



THE CITY OF EXCELSIOR MINNESOTA

2018 FALL/WINTER NEWSLETTER



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A Letter From The Mayor

When our family moved here in 2002, the city had many neglected and vacant commercial buildings, and there were much needed improvements to be made in our housing. A few years later, I was asked to serve on the Planning Commission, and under the guidance of the City Council, my fellow commissioners set the city on a path of improving zoning ordinances over seven years. Since becoming Mayor, the city has experienced a renaissance, making many “best of” lists for small towns in Minnesota and beyond. This success has come from a superb collection of citizens with a variety of skills and ideas, working together to make Excelsior better for all of us to enjoy not only now, but well into the future.

In 2010, we started down the path of significant street and utility improvements that had been neglected for many decades. Over the past eight years we have completed three phases of street improvements, at a cost of \$7.5 Million and have plans for improvements in the next 2 years at an estimated cost of \$6 Million. There will always be pressure to increase the tax levy as our commitments to police, fire, parks, and infrastructure cannot be neglected. These yearly commitments are important and how we approach planning and paying for the improvements are critical. The Council has been thoughtful about minimizing our operating expenses to keep our average levy increases to 2.6% over the past ten years (2009-2018). It’s important to keep our tax levy increases consistent so we don’t have large spikes in levy requests. This is a hallmark of proper City planning and management.

In 2014, a commercial property owner requested a second story addition for a residence above a building on Water Street. Our historic preservation ordinances were not clear on this topic and the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) recommended denial of the request based on national standards that the Commission was obligated to uphold. The Council determined that we needed a nine month moratorium on building expansions in our historic business district to study the issues and update our historic preservation ordinances. The moratorium resulted in a prohibition of vertical building expansion and a commitment to keep the historic business district as-is, thus preserving our building skyline and authenticity we all enjoy. We must maintain our historic business district as it generates over 30% of our City’s revenue and contributes to our quality of life that many suburbs try to imitate.

In 2016, the Council started to make changes to our residential zoning to control building mass and scale. After a seven month effort, we approved changes to the residential zoning but continued to see more tear-downs and rebuilds.

(Continued on back page)

- HOLIDAY HOURS -

City Hall and Public Works will be closed for business on the following holidays:

Veteran’s Day-

Thursday, November 12, 2018

Thanksgiving Holiday-

Wednesday, November 21, 2018

(City Hall only)

Thursday, November 22, 2018

Friday, November 23, 2018

Christmas Holiday-

Monday, December 24, 2018

Tuesday, December 25, 2018

New Year’s Holiday-

Monday, December 31, 2018

Tuesday, January 1, 2019

Martin Luther King Jr. Day -

Monday, January 21, 2019

Presidents’ Day -

Monday, February 18, 2019

- CITY HALL HOURS -

City Hall is open from
7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.,
Monday through Thursday.
City Hall is closed on Fridays.

2019 Preliminary Budget and Tax

The City Council has set the proposed 2019 tax levy at \$1,595,734 which is a \$118,143, or 8%, increase over the 2018 levy. The entire increase over the prior year will be designated towards street and utility improvements that are planned for 2019. By State law, the Council may reduce the levy, but it cannot exceed the preliminary

Where Does Your Tax Dollar Go?



When you receive your property tax bill, keep in mind your bill includes taxes from several jurisdictions, not just the City. Most residents tend to attribute their high taxes to their city, but actually only 21 percent of your bill goes toward city taxes. ISD #276—Minnetonka Public Schools gets 39 percent, Hennepin County gets 33 percent, the Metropolitan Council gets two percent and other taxing districts get five percent.

Sidewalk Regulations for Snow and Ice

City Ordinance requires that all sidewalks be kept clean of snow and ice to keep sidewalks safe for pedestrians.

- Commercial properties are required to remove all snow and ice within 16 hours after it has been deposited.
- Residential properties are required to remove all snow and ice within 24 hours after it has been deposited, with the exception of Bell Street between Center and Courtland Streets and Oak Street between Beehrle Avenue and Water Street.

Snow or ice shall be considered deposited on the sidewalk when the snow or other precipitation has ceased to fall, ice has formed, or more than two inches has accumulated (whichever occurs).

Saturday, November 3, 2018

**** Fall Yard Waste Cleanup ****

ALL ITEMS MUST BE CURBSIDE BY 6:00 A.M.

Items picked up curbside on November 3rd:

- Weeds, leaves, lawn clippings (bagged in a compostable bag, placed separate from other items).
- Brush/limbs MUST be bundled in 4' lengths or Less.

Any questions, contact City Hall at (952) 474-5233.

Don't Leaf the Lakes You Love

As you tend to your yard this fall, take a minute to sweep or rake leaves and grass clippings out of the street in front of your home. Left in the street, they can clog storm drains, contributing to localized flooding. When washed into nearby lakes and wetlands via storm drains or ditches, the leaves and clippings become a major source of phosphorus, the nutrient that feeds algae blooms in the summer. Dispose of leaves and grass clippings by composting them in your yard or take advantage of the upcoming Fall Yard Waste Cleanup event to ensure these organics are disposed of properly. For more information, check out the City's website at www.excelsiormn.org.

Winter Parking Regulations

Snow Emergencies are declared whenever there has been an occurrence of snowfall where snow has accumulated to a depth of two inches or more. During a snow emergency, vehicles shall be parked on city streets in accordance with the following regulations from 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.:

- (1) On all even-numbered calendar days, parking is permitted on the side of the street with even-numbered house numbers.
- (2) On all odd-numbered calendar days, parking is permitted on the side of the street with odd-numbered house numbers.

Receive emergency alerts and other notifications via text or email by simply signing up on the City's website at www.excelsiormn.org and click on "Email Signup."



2018 ELECTIONS

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

New Polling Place for Residents:

Former Excelsior Library

343 Third Street

(Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

Absentee voting, direct balloting available prior to Election Day

Voters who cannot get to the polls on Election Day may vote by absentee ballot, which began on Friday, September 21.

Absentee voting is a two-step process that can be done in person or by mail.

In Person: Complete the entire process at City Hall, 339 Third Street. City Hall is open 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

By Mail: Voters can apply for absentee ballots at the Minnesota Secretary of State's website (sos.state.mn.us) or by calling Hennepin County Elections at 612-348-5151. Hennepin County will mail an absentee ballot to those eligible. The City and/or Hennepin County must receive all absentee ballots by 3 p.m. Tuesday, November 6. Please be sure to allow enough time to request the application and mail it back to Hennepin County Elections at:

300 South 6th Street
PSL 012 Government Center
Minneapolis, MN 55487

Parking Permits & Restrictions

Each household is allowed to purchase parking stickers for vehicles registered to a household address. A parking permit allows residents to park at the meters in Excelsior without having to pay the meter. Permits may be purchased at City Hall, during regular office hours. You **MUST** bring the Registration (annual renewal for your license tabs) for each vehicle.

Direct Balloting Begins October 30th

Direct balloting allows residents to feed their ballots through the ballot counter just like on Election Day. The process begins on Tuesday, October 30 and is more streamlined than requiring the use of absentee ballot envelopes.

To vote early via direct balloting, voters must complete an absentee ballot application and vote in person during normal business hours (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday) at Excelsior City Hall. City Hall will be open extended hours for direct balloting, including 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 3 and 7:30 a.m. until voting will end at 5:00 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5.



Meet Your Candidates:

Election 2018

For City Council

Lake Minnetonka

Communications Commission

Election time is in full swing and LMCC has it covered, both on their channels and on the LMCC website.

www.lmcc-tv.org/lmcc-election-excelsior.html

Opportunities for Involvement

To apply for a City Commission please fill out a Citizen Inquiry Form, which is on the City's website at www.excelsiormn.org.

Meeting Schedules

City Council Work Session
1st & 3rd Mondays,
5:30 p.m.

City Council Regular Meeting
1st & 3rd Mondays,
6:30 p.m.

Park and Recreation
Commission
2nd Tuesday, 6:15 p.m.

Heritage Preservation
Commission
3rd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission
4th Monday, 7:00 p.m.

Charter Commission
On Call

339 Third Street
Excelsior, MN 55331

PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

*****ECRWSEDDM*****

Postal Customer
Excelsior, MN 55331

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A Letter From The Mayor (Continued from Front Page)

Earlier this year, the City issued a four-month residential tear-down moratorium that resulted in comprehensive improvements to our residential zoning. The improvements included reducing height by 8 to 12 feet depending on lot width, increasing side yard setbacks as a percentage of lot width, and decreasing buildable hardcover with increasing lot size. The new zoning aligns better with our comprehensive plan to help keep our neighborhoods historic and charming. We also established a committee of residents to study long-term solutions like a historic preservation district for the residential neighborhoods that will reconvene this fall.

In 2017, the Council, working with Community for The Commons, approved The Commons' Master Park Plan, with the next step being funding. The Commons' operates like a regional park, but residents pay for improvements and maintenance. As a City, we need to make a long-term commitment to improving The Commons with several streams of revenue. First, we need to make the annual request of our state legislature to enact the local sales tax that residents approved. Secondly, we need to raise the park dedication fees we impose on new commercial developments; for example, \$168,000 was dedicated to our park fund by the Waters of Excelsior development. Thirdly, we need to focus on partnerships with local groups, like the Rotary to provide additional funds through concerts and other events. Other sources of revenue are also being looked at and we welcome everyone's ideas and input.

Please join us at our City Council meetings or talk with a City Council member to help us make Excelsior a great place to live, work, and play.

Hope to see you around town!

Mark W. Gaylord, Mayor



2018 EXCELSIOR CITY COUNCIL

Mark Gaylord, Mayor
(612) 720-1547
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John Beattie, Councilmember
198 Third Street
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jbeattie@messerlikramer.com

Todd Carlson, Councilmember
(707) 738-9903
toddr Carlson@aol.com

Jennifer Caron, Councilmember
(952) 474-7824
jencaron@earthlink.net

Greg Miller, Councilmember
(952) 474-2541
gmiller17@msn.com

Watch City Council and Planning Commission Meetings

The Lake Minnetonka Communications Commission (LMCC) has a link on their website at www.lmcc-tv.org that allows you to watch the meetings on the internet. The LMCC also broadcasts the meetings on Mediacom Cable, Channel 8.