



City of Winooski

Vermont's Opportunity City

27 West Allen Street
Winooski Vermont 05404
802 655 6410
winooski.vt.gov

Winooski City Council Meeting

Monday, July 13, 2026, at 6 PM

Attend in person: Winooski City Hall (27 W Allen St)

Attend online: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84364849328>

Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 843 6484 9328

Members Present: Mayor Thomas Renner; Deputy Mayor Bryn Oakleaf; Councilor Elsie Goodrich; Councilor Al Turkos; Councilor Eli Ogilvie

Officers Present: Elaine Wang, City Manager; Ray Coffey, Community Services Director; Angela Aldieri, Finance Director; Ravi Venkataraman, Director of City Planning; Paul Sarne, Communications Director; Jenny Willingham, City Clerk; Kim Hier, Assistant City Clerk

Others Present: Sara van Ryckervorsel, Razan Alrubaii, Leslie Fry, Jen Berger, Brian Colombini

- I. Call to Order** at 6 PM
- II. Pledge of Allegiance** led by Deputy Mayor Bryn Oakleaf.
- III. Agenda Review**

Minutes: No discussion, agenda was accepted as presented.

IV. Public Comment

Minutes: No public comment was made.

V. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval: City Council and Liquor Control Board Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2026
- B. Approval: Accounts Payable Warrant: July 9, 2026
- C. Approval: Payroll Warrant: June 21 - July 4, 2026
- D. Approval: Disability Pride Month Resolution

Minutes: There were no concerns or comments.

Motion: Motion by Councilor Ogilvie to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Deputy Mayor Oakleaf. Motion carried 4-0.

Council Reports

Mayor Thomas Renner: The Planning Commission met with the Development Review Board and had a good conversation. Topics included the armory project as well as Franklin St. There was conversation regarding how they got there (Franklin St.) and how to prevent issues similar to it in the future. They also discussed "character of the neighborhood". Both bodies recognize that it is good for them to be in



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communication and will meet twice a year, in January and July. They recognize the difficulty people have in understanding the work the Planning Commission does and many people go to the Development Review Board to express concerns over things that have happened within the Planning Commission. He encouraged them to communicate with the community as representatives on those commissions. A confederate flag was recently hanging in our city and there was a great deal of communication from residents with him via social media about this. The City Council supports and cherishes the diversity in our city. Many people in Vermont may think that we have no racism here, but that is not true. If you feel you would like to reach out about this matter, we'd be happy to hear from you. Contact information is on the web site.

Deputy Mayor Oakleaf: The Safe Healthy Connected People Commission will meet Tuesday July 14th at 5:30 at the Winooski Memorial Library at 65 Winooski Falls Way. We will be welcoming our two new commissioners and also electing officers, doing orientation and going over the comprehensive plan. The Housing Commission has not been posted yet on the city website; the meeting will be later this month if they have a quorum. Chittenden Solid Waste District will meet July 29th. The agenda will be noticed on their website later this month.

Councilor Al Turkos: There is an Airport Commission meeting on August 5th at 4:00 PM, which is available and open to the public. An update was posted to Front Porch Forum regarding the robust conversation that we had with the Inclusion and Belonging Commission and also the Safe Healthy and Connected People Commission regarding our draft background check policy. There was no movement or suggestion made to City Council outside of the fact that this is a conversation that will most certainly continue to be had within the community. There are multiple spots open on the Inclusion and Belonging Commission. People can reach out to Councilor Turkos or find more information on the Winooski web site. There is a block party starting at 5:00 PM in the rotary on Wednesday July 15th. There was a special Airport Commission meeting on June 23 at 4 PM. At this meeting, we discussed the budget and made a recommendation to the Burlington City Council for a new building that will house the snow removal equipment. Our most recent meeting on July 1st was cancelled due to a lack of quorum.

Councilor Elsie Goodrich: The Finance Commission will next meet tomorrow, July 14th at 6 PM here at City Hall or on Zoom to discuss the Payment Agreement Procedure, and elect new officers. The Winooski Finance Commission has one vacant alternate seat, if you're interested in serving on the Commission, please apply today at winooski.vt.gov.

Councilor Eli Ogilvie: "This month's Municipal Infrastructure meeting will be held on Thursday, July 23, 2026 from 6:30-8 PM @ City Hall. The agenda will be formalized this week. If residents have items they would like added to the agenda, please reach out to me. Additionally, the municipal infrastructure has a comprehensive plan open house on Wednesday July 29, 2026 from 5 – 7 PM @ Winooski Senior Center ([123 Barlow Street](#)). This open house will allow folks to give feedback on the City's long-term infrastructure goals and objectives (water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, and energy infrastructure improvements). During the event, city staff will present maps identifying recommendations for transportation improvements based on input from the [Winooski Walk/Bike Plan](#) and the [Transportation Master Plan](#). Lastly, light refreshments are provided. We hope to see folks at the upcoming meetings!"



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VI. City Updates

Elaine Wang, City Manager, gave the following updates

Everyone is invited to the **City of Winooski's Comprehensive Plan Open House Series**. Comprehensive plans serve as a guide for local government projects and budgeting for the community. By state law, cities and towns adopt a comprehensive plan every 8 years. Winooski is due to adopt our next one in March of 2027 and we want as many people's voices informing the plan as possible! We're having 4 open houses this summer, each one focused on a particular topic. The next, covering Municipal Infrastructure, will be held on Wednesday, July 29, from 5 – 7 PM @ Winooski Senior Center (123 Barlow Street). Give feedback on the City's long-term infrastructure goals and objectives. This includes water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, and energy infrastructure improvements. City staff will present maps identifying recommendations for transportation improvements based on input from the Winooski Walk/Bike Plan and the Transportation Master Plan. Light refreshments will be provided.

The **2026 Statewide Primary Election** is on Tuesday, August 11, 2026 from 7 AM to 7 PM at the Winooski Senior Center. To view the official warning, sample ballots, and to register to vote, visit winooski.vt.gov/vote.

We are thrilled to share that the **City's Thrive After School and Summer Program was recently awarded a 5 STAR designation from the State of Vermont**, which is the highest quality credential awarded by Vermont to licensed childcare programs. STARS is Vermont's Quality Recognition and Improvement System for childcare, preschool, and afterschool programs. Participation in STARS means that a program is striving beyond base licensing regulations to meet higher quality standards, uphold professional practices, and commit to continuous quality improvement. Congratulations to the Thrive team on this outstanding achievement!

VII. Regular Items

- A. Discussion: Public Hearing - Amendments to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations (Gentle Infill) - Ravi Venkataraman, Director of City Planning

Motion: Motion to open the public hearing at 6:13 PM by Councilor Goodrich, seconded by Deputy Mayor Oakleaf. Motion carried 4-0.

Minutes: Director of Planning and Zoning, Ravi Venkataraman, provided a brief overview of the changes to the city's Unified Land Use and Development Regulations (ULUDR) – Gentle Infill. In addition to this, it was discussed that in late June the state passed Act 179 and in that they removed the owner occupancy requirements for accessory dwelling units. This has an effect on the proposed changes. It can be removed from discussion and put back to the Planning Commission to discuss. State statutes supersedes our regulations so we won't be adhering to the owner occupancy requirement that currently exists here.

Jen Berger and Leslie Fry who are part of a group that has been discussing public art had questions regarding the changes to the regulations. Regarding section 4.14A, they asked for a real-life example of what the pros and cons are within this section, the section on intent. The intent of the section is to promote the public health, welfare and safety of the general public by regulating signs, etc. Director Venkataraman stated that the intent statement speaks very broadly. The language signals that we are regulating the size of the sign or the size of the lettering, the placement of the sign, and the duration, not the messaging. Jen Berger asked when we are talking about signs does that include public art and if



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so, can that be specified where they are similar and where they are different in terms of regulations? Director Venkataraman responded that public art is mentioned toward the bottom of that section under subsection L and public art is always a gray area when it comes to sign regulations. There are negotiations that happen with the public, the Council, and artists in making sure that the art is representative of the community's interest. Jen and Leslie stated they are thinking about the future of public art in Winooski. Jen asked if the items mentioned in public art held to the same intent as signs and if so, could it say that, and if it doesn't can public art be specifically mentioned somewhere else in the document? That way if someone is putting up a mural, it is clear where to look for it. Right now, it could or could not be in there. Director Venkataraman stated that generally public art is tucked into signs. However, they may not be one in the same. This could be a broader discussion with the Planning Commission on how to split that up, and he needs to do more research on how to make the distinction better. Jen asked the question regarding "creates structure, intrudes into or lessens the urban experience and creates visual clutter", what is the urban experience being described here? Director Venkataraman stated that intent and purpose statements speak in general ways and are subjective and are used as guidelines to set regulations on signage. Leslie stated that public art is in the beginning stages and some of this might be constricting if public art is falling under signage. Mayor Renner stated that this document is meant to be a living document. Jen stated there was need for clarity under substitution clause under C Also under D, "unsafe and menace to the public" needs clarification as to what it refers to. They would like clarification on section E regarding murals – no murals on street facing walls unless they are done on a board and hung. Section F – all signs temporary in nature may be granted a temporary permit, does that include public art and if not should it be specified? There might be a typo in H, number 1, all proposed signs will not relate to the architecture of the building on which they are located, should it be "not"? Director Venkataraman will look into it. Regarding J. 3 height of signs, they would like clarity on how it relates to murals and public art, or is it just related to signs? Under L, is there a distinction to the definition of public art that comes sooner so someone reading the document is able to distinguish between signs and public art throughout the document? They will email the questions to Council and Director Venkataraman.

Sara van Ryckervorsel spoke to revisions to the administrative review allowance for priority housing. She read the overview and it stated that the City had gone to legal counsel and it wasn't allowed for an extension of a time period. She recommended that City Council instead of approving page 59 section article 5, administrative review that we may try to figure out what that change is being designed to do and throw it back to the Planning Commission and possibly the Development Review Board. It feels as if there aren't any checks and balances in the development review. She stated that should be looked a more closely.

Motion: Motion to close the public hearing at 6:34 PM made by Councilor Goodrich, seconded by Councilor Turkos. Motion carried 4-0.

B. Discussion/Approval: Adopt Amendments to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations (Gentle Infill) - Ravi Venkataraman, Director of City Planning

Minutes: Items discussed included support for having the Planning Commission review what is public art vs. what is signage; section 5.14.E.4 regarding notification of adjoining properties and how it could allay concern about the administrative review process; adding the City Manager to the administrative review process and the importance of passing on institutional knowledge. It was also discussed that projects cannot be arbitrarily denied along with the importance of consistency with other cities and towns in Chittenden County in terms of working with developers. Discussion took place regarding changing language to blank walls per 15 feet per floor instead of by area, which is consistent with other land use



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regulations for Winooski, particularly form-based code and also consistent with other communities in Chittenden County. Reasons for moving to "by area" were discussed, and how this relates to the transparency per floor requirement. The importance of consistency in the document and in code was discussed, along with the need to still be able to address issues and solve problems.

Motion: Motion by Councilor Turkos, seconded by Councilor Goodrich to approve the document as presented with changing the section about the area of blank wall and making it by floor. Director Venkataraman added that would be a change to section 2.5 about blank wall length and also a change in the definition regarding the blank wall area, removing the graphic and making it speak to length. It would also involve making it more in alignment with our form-based code. He added that section 5.1 regarding accessory dwelling units will need to change, they will strike through relevant sections due to state statute changes. They will come back after the Planning Commission has discussed the changes in state statute. Motion carried 3-0 and Deputy Mayor abstained..

C. Discussion/Approval: Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Appointments to the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee (OSAC) - Mayor Thomas Renner

Minutes: Mayor Renner discussed the process for Winooski to put forth a candidate for the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee. He believes it is an opportunity for our city to be involved in this committee for a variety of reasons including there being people in our city who have been impacted by the opioid crisis. They will be discussing important things on this committee and it would be good for Winooski to have a voice. VLCT is doing the vetting of the person we recommend. We would do our own vetting similar to what we would do for commissioners. He thanked the Deputy Mayor for assisting with his memo related to this topic. There were no concerns.

Motion: Motion by Councilor Turkos, seconded by Councilor Goodrich to approve Winooski being able to offer a recommendation to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns as outlined in the memo, we will hold applications, do interviews, to find somebody to recommend to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Motion carried 4-0.

IX. Adjourn

Minutes: Meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM

Motion: Motion to adjourn by Councilor Turkos, seconded by Deputy Mayor Oakleaf. Motion carried 4-0.

Attest: _____
Kim Hier, Assistant City Clerk