

**CITY OF WACONIA
JULY 20, 2026**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Litfin called the July 20, 2026, Waconia City Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Noting that Council Member Coleman is absent.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Litfin led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PROCLAMATIONS

None.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion to accept the agenda as published was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Siddons.

MOTION CARRIED.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

1) Annexation Petition – Tamarack Land & Carver County Parcels

Motion to open the public hearing was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Grengs.

MOTION CARRIED.

Abdi Sahai, Community Development Assistant, provided an overview of the proposed annexation, which includes approximately 138.08 acres. The property owners have submitted a petition for annexation in connection with the Woodland Trail residential development, which was approved by the Council on April 2, 2026. The proposed annexation also includes adjacent property owned by Carver County. The preliminary plat, approved by the Council in April 2026, consists of 127 residential units. Of the total annexation area, approximately 77.7 acres are owned by Carver County and include the site designated for a future lift station. No public comments were received regarding the proposed annexation, and with no members of the public present to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Council Member Siddons, seconded by Council Member Grengs.

MOTION CARRIED.

Motion to adopt Joint Resolution No. 2026-170 approving the annexation petition between the city of Waconia and Laketown Township for the Carver County owned properties and the Tamarack Land LLC property identified in the Resolution was made by Council Member Grengs, seconded by Siddons.

MOTION CARRIED.

6. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Litfin provided instruction regarding the open forum.

Mark Sullivan, 1333 Creekside Drive. Requesting the Council to vote no to reduce the cannabis retail buffer requirements on tonight's agenda, Mr. Sullivan represents Promise Church, where he is lead pastor. He stated the State of Minnesota does legally allow the sale of cannabis, and it is becoming increasingly acceptable to consume; however, the risks to the individual community at large are understated by those who approve of their use.

Marijuana addiction and marijuana psychosis are a real danger to those consuming the drug. He agrees with the Planning Commission and the Council Members that cannabis retail businesses should not exist within specified distances of schools, daycares, residential treatment facilities and playgrounds. This decision was made due to the risk of proximity that this type of business poses to children. The Council should not reverse itself by creating an exception to its prior well-thought-out Ordinance. Additionally, the City has a tunnel under Highway 5 that provides a safe means of crossing a four-lane highway for all residents but with strong consideration for students that travel to the middle school, the high school, and parks. The tunnel which was made for physical safety enters and empties directly onto this property. Mr. Sullivan is asking the Council to vote no on the cannabis retail buffer requirements.

Dan Iverson, 1230 Spring Hill Road, urged the Council to vote against reducing the cannabis buffer requirements. He expressed concern that allowing cannabis businesses closer to schools would promote activity he does not believe reflects the values of the Waconia community. Mr. Iverson stated that he and his family do not support this direction for the City and stated that, if the proposal is intended to increase tax revenue, there are other ways to generate revenue without changing the buffer requirements.

7. COMMUNITY INTEREST PRESENTATIONS

None.

8. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) Approve the June 20, 2026, City Council Minutes**
- 2) Approve July 20, 2026, Expenditures**
- 3) Safari Island Community Center Expenditures from Sports Facilities Companies Incurred June 2026**

- 4) **Ice Arena Expenditures from Sports Facilities Companies Incurred June 2026**
- 5) **Contractor Pay Request - Island View Estates Park to NW Asphalt Inc. #1**
- 6) **Contractor Pay Request - Downtown Reconstruction Phase 4 to GMH Asphalt Corporation #2**
- 7) **Contractor Pay Request - CSAH 10 Trail Project to GMH Asphalt, Inc. #3**
- 8) **Contractor Pay Request - Wildcat Way Reconstruction Pay Request to GMH Asphalt Corporation #3**
- 9) **Firefighter Resignation**
- 10) **Park Board Resignation**
- 11) **Election Judge Appointments**
- 12) **Authorizing Staff to Submit to the Department of Labor and Industry Safety Grant Program**
- 13) **MOU for Permanent Drainage and Utility Easements - Little Ave**
- 14) **Woodland Trail Early Grading Agreement & Permit – Tamarack Land**
- 15) **Approve Gambling Raffle Application Church of St. Joseph**
- 16) **Designate Outdoor Area for Nickle Dickle Day Festival**
- 17) **Liquor License Application**
- 18) **On Sale Tap Room License**
- 19) **Approve Sidewalk Cafe License and Encroachment Agreement**
- 20) **Cannabis Retail Registration Application**
- 21) **Accepting Cash Donation for War Memorial Maintenance and Preservation**
- 22) **Donation and Approve Pass Thru Recommendation - Waconia Fire Relief Association**
- 23) **Lodging Tax Fund Request - Waconia Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)**

Motion to adopt the consent agenda as published was made by Council Member Grengs, seconded by Council Member Siddons.

MOTION CARRIED.

9. COUNCIL BUSINESS

- 1) **Ordinance Amendment - Amend Sections 900.05.7, B-1, Highway Business District, Section 900.06.1.D Cannabis Retail Business Buffer Requirements and Section 900.11, Uses Permitted by Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Interim Use Permit (IUP)**

Community Development Director Lane Braaten reviewed the proposed ordinance amendment and explained the current method for measuring cannabis retail buffer zones. At the Council's previous direction, staff researched how other communities measure buffer zones, contacted the school district for input, and prepared examples illustrating the impact of potential changes. Staff reported that many local

communities have adopted the same buffer requirements as Waconia, while others have no buffer requirements.

Staff explained that changing the school buffer measurement from property line to property line to building to building while maintaining the 1,000-foot distance, and reducing the park buffer from 500 feet to 250 feet, would make the property at 1320 Mill Lane eligible for a cannabis business. The proposed changes would also make approximately 10 B-1 and B-2 commercial parcels eligible, including a portion of the former UFC site, two downtown parcels, and several parcels near Target and Regarding Dentistry. Staff also noted that, based on state statute, the City's population, and City Ordinance, Waconia is limited to a maximum of two cannabis retail licenses.

Council Member Grengs stated that Waconia's current Ordinance was written with the most restrictive buffer requirements possible to protect children. He noted that while schools are generally built close to their property lines, the middle school is separated from the potential retail location by a large parking lot and Highway 5, making the current property line measurement less meaningful in this situation. He stated that measuring from building to building would better reflect the actual separation between the school and a cannabis retailer.

Council Member Siddons noted that City Administrator Shane Fineran had spoken with the school superintendent, who expressed no concerns regarding a reduced buffer area.

Mr. Fineran explained that state law permits onsite consumption only for certain cannabis license holders and only for edible products. Smoking, vaping, and consumption of cannabis concentrates are prohibited indoors under the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act. He also noted that the legal age to purchase cannabis is 21 and that the proposed ordinance amendments were consistent with the Planning Commission's recommendation and the Council's previous direction to gather additional information.

Mayor Litfin acknowledged that the issue is confusing for both residents and business owners and invited the applicant, Mr. Levine, to provide any additional comments.

Resolution No. 2026-159 to deny Ordinance amendment to review Section 900.05, Section 900.06, and Section 900.11 related to cannabis retail buffers, permitted uses and interim uses.

FAILED TO LACK OF A MOTION AND A SECOND

Motion to direct staff to provide a formal Ordinance to amend Chapter 900 regarding Cannabis Zoning Requirements was made by Council Member Grengs, seconded by Council Member Siddons.

MOTION CARRIED.

2) Small Area Plan — 801 Hwy. 284

Mr. Braaten introduced Lance Bernard of TC2 who will provide the details of the agreement for the development of the 9-acre site located at 801 Highway 284. Mr. Bernard stated that the items for discussion will be a refresher of the study purpose, the public engagement recap and findings, and the highlights of the small area plan draft. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the existing site, access the transportation network, prepare several conceptual redevelopment alternatives, and recommend a concept supported by a realistic implementation strategy. The engagement process included an open house and a community survey with the commercial uses generally favored. Mr. Bernard went on to explain the purpose and structure of the agreement, which will guide prospective developers by articulating the City's aspirations for the site and explained a range of potential redevelopment scenarios. The next step in the process will be the plan approval and developer, followed by the planning approvals and the infrastructure planning and design. Then construction would begin.

Mr. Fineran stated if approved, the next step would be to create a request for proposal so that interested developers/businesses can have an opportunity to respond to the plan.

Motion to approve the small area plan, 801 Highway 284 agreement was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Grengs.

MOTION CARRIED.

3) Site Plan — Trails Edge Senior Apartments at 905 Airport Road

Lane Braaten introduced the site plan review for the Trails Edge Senior Apartments at 905 Airport Road. Explaining that the property is Zoned R-5, which is high density residential and meets the requirements including setbacks, height, hardcover, parking and landscaping. This is a three-story, 43-unit affordable senior apartment building and is a mirrored project to Trails Edge South, built in 2022.

Allison Strike, Executive Director of Carver County Development Agency and the developer for this project. For this project, the CDA purchased this land in 2009. The renters must be 55 or older, and no minors are allowed. Adult children are allowed, but they must be over 18 years of age.

Adopt Resolution No. 2026-178 approving the site plan for the Trails Edge Senior Project at 905 Airport Road was made by Council Member Siddons, seconded by Council Member Grengs.

MOTION CARRIED.

4) Ordinance No. 793, Amending Municipal Code Section 630, Regulating Parking & Traffic and Ordering Summary Publication.

City Administrator Shane Fineran explained that the proposed Ordinance and Resolution were brought forward at the direction of the Council to review parking and

regulations within the downtown core. The proposed Ordinance would amend the current time-restricted parking limits on designated downtown streets, changing the restriction from 90 minutes to 4 hours, Monday through Saturday between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm. The amendment would also establish a consistent 4-hour parking limit on Elm Street and the portions of Vine Street and Olive Street that are currently subject to different restrictions. In addition, parking Lot #2, located near Elm Street and 1st Street, would be designated as a safe harbor location for winter parking. No changes are proposed to truck parking regulations or the City's existing winter parking regulations.

Adopt Ordinance No. 793 amending Chapter 630 of the City Code related to Parking Regulations was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Grengs.

MOTION CARRIED.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 2026-279 approving summary publication of Ordinance No. 793 was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Siddons.

MOTION CARRIED.

10. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None.

11. BOARD REPORTS

1) Staff Reports

Shane Fineran announced that he accompanied Jackie Schulze and Jen Friesen to the Northern Lights Awards for the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators. The City of Waconia is an award-winning communicator thanks to Jackie and Jen. The City was awarded two silver and one bronze awards in various categories in communication efforts. Fun fact: different states are judged by different states, with the Minnesota entries judged by South Carolina and the South Carolina entries were judged by Minnesota, with the key to winning being submitting winter entries.

.Jackie Schulze, Assistant City Administrator, stated that the next Summer Music in the Streets is Thursday, July 23rd and will feature Pandora's Other Box Unplugged, and they will be performing on 1st Street between Vine Street and Olive Street starting at 6:30 p.m.

National Night Out will take place on August 4th at City Square Park with the City partnering with Gather and Grow food shelf. There will be food trucks, music, pop-up splash pad, and of course, fire trucks. The fun starts at 5:00 pm.

Early voting for the State Primary Election begins on Friday, July 24, 2026, at City

Hall.

Candidates filing for City offices is open through Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. with two council seats and the mayor's seat.

2) Councilmember Siddons

Nothing to report.

3) Councilmember Coleman

Absent

4) Councilmember Gleason

Nothing to report.

5) Councilmember Grengs

Nothing to report.

6) Mayor Litfin

On Sunday, June 28, Mayor Litfin attended a Comcast event recognizing first responders, including firefighters, public works employees, local military personnel and law enforcement.

On Tuesday, June 30, he attended a candidate open mic event at Waconia Middle School, which primarily featured candidates running for State Representative.

On Wednesday, July 1, Mayor Litfin, Public Services Director Jon Haukaas, and Bolton & Menk hosted an open house for the Fox Run drainage project.

Mayor Litfin announced that the new recreational trail along the west side of Waconia on County Road 10 is now open, calling it a great addition to the City's trail system.

He also recognized Sovereign Estates, the Waconia Lions, and the Waconia Chamber of Commerce for hosting a successful fireworks celebration on July 3 at Sovereign Estates.

On Saturday, July 18, Mayor Litfin attended an event at the American Legion that drew hundreds of attendees and featured great food and live music. He also noted that earlier in the meeting, the Council approved a donation from the Waconia Legion Post 150 to support the upkeep and maintenance of the Veterans Memorial Park.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

13. ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

Motion to adjourn the July 20, 2026, City Council meeting was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Siddons at 7:20 pm.

MOTION CARRIED.

WORK SESSION: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS, AFFORDABILITY TARGETS

UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS/MEETINGS:

Tim Litfin, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Sue Schwalbe, Administrative Specialist