

## **OPINION: Wilsonville deserves leadership that listens**

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Our current leadership is pushing the Town Center Plan (TCP) forward without genuinely listening to the community. Rather than taking the time to understand what residents want, they're forcing decisions that many feel disconnected from. There's also recent evidence suggesting that city officials haven't been completely transparent about their intentions. It's time to pause and ensure the TCP reflects the will of the people, not just the agenda of city officials.

Some elements of the plan do have merit, but our city has evolved since the TCP was first proposed. The needs of our residents and businesses have shifted, and it doesn't make sense to stick rigidly to a plan developed years ago. A good plan should grow and adapt with the community, incorporating real input from the people it affects the most.

While promoting biking and walking is commendable, forcing these modes of transportation by limiting parking options seems out of touch with the everyday needs of residents (2022 Census regarding commuting in Wilsonville: 1.9% Walked, .2% Biked and 83.7% Drove). Similarly, encouraging boutique businesses is fine, but dictating choices and shutting down viable alternatives without consensus is not. The push for high-density housing, without honest discussion about its scope or the impact it will have on our already problematic traffic, only deepens the divide within our community.

We should be focusing on a plan that unites us — one that everyone can support — rather than pushing forward with a version that has clear flaws and significant opposition. Yes, there was some community input during the development of the TCP, but it was a small, unrepresentative sample that left many communities feeling overlooked. Real community engagement means listening to everyone, not just a select few, and making sure the plan reflects the diverse needs of Wilsonville.

The May advisory vote clearly showed skepticism. Instead of dismissing it, our leadership should take it seriously. Low voter turnout doesn't invalidate the results — it's a sign that people feel disconnected from the process. Blaming misinformation or downplaying the vote misses the point. What we need is better communication and more inclusive dialogue, not more top-down decisions.

The proposed funding through an urban renewal district also raises concerns, often creating inequities in who benefits and who bears the costs. Before committing to this approach, we need to explore alternative funding options that distribute the benefits and burdens more fairly across all residents.

I'm not against "A" Town Center Plan, but I am against imposing decisions on a community that hasn't been fully heard. Perhaps we should be exploring a more decentralized plan.

Whatever the direction, Wilsonville deserves leadership that listens and adapts. We need a plan that grows with us, not one that's imposed on us. I believe we can strike that balance, and that's why I'm running for mayor. It's time for leadership that engages with the people, respects their input, and ensures that plans truly reflect the needs and desires of our community.

For more on my vision for Wilsonville's future, visit [GlennLancaster.com](http://GlennLancaster.com). Let's build a future together — one where your voice is heard.