



Watsonville
CALIFORNIA

**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR**



**BOB MURRAY
& ASSOCIATES**
EXPERTS IN EXECUTIVE SEARCH

THE COMMUNITY

The City of Watsonville, California is located within the beautiful Santa Cruz County just north of scenic Monterey. The lush agricultural location offers an ideal Mediterranean climate and the rustic small-town charm of a close-knit community. The City has a population of 52,000 and a land area of nearly 6.8 square miles. The community and the Pajaro Valley are home to pristine beaches and miles of trails surrounded by wetlands and redwood forests, which provide spectacular opportunities for year-round hiking, days at the beach, bicycling, and watersports. At the heart of Watsonville is its Historic Downtown, with a bustling retail district, a budding/growing art scene, and an eclectic mix of old and new. Watsonville's downtown is home to several homes and commercial buildings designed by the famous Victorian Era architect, William Meeks. The larger buildings lining Main Street were constructed in the late 1800's and early 1900's which radiate its traditional character.

Watsonville has long been known as an agricultural center. In 1868, Martinelli's Sparkling Apple Cider was founded, and Watsonville soon became a major food processing center. Agriculture has remained at the heart of the Pajaro Valley, boasting world renowned brands such as Driscoll's and Martinelli's. Home to some of the nation's finest produce, Watsonville hosts a farmer's market every Friday, year-round, providing fresh produce, flowers, and one of a kind art. Strawberry fields and apple orchards can be seen for miles, and the fertile soil provides many acres of produce as you drive through the region. The captivating City has various possibilities; from an early morning bird watching excursion to an afternoon at a u-pick farm or museum; sunset strolls on an expansive beach or attending a signature festival like the Strawberry Festival, Film Festival or Nerdville. Whether it is food, wine, beautiful scenery, relaxation, or culture that you desire, the City of Watsonville has it all.

THE ORGANIZATION

The City of Watsonville was incorporated in 1868 and operates under a locally approved City Charter, first adopted in 1908. The Charter established a Council Manager form of government, and the City Council serves as the legislative and policy branches of the City government. The Council is comprised of seven elected members who represent the seven districts of Watsonville. The City Council is elected on a non-partisan basis from the seven districts for a four-year term. The City Council appoints three positions: the City Clerk, City Attorney, and the City Manager who oversees all department heads. Council elections are held in even years in conjunction with State-wide general elections.

With over 400 employees, Watsonville is a full-service city, providing public safety, public works, sewer, water, and waste utilities, parks and community services, library, and planning services. The total budget for City operations in Fiscal Year 2024-25 is approximately \$309.5 million, which includes an operating budget of \$140.1 million and a



capital project appropriation of \$159.8 million.

The Community Development Department has many impactful projects that underway that will shape the future of the city including the 2050 General Plan, Housing Element, and implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan. The City is embarking on a new two-year budget and strategic plan next year that will move the community forward, deepen engagement with all sectors of the community, address many critical areas of housing and affordability, community safety and well-being, water, infrastructure, economic development, and business resiliency.

THE POSITION

Under general direction from the City Manager, the Community Development Director plans, organizes, coordinates, and directs the functions of the City's Community Development Department in order to administer and maintain the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other developmental regulations. The Community Development Director oversees the issuance of all permits and approvals for private construction and land development and serves as the Secretary to the Planning Commission. This position oversees long-range land use planning and annexations as well as the processing of applications for private construction, subdivisions, and land development. The incumbent represents the Community Development Department in meetings with community organizations, the general public, private and trade organizations, and businesses. Maintaining close and effective working relationships with the management staff, other City Departments, and other government officials is essential for this role.

The Community Development Director exercises direct supervision over the Assistant Community Development Director and provides executive level leadership for personnel assigned to the Community Development Department. This position provides technical advice, consultation, and makes presentations to the City Manager, City Council, Planning Commission, and other committees on community development



issues. The Community Development Director is responsible for developing the Department budget as well as approving, monitoring, and coordinating expenditures. Other responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Manages the development and implementation of departmental goals, objectives, and priorities for each assigned service area; recommends and administers policies and procedures
- Assesses and monitors workload, administrative and support systems, and internal reporting relationships; identifies opportunities for improvement; directs and implements changes.
- Selects, trains, motivates, and evaluates assigned personnel; provides or coordinates staff training; works with employees to correct deficiencies; implements discipline and termination procedures.
- Supervises and coordinates the environmental review and development review process for private and public development activities in the City; reviews, plans, and resolves sensitive, controversial and complex issues; solves problems with developers, property owners, the public, architects, engineers, and planners as well as City Council and Planning Commission.
- Oversees housing programs including the City's Affordable Housing services and activities; oversees and provides support to programs that provide safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for the community.
- Reviews and recommends appropriate adjustments to fees for services provided by the Community Development Department; prepares and/or approves a variety of technical studies, reports and correspondence.
- Analyzing complex community development issues and problems, evaluating alternatives, and developing and implementing effective courses of action.
- Formulating, evaluating, and implementing departmental operating policies and procedures.
- Receiving, investigating, and resolving difficult and complex complaints and requests.
- Overseeing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with respect to private development projects.
- Ensuring that all safety regulations are communicated to department staff and followed.
- Reviewing and recommending appropriate adjustments to fees for services provided by the Community Development Department.
- Serving on a variety of committees to work with regulatory agencies, the public, elected officials, and other governmental agencies.
- Ensuring the effective utilization of equipment, material, and other resources of the Department.



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Watsonville is seeking an innovative, forward-thinking professional to serve as the new Community Development Director. The ideal candidate will be a process oriented, personable individual who is skilled in customer service with the ability to establish and maintain positive and effective working relationships with all kinds of people contacted in the performance of required duties. Knowledge of the principles and practices of management in a diverse organization and a thorough understanding of Federal, State, and local laws, codes, regulations, policies, and ordinances affecting the development of the community is essential. The successful candidate has proven experience with community development, budgeting, and finance and personnel management. Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to make effective, tactful presentations to a variety of audiences, are required.

The City is looking for someone with experience managing at an executive level, including long range planning, organizational development, forecasting, and benchmarking. The new Community Development Director must possess the ability to prepare and manage the departmental budget including accounting for fee revenues as well as review and evaluate technical community development information, reports, and recommendations. Candidates must have knowledge of the principles and practices of land use planning, land subdivision, zoning and other land use regulations, building regulation, and code enforcement. The ability to formulate, evaluate and make recommendations on policies and procedures affecting the provision of community development services is essential. Knowledge of code enforcement and the ability to take a holistic approach in the review and



updating of fees and business processes is highly desired.

Qualified candidates will possess a bachelor's degree in public administration, political science, management, city planning, architecture, business administration, economics or a closely related field, along with eight (8) years of increasingly responsible experience in the management and direction of one or more municipal planning, building, construction, housing, economic development or closely related programs and services. A master's degree is highly desirable. Equivalent experience and/or education that would indicate the ability to perform the essential duties is also accepted. A valid Class C California Driver's License and a safe driving record are required.

COMPENSATION

The annual salary range for the Community Development Director position is \$216,120. Placement within this range is dependent upon experience and qualifications. The City also provides an excellent array of benefits that include:

Retirement - The City participates in the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) under a 2% @ 60 formula for Classic Members (employee pays 7%). A 2% @ 62 formula applies to New/PEPRA Members (employee pays 6.25%) City Management employees also participate in Social Security at 7.65%.

Deferred Compensation Contribution - \$120 match per paycheck.

Medical/Dental/Vision Insurance - The City offers generous medical, vision, and dental benefits.

Life and AD&D Insurance - City provides \$50,000 coverage.

Vacation - Vacation accrual of up to 22 days per year dependent upon length of service.

Holidays - 14 paid regular holidays per year, including 1 floating holiday.

Sick Leave - 15 sick leave days per year.

Administrative Leave - Up to 15 days of administrative leave per year. Unused Administrative Leave may be cashed out annually.

Tuition Reimbursement - \$1,000 per year.

Bilingual Pay - \$75 per month bilingual pay.

Longevity Pay - 1.5% at 10 years and 1.5% at 15 years.

TO APPLY

If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please apply online at:

www.bobmurrayassoc.com

Filing Deadline:
January 11, 2026

Following the closing date, resumes will be screened according to the qualifications outlined above. The most qualified candidates will be invited to personal interviews with Bob Murray & Associates. A select group of candidates will be asked to provide references once it is anticipated that they may be recommended as finalists. References will be contacted only following candidate approval. Finalist interviews will be held with the City of Watsonville. Candidates will be advised of the status of the recruitment following selection of the Community Development Director.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Stacey Stevenson at:

(916) 784-9080

