



CITY OF RUTLAND
P.O. BOX 969
RUTLAND, VERMONT 05702

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MICHAEL DOENGES

802-773-1800
FAX 802-773-1827

Thursday January 29, 2026

To the Residents of Rutland City,

After a great deal of thought, I am announcing today that I will resign as Mayor of Rutland City, effective February 27. By providing notice now and leaving office before Town Meeting Day, this timing ensures that others may run for mayor as write-in candidates during this election period. While my term will officially end on the 27th, I am committed to assisting the next mayor to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

I ran for mayor with a clear purpose: to help Rutland seize the opportunity that existed in this community; not to pursue a long-term political career. This decision was not made lightly. A rare opportunity has presented itself to return to my prior 20-plus-year career path in a role that aligns with my long-term goals and is right for me and my family. It is not an opportunity I was actively seeking, but it is one I cannot pass up. And while I never intended to be a lifelong politician, this was not the exit I had imagined.

Serving as mayor has been one of the greatest honors of my life. Together, we have captured real opportunity in Rutland—opportunity that has not been realized for a long time—and it is essential that we maintain that momentum.

During my tenure, we focused on intentional, targeted growth. Through programs like Roofs Over Rutland, we facilitated more than \$8 million in direct housing investment, and when combined with private development, saw over 250 new housing units permitted in just the last two years. These efforts positioned Rutland to be part of the solution to both local and statewide housing challenges. We laid critical groundwork for long-term economic growth through the creation of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, opening doors for developers to invest in our city center—an initiative made possible by strong community support. We also worked deliberately to make it easier to do business in Rutland by streamlining permitting, improving incentives, and ensuring investment happened within our city rather than outside our borders.

We invested significant time, effort, and energy into public safety, strengthening our police department and advancing policies that improve safety in Rutland and across Vermont. We have made local efforts to step up our presence and reaction, while actively working on policy changes at the state level to ensure our city was protected from those who would seek to cause it harm. And rather than placing blame for challenges at the state level, and waiting for an answer, we worked collaboratively with the State of Vermont to restructure processes, reduce burdens on our community, and deliver better outcomes for our city.



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At the same time, we shifted how the city plans and manages its finances—moving away from reactionary decision-making and toward proactive, long-term planning through tools like the local option tax, a new Capital Improvement Plan, and disciplined debt management. The goal has always been clear: stabilize costs, protect taxpayers, and build a more affordable and sustainable city over time. You have already seen the benefits of these changes but as time goes on they will provide a stronger, more affordable city government.

None of this work happened in isolation. Progress in Rutland depends on collaboration. When everyone, from the Board of Aldermen and city staff to community partners, when we all row in the same direction, we succeed. While we will not always agree on every detail, we share a common goal: a Rutland that is safer, more affordable, vibrant, and welcoming. I am extremely optimistic about Rutland's future. Our partnerships are strong, and with significant investment occurring in Killington, Rutland is well positioned to capture regional opportunity. By staying focused on housing, economic development, and regional collaboration, Rutland will not simply be a place people pass through, it will continue to grow as a destination where people want to live, work, visit, and invest.

As we move forward, I want to emphasize two things. First, your vote matters. Who you elect directly impacts how this city is governed and how decisions are made. If you want a Rutland that moves forward, not just stands still - the people you put in charge, they control the momentum. Second, public service requires us to be servants to our community. Those who step forward must be willing to put in the time, effort, and the energy that the work demands. Our residents deserve leaders who are prepared, committed, and focused on what is best for the entire community, not just playing politics.

While I am stepping away from this role, I am not stepping away from Rutland. I have visited many places, and lived in a few. Rutland will always be my home. I look forward to continuing to support the city's growth, investing in the community I love, and cheering on Rutland's continued success.

Thank you for the trust you placed in me, for the opportunity to serve, and for the work we have done together. Rutland's best days are still ahead.

With gratitude,

Michael Doenges
Mayor, Rutland City