

55cull 115/26.

As we open 2026, I want to begin by recognizing something simple, but important.

A new year brings both opportunity and responsibility. It gives us a chance to reflect on where we've been, to acknowledge what we've done well, to be honest about what has been difficult, and to recommit ourselves to the work ahead.

Wilsonville remains a strong and resilient community. We are a city people choose to raise families, build businesses, invest, and put down roots. That does not happen by accident. It happens because of thoughtful planning, civic engagement, and people who care deeply about this city. I am grateful for our residents, our city staff, our volunteers, and my colleagues on this Council who continue to show up—even when the conversations are hard.

At the same time, we would be doing our community a disservice if we pretended the year ahead will be easy. We are entering 2026 at a moment that requires discipline, clarity, and trust—trust between residents and their city, and trust that the decisions we make are guided by both compassion and responsibility.

There is much we can build on. Wilsonville benefits from a diverse economy, a strong employment base, and infrastructure that—because of past investments—has helped us weather economic uncertainty better than many communities. Our parks, natural areas, and trail systems continue to define our quality of life. And we benefit from an engaged public—people who care enough to show up, ask questions, and hold us accountable. That may make governing harder at times, but it ultimately makes it better.

But we must also be honest about the pressures facing our community.

The cost of living remains a real concern for many households. Inflation has not affected everyone equally, and for too many families, even small increases can have enormous impacts. Housing affordability, health care, utility rates, and basic necessities continue to strain budgets—especially for those on fixed incomes, renters, and small businesses.

At the city level, we are facing rising operational costs, aging infrastructure, and long-deferred investments coming due at the same time. These realities force difficult conversations—particularly around rates, fees, and long-term planning.

Our responsibility is not to choose between caring about residents and maintaining essential services. Our responsibility is to do both: to be mindful of affordability while ensuring the systems our community depends on remain safe, reliable, and sustainable.

As we look ahead, I want to be clear about what I hope to help accomplish in 2026, in no particular order.

First, advancing a vibrant and realistic vision for Town Center.

Town Center is the heart of our city. It should reflect the energy, identity, and values of Wilsonville—not just on paper, but in everyday experience. In 2026, I want us to move beyond

abstract plans and toward tangible progress. Town Center does not need to be built all at once to succeed, but it does need clarity, consistency, and follow-through. My goal is to help ensure that decisions made this year move us closer to an active, accessible Town Center that serves the entire community.

- » Second, bringing greater transparency and balance to rate structures.

Utility rates and fees affect every household and business, and they are not optional services. We must continue to examine how rates are set, how assumptions are made, and how impacts are communicated—with a focus on volatile inflation, construction costs, and regulatory obligations while also asking hard questions about timing, phasing, and alternatives. Just as important is improving how we support residents most affected by these increases. Clear communication, better coordination, and strong partnerships around assistance programs are not side issues; they are part of responsible governance. We may not always agree on the answers, but we must commit to a process that is respectful, balanced, and stays grounded in data.

- » Third, strengthening emergency preparedness and community resilience.

Recent years have shown us that emergencies are no longer hypothetical. Wildfires, extreme weather, earthquakes, infrastructure failures, and regional disruptions are realities that we must plan for—together. While the city has an important role in providing clear communication, reliable systems, and realistic planning, preparedness also begins at the household and neighborhood level. When residents know where to get information, how to stay connected, and how to care for themselves and one another during disruptions, the entire community is stronger. Preparedness is not alarmism; it is practical stewardship. The cost of being unprepared is felt most by those least able to absorb it and helping residents prepare ahead of time is one of the most effective ways we can reduce harm and recover more quickly.

Finally, I want to speak briefly about how we govern together.

2026 will require steady leadership. It will require us to listen carefully, disagree respectfully, and resist the temptation to oversimplify complex problems. It will require us to explain not just what we are doing, but why—even when those explanations are uncomfortable.

My hope for this year is that we govern with humility, clarity, and courage. That we acknowledge trade-offs honestly. And that we treat residents not as obstacles to be managed, but as partners in shaping the future of this city.

Wilsonville has always planned ahead—not perfectly, but intentionally. If we stay grounded in our values, focused on long-term livability, and committed to responsible action, I am confident we can navigate the challenges ahead and emerge stronger.

I look forward to the work of the coming year, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this community as we begin 2026 together.