or any other community connected to the Portage Site. Do research at local libraries and historical societies, including the Chicago Historical Society, for such sources as maps, old-timers accounts, photos, local newspapers, and early histories.

### **Develop your own historical questions or use any of the questions posed in *Swamp to City*:**

- What are the geographic features of this community and how did they play a role in of human activity? Were decisions made to take advantage of or alter the natural environment? What was the impact of those decisions?
- Who were people and empires who inhabited the land, what were their encounters with each other, and how did the groups of people change over time?
- What role did this community play in the fur trade?
- How did the building of the I&M Canal or the Sanitary and Ship Canal affect this town? What political decisions and economic activity involved in the canals helped shape this community?
- What were other significant events that impacted the town?
- What was the economic and political relationship between this town and Chicago? How did the growth of the city impact the community?
- Are there “places of memory” in this town related to the Portage, Fur Trade, Canal days? What place names, monuments, landmarks or other historic sites attest to the town’s earlier history?



**ACTIVITY**

Timelines help people see the “big picture” and observe change over time, cause and effect, and the connections between different events. Construct a timeline that displays the town’s history and significant points in both Chicago and periods in U.S. History.

Town & Chicago History	Periods in U.S. History
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	First Peoples
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Colonization
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Revolution & Early National Period
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Expansionism
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Industrialization
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Progressive Era
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	World War I Era
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Depression & New Deal
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	World War II Era
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Post-war Era
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	Contemporary