

# The Bridge

Connecting with our residents

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City of Belle Plaine

February • 2021

## Message from the Mayor: Why Belle Plaine?

*Christopher G. Meyer – Mayor*

Over the years I've been asked this question numerous times and have always tried to answer in depth so they will want to know more about our community. In a recent conversation I had, the person I was talking to mentioned that he often traveled through Belle Plaine from the Twin Cities to Mankato. I asked if he ever took the time to actually get off the highway and tour the city. He answered that he had not done so over the course of all of those years that he drove through our community. This is a prime example of why I try to describe things about the City that are not visible and leads me to other great things to talk about.

So *Why Belle Plaine?* It is fairly easy to brag about the natural beauty of the area when looking at the river valley, river, wetlands, and most likely the wild life moving about. We also have the rolling prairies, which we know are beautiful and is the basis of the French version of the name our fine city, Beautiful Prairie. While talking about the physical appearance of the City, it then leads to the discussion of our abundant parklands and trail systems, which have amenities for all ages, in all seasons to enjoy. The "cherry on top" of course, is the new Aquatic Center, which many find hard to believe that a community of our size has made the investment for all to enjoy for many years to come.

The next part of the discussion needs to be about the people, our residents, the true backbone of the community. It is so easy to tell the story of a population that is always more than willing to step up and help each other out. These are the people who volunteer in our wonderful city; the various

local organizations; the people in our business community that made the investment to support Belle Plaine; the people in our schools teaching our children and building a base for their futures; all working hard to make this the great place we all love to call home. We have great people that are proud of Belle Plaine and love to come together to celebrate with each other. This is very evident in our community celebrations, our sports teams, and our civic pride, which is shown in so many ways throughout the year.

*...the people, our residents, the true backbone of the community*

Finally, I talk about the City in terms of the elected and appointed officials, city staff including all departments, and the pride, enthusiasm and determination that everyone has while working for the city and serving its residents. I also talk about the dedication and work ethic this group of people have on a daily basis and are many times over looked and undervalued. We are truly

blessed with some of the best! We need to appreciate and celebrate this fact as well.

This is the story that I tell. So, I would ask that all of you to reflect on the many assets and attributes that did not make this short list. A person could talk about our favorite hometown for hours and still not do it the justice it deserves. We can hang our hats on the generations of townspeople that came before us, who put in the hard work and made sacrifices so that we can all continue to enjoy the life that we so love here on the beautiful prairie.

Stay safe, and look forward spring – it is around the corner!

*Save the Date!*

32nd Annual

**RECYCLE &**

**CLEAN UP DAY**

September 18, 2021

At Public Works

### *Snow Removal Regulations*

**400.03 (R)** All snow and ice must be removed from public sidewalks within 24 hours after snow has ceased to fall. Failure to comply may result in a citation.

**501.09** Parking will not be permitted on residential streets during a snow emergency, when snow has accumulated to a depth of one-half (½) inch or more. Downtown parking will be posted as NO PARKING during a snow emergency.

Don't let your vehicle get towed, sign up for Nixle, a free program which sends an e-mail and text message to your cell phone regarding snow emergencies and / or community information. Sign up for free at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com).

# Ask the Building Inspector

## 1. What is a building permit?

A building permit gives you permission to start construction after plans are reviewed and approved by the City Building Official. Building permit review helps ensure that building project meet minimum safety, zoning and aesthetic requirements. The fees charged for building permits are used to defray the cost of code administration and inspections.

## 2. When do I need a permit?

It's a good idea to contact the City any time you are considering construction, mechanical, electrical, or plumbing projects. That means if you are building, enlarging, altering, repairing, adding/removing walls, replacing exteriors, replacing windows/doors, moving, converting, or demolishing something you may need a permit. Permits are generally not required for replacing kitchen cabinets, installing carpet or other floor coverings, installing wallpaper or paneling on finished surfaces, or redecorating without a structural change.

## 3. What good does a permit do?

Your home or business is an investment. If your construction project does not comply with the codes adopted by the City, the value of your investment could be reduced. Property insurers may not cover work done without proper permits and inspections. If you decide to sell your home or building, the potential buyer may examine our records to make sure the proper permits and inspections were obtained. Your permit also helps protect you and the public by reducing the potential hazards of unsafe construction. By following code guidelines, your completed project will meet minimum standards of safety and will be less likely to cause injury to you, your family, your friends, or future owners.

## 4. Whose responsibility is it to see that the building code is followed?

The contractor you hire to complete your project is responsible for compliance with the state building code. They should be licensed by the state (when required) to perform the work. If there is ever a question as to whether or not some aspect of a construction project complies with the code, the contractor is the responsible party. If you are performing the work yourself, then you are the responsible party. If you are planning a do-it-yourself home improvement project, contact the City for information about specific requirements. Staff can provide information handouts that explain how to design, construct, and obtain a permit.

## 5. Should I take the permit out for the contractor?

When the contractor signs the permit, the contractor is agreeing to do the work according to code. If you sign for the permit, you are liable for correcting the contractor's work if it should fall short of City or State building code standards.

## 6. What happens after a permit is issued?

An inspection card containing a list of required inspections will be issued. The card should be displayed near the work area. When a required inspection has been passed, the City's Building Official will sign the card. When the final inspection is approved, the inspectors' signatures are your assurance that the work has been properly inspected and no violations of the building code were discovered.

### City Council Contacts:

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### February 2021 Government Calendar

<b>1</b>	Design Committee .....	5:15 p.m.
	City Council .....	6:30 p.m.
<b>8</b>	EDA.....	5:00 p.m.
	Planning Commission.....	6:30 p.m.
<b>9</b>	Public Safety.....	7:30 a.m.
<b>11</b>	Public Works.....	9:00 a.m.
<b>15</b>	Presidents Day Observed.....	City Offices Closed
<b>22</b>	Parks Commission.....	5:00 p.m.
	City Council .....	6:30 p.m.

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