



### **What Types of Work Require Building Permits**

A building permit is required any time you do work that is regulated by the building code. This would include any work to the permanent weather resistive surfaces of the dwelling such as the siding, windows (if altered) or roof. Any structural alterations or repairs to those members require a permit. If you change the use of a space or finish unfinished space, a permit is required. Dwelling additions, garages and decks require permits.

Work that is exempt from a permit includes painting, wallpapering, flooring, kitchen cabinets, minor repairs and detached storage buildings not exceeding 120 square feet.

### **Do I Need to hire a Contractor?**

Neither city ordinances nor any state regulations prohibit a homeowner from doing work in their own home, as long as it has been homesteaded. So the answer to whether you need to hire a contractor largely lies with knowing your own abilities to do the work proposed. If you feel uncomfortable doing electrical wiring for example, you may wish to hire an electrical contractor, although you may do the work yourself. In either case, make sure you check on the permitting requirements for the type of work you are proposing to do.

### **Are Contractors Required to be Licensed?**

Minnesota has a law requiring residential builders, remodelers and roofers to be licensed as a means to help protect homeowners. Contractors are required to include their license number in any contracts submitted to clients as well as in any advertising. Contractors are required to provide proof of licensure when they obtain building permits.

### **Do I Need an Architect or Engineer Prepare My Plans?**

The short answer is no. You can prepare your own plans or your contractor or a drafting service can prepare them for you. If you are having multiple contractors bid on your project, you will be better able to compare the bids if you prepare the plans and specs yourself rather than have each contractor prepare a set.

If your project is very complex, you may find it advantageous to hire a professional designer to assist you. Also, if your design involves complicated framing techniques or the use of steel I-beams, for example, you may be required to verify that the designs meet code as a part of the plan review process. The inspections division may require that a licensed engineer provide this verification.

## **Electrical Permits**

Electrical permits are required for all electrical wiring. In Excelsior, the State Board of Electricity issues these permits and performs all the inspections. Your electrical permit does not include the inspection of electrical work. A separate Request for Electrical Inspection form with the required fees must be submitted to the Board of Electricity at or before commencement of any electrical installation that is required by law to be inspected.

If you have questions or need to schedule an inspection, call Brian Luce, the State Electrical Inspector, at (952) 233-8988, between the hours of 7:00-8:30 a.m. weekdays.

## **Roofing and Siding**

Pictures are required of weather barrier for final inspection.

## **Site Alteration Permits**

The City of Excelsior has close to 20 single family residences that are designated as historic preservation sites. Any exterior alterations to a designated historic preservation site require a Site Alteration Permit from Excelsior's Heritage Preservation Commission. Alterations that require a Site Alteration Permit, include but not limited to, painting the exterior, addition or deletion of awnings, any additions or demolitions, changing a structure's architectural style or changing the roofing or siding (Sec. 20-5). Please check with the City Planner to determine if your residence is either designated a historic preservation site or located in a historic preservation district.

## **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD)**

Many projects within the City require a permit from the City and also the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. A MCWD Erosion Control permit is required when land disturbances of 5000 square feet or more OR stockpiling or excavating of more than 50 cubic yards of material (roughly an 800 SF expansion). Wetland protection permits are required for any increase in impervious area that is uphill from a wetland. Please contact the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to determine what other types of projects require a MCWD permit in conjunction with a City permit.

## **How Long Does it Take to Get a Permit?**

Permits for work that do not require a plan review are issued the same day and generally at the time the permit application is submitted. Permits where review of plans is necessary can take up to fifteen working days. Some plans may need to be reviewed by more than one city department. For this reason, it is important that you plan ahead and have your permit application and plans submitted far enough in advance of the start of work that the permitting process does not delay the start of your project.

## **Building Codes**

The City of Excelsior has adopted the Minnesota State Building Code, which adopts the 2006 International Building and Residential Codes, with amendments by reference. Information of State Building Codes can be found on the Minnesota State Building Code Division Web Site: [www.doli.state.mn.us](http://www.doli.state.mn.us).

The following is required for a complete permit submittal:

- 1. Completed City of Excelsior Building Permit Application Form.
- 2. **Two** copies of building plans for work to be completed meeting Minnesota State Building Code standards.
- 3. Application for a Site Alteration Permit for Historic Structures and Historic Districts, if applicable.
- 4. Two copies of certificates of existing and proposed surveys. Surveys must comply with Excelsior Zoning Ordinance, Article 9. The survey must show the location of the house and the measurements to all of the lot lines and the top of the foundation height indicated on the survey. Please see Excelsior Zoning Ordinance, Article 14 for information on measurements.
- 5. Electronic copies of the building plans and survey.
- 6. Demolition Permit.
- 7. Sewer and Water Disconnect Permit.
- 8. One copy of the **Energy Calculations** for the proposed structure.
- 9. A copy of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) permit(s) or written confirmation from the MCWD that no permit is necessary for the project.
- 10. Wall opening tabulations.
- 11. Landscape Plan and Tree Preservation plan must comply with Excelsior Zoning Ordinance, Article 12, Tree Protection, Care and Management. A tree removal permit must be obtained prior to removal of any significant or landmark tree.

**Tree Protection:**

When required by the City, fencing must be installed and maintained until final grade is established. The fence shall be orange safety fencing or orange silt fencing and should be attached to steel posts and must be installed at or beyond the drip line of the tree. ***The fence must be installed and inspected prior to any clearing, digging, fill removal or any activity that would harm or cause trees to die.*** Penalties will be assessed for trees illegally removed or damaged.

- 12. A signed Construction Management Agreement for un-occupied new build or major remodeling of one and two-unit dwelling structures and a \$2000 Escrow.

**Escrow Release:**

The escrow will not be released until the As-built survey has been submitted to the City, turf established, required trees planted and all inspections completed and approved.

- 13. New single-family residential and duplex housing developments and construction with a net increase of impervious surface shall incorporate best management practices (BMPs) designed to treat, store, filter and/or infiltrate stormwater runoff onsite, and improve water quality runoff before sending it downstream to downstream waters. Residential

BMP volume calculations shall be based on 1.0 inches of rain over the total increase in impervious surface area from existing conditions. Raingardens, drywells, infiltration/filtration trenches, and cisterns are all permitted types of residential BMPs subject to review and approval based on site conditions, including but not limited to site soils type, size of property, site grading and drainage, and groundwater table. Permeable pavers or permeable pavement is not considered acceptable as a residential BMP. A \$2000 escrow is required for such projects requiring BMPs.

14. Residential Review Permit (if the proposed project increases the volume or changes orientation or setbacks from the existing structure) and applicable submittal requirements. This must be approved before the building permit will go forth to the building inspector for review.

### **OTHER RELATED BUILDING REQUIREMENTS**

1. All contractors must be licensed by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry or provide proof of exemption to do business within the City of Excelsior. A copy of the Builders License must be provided.
2. Work is not permitted to start prior to the issuance of the building permit.
3. **As-built Surveys** are required by the builder once the house has been constructed and the lot has been graded. As-built surveys must be approved prior to placement of trees, sod, and lawn irrigation systems. Contact Morgan Dawley, City Engineer, at (763) 287-7173 for specifics.
4. A **Certificate of Occupancy** must be obtained before a structure may be legally occupied or before the storing of any furniture or other items in that structure will be permitted. Homes will be issued a Certificate of Occupancy with the completion of a satisfactory final inspection.
5. The Building Official may require soil test and an engineer's analysis if any questionable soils are encountered.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Building Inspector, Metro West Inspection Services, Inc., (763) 479-1720

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, (952) 471-0590, [permitting@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:permitting@minnehahacreek.org)

Excelsior City Planner, Emily Becker, (952) 653-3674, [ebecker@excelsiormn.org](mailto:ebecker@excelsiormn.org)

Electrical Inspector, Brian Luce, (952) 233-8988

City Engineer, Morgan Dawley, (763) 287-7173

## **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS**

The City's Design Standards can be found in Article 41 of the Zoning Ordinance. Any question regarding the Design Standards can be directed to the Planning Director or by emailing [ebecker@excelsiormn.org](mailto:ebecker@excelsiormn.org) or by calling (952) 653-3674.

*Single family and multiple family containing up to five units including all new construction and remodeling shall meet the following design standards:*

### **A. Entrances**

Primary entrances on principal structures shall face the front lot line as defined by Article 2 of Appendix E. Additional secondary entrances may be oriented to a secondary street or parking area. Primary entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street and delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping or similar design features. Lakeshore properties are exempt from this requirement.

### **B. New construction and remodeling**

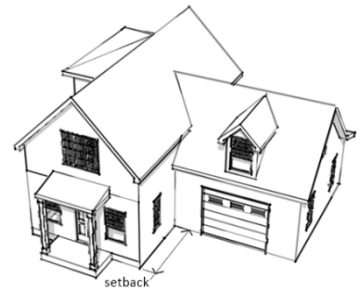
New construction and remodeling shall relate to the design of surrounding traditional buildings, where these are present. Design features such as similar setbacks, scale, facade divisions, roof lines, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials and colors are possible design techniques, while allowing desirable architecture innovation, variation, and visual interest. All sides of buildings shall use the same building materials and other architectural treatments as principal facades. The architectural style shall be consistent with the definition of four-sided architecture as defined in section 2-2

### **C. Window and door openings**

For principal residential buildings, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least 15 percent of the total area of exterior walls (excluding the area of garage doors) facing a public street or sidewalk. In addition, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least ten percent of the total area of all exterior walls.

### **D. Garages**

1. Garage doors/street facing building facade. Street facing garage doors shall not exceed 64 square feet each and shall not exceed 50% of the combined façade width of the dwelling and garage; and be recessed at least ten feet from the longest front or side wall plane of the principal building. For tuck-under garages, provide a feature that will provide a shadow line giving the perception that the garage opening is recessed.
2. Garages with non-street facing garage doors must be recessed at least six feet from the longest front wall plane of the principal building.
3. Garage doors/building design. Garage doors may be located on another side of the dwelling ("side or rear loaded") provided that the side of the garage facing the front street has windows and other architectural details that mimic the features of the living portion of the dwelling.
4. The aggregate footprint or coverage of all garages and accessory buildings shall not exceed 800 square feet.
5. No detached garage shall exceed 768 square feet in floor area on lots of 12,000 or greater, or 624 square feet on lots of less than 12,000 square feet in size.
6. No attached garage shall exceed 800 square feet or 75% of the square footage of the footprint of the principal dwelling, whichever is less.



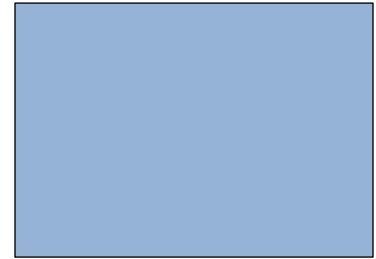
### **E. Front, side and rear wall plane limitations**

1. The length of an exterior front wall of principal structures more than 20 feet in height shall not exceed 16 feet in width on the first floor without a minimum of at least a two-foot deep by eight-foot-wide offset (projecting or recessed) within every 16 feet or less. The length of an exterior front wall of principal structures up to 20 feet in height shall not exceed 24 feet in width on the first floor without a minimum of at least a two-foot deep by eight-foot-wide offset (projected or recessed) within every 24 feet or less. A porch may be utilized in lieu of the required offset.
2. The length of an exterior side or rear wall shall not exceed 32 feet without a minimum of at least a two-foot deep by eight-foot-wide offset (projecting or recessed) within every 32 feet or less. A porch may be utilized in lieu of the required offset.

- F. **Wall heights on sloped terrain.** To the extent that any wall height of a new or remodeled structure exceeds 28 feet in height, it shall step back at least two feet for each foot it exceeds 28 feet in height at the point the wall height exceeds 28 feet in height. For purposes of this section, "wall height" shall mean the distance from the place it emerges from the ground to the top of a cornice or a flat roof, to the deck line of a mansard roof, to a point on the roof directly above the highest wall of a shed roof, to the uppermost point on a round or an arch type or to the mean distance of the highest ridge of a pitched, hip, or gambrel roof.

## **excelsior Award**

Excelsior neighborhoods are characterized by our greenery and high-quality housing stock. Our neighborhoods have evolved over time and circumstance and will continue to evolve and gradually change character. The continuous influx of new residents moving into Excelsior is a sign of health and vitality, and long-time residents stay in Excelsior because of their pride and sense of connection to the neighborhoods and town.



The excelsior Award recognizes individual building projects that enhance and strengthen our Excelsior neighborhoods. The excelsior Award does not require a specified architectural style, as diversity and innovation in design adds character and flavor to our neighborhoods. Rather, the excelsior Award is meant to honor new developments that respect the light, privacy, and scale of the neighborhood context where residents have chosen to live for so many years. As we look to the future, today's buildings should live for generations and contribute to a neighborhood's character even as our lifestyle patterns change.

### **excelsior Award Guidelines**

Every two years, the City of Excelsior presents an award to architects, buildings, designer and property owners that blend remodeled or newly constructed structures in to the fabric of Excelsior neighborhoods. All projects are eligible for the award and judged on the following guidelines:

#### ***Size and Massing***

Building mass should be comparable to the majority of other buildings on the block and particularly be sympathetic to the scale of adjacent buildings. Designs should carefully consider the impact of new construction on the sense of space, light, and view of the immediate neighbors.

#### ***Building Exterior***

Architectural elements such as windows, doors, and roofs should be designed with an emphasis on successful visual proportion. Monolithic wall or roof planes that do not complement the existing neighborhood context should be broken-up into proportional elements to achieve a human scale. The quality of exterior material and detail should extend around the sides of the home rather than stop at the front corners.

#### ***Vegetation***

Existing trees and shrubs should be preserved if at all possible, paying special attention to existing root systems. The Zoning Ordinance requires temporary fencing around significant trees (10" trunk or wider) to avoid long term damage from compaction from vehicles or stored materials, but developers may want to install temporary fencing around all landscaping to be preserved.

### **Winning Projects**

The winning project(s) will be highlighted in the local paper and City newsletter, and the City will install a small wooded sign in the front yards, announcing the project won the BLEND award.