

Case Study: Eden Prairie, Minnesota

The fastest growing suburb in Minnesota in the 1980s, the City of Eden Prairie weathered the growth spurt without sacrificing the integrity of its historic architecture. One of the tools it used to maintain its was a masonry ordinance, enacted in 1982, requiring all commercial and multi-family development to be built with an exterior of at least 75% brick, stone or glass.

City Planner Mike Franzen says that having the masonry ordinance in place for the past 20 years have definitely been good for the City – both aesthetically and in terms of the durability of buildings. “I look around in the older parts of Minneapolis and see brick and stone buildings being restored, while buildings sided with EIFS or other less durable materials would simply be torn down.” Seamlessly blending the old and the new was a crucial task for Eden Prairie, a community in which the town board held its first meeting on the same day Minnesota became a state - May 11, 1858.

He notes that because of Eden Prairie’s long-standing commitment to quality building, the “bar has been raised for all the surrounding communities, as well. You are seeing more brick in new retail across the whole area because the market now demands it.”

Franzen said the ordinance was initiated to ensure a more finished look in both commercial and residential construction and that they internally refer to the ordinance as the “brick or better” requirement, meaning that no more than 25% of a structure can be built with less durable materials including wood, stucco, vinyl, metal or plastic.

JUST THE FACTS

City:	Eden Prairie, Minnesota
Population:	60,000
Founded:	1858
Masonry Requirement:	Commercial = 75% Multi-Family = 75%
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