TO: City Council

FROM: Michelle Sutherland, Administrative Services Director

DATE: February 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Position Requests

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1) Recommended Action:

Authorize the Mayor to approve the creation of a Payroll Technician position and add an Executive Assistant position (Police), increasing the number of FTE's at the City of Tumwater from 275 to 277 as of March 1, 2026.

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2) Background:

Payroll administration is one of the City's most critical operational functions. The City currently relies on a single Payroll Officer to process payroll for all employees, maintain compliance with federal and state regulations, administer complex benefit and retirement deductions, and implement negotiated labor agreement provisions. This structure presents significant operational risk in the event of extended leave, unexpected absence, turnover, or increased workload demands. Over the past several years, payroll complexity has increased substantially due to growth in staffing, expanded reporting and compliance requirements, implementation of new payroll and timekeeping systems, and specialized payroll provisions for police and fire bargaining units, including premium pay, specialty assignments, and overtime calculations The absence of a trained backup creates vulnerability for the City's ability to process timely and accurate payroll. Establishing a Payroll Technician position will ensure continuity, accuracy, and compliance in payroll operations.

The Police Department has experienced continued growth in operational demands, administrative complexity, and regulatory compliance requirements. Executive administrative support responsibilities have expanded significantly and are currently dispersed among command staff. Currently, the department does not have a position dedicated exclusively to executive administrative support for its leadership. This gap has created inefficiencies, delayed administrative processes, and increased workload pressures on command staff and existing employees whose primary duties are operational, supervisory, or technical in nature. A dedicated Executive Assistant will allow command staff to focus on strategic leadership, operational readiness, and community safety priorities by providing necessary support.

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3) Policy Support:

2026-2032 Strategic Priorities & Goals

Tumwater Excellence – Refine and sustain a great organization.

Health and Safety – Provide and sustain quality public safety services.

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4) Alternatives:

- ❑ Do not approve position requests

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5) Fiscal Notes:

Payroll Technician – Grade 26, $6,259-$8,387/month
Executive Assistant (Police) – Grade 27, $6,571-$8,807/month

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6) Attachments:

A. 2026 Classification and Pay Schedule
B. 2026 Non-Represented Employee Grade and Step Table