



**Watsonville**  
CALIFORNIA

## **CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025  
**TO:** CITY COUNCIL  
**WRITTEN BY:** MONICA FLOREZ, PRINCIPAL HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST  
**RECOMMENDED BY:** DEPUTY CITY MANAGER MANNING  
**APPROVED BY:** TAMARA VIDES, CITY MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** ASSEMBLY BILL 2561- PUBLIC HEARING ON CITY VACANCIES,  
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council hold a public hearing in accordance with AB 2561 and accept and file the staffing/vacancy report.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

California State Assembly Bill (AB) 2561 was approved on September 22, 2024, and added §3502.3 to the Government Code. This law requires public agencies to present the status of their vacancies in a public hearing before their governing body at least once per fiscal year. The presentation must be made prior to the adoption of a final budget for the fiscal year.

### **DISCUSSION:**

In compliance with the new legal obligations under AB 2561, the City is required to hold a public hearing to present the status of filled/vacant positions within the agency by bargaining unit, and if the vacancy rate meets or exceeds 20% the total number of authorized full-time Union represented positions, the agency is required to make additional reporting requirements. Further, the Legislative Bill authorized the recognized bargaining unit to be entitled to present at the public hearing at which the public agency presents the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts for positions within that bargaining unit. The City has notified bargaining units of this hearing and their opportunity to make a presentation.

## Vacancies

In response to AB 2561, the City reviewed the total staffing and vacancy rates, using the FY 24/25 budget and staffing/vacancy rates occurring during the 2024 calendar year. Total vacancies by bargaining group as of December 31, 2024, are listed in the chart below.

Bargaining Unit	Number of Budgeted Position in FY 24-25	Number of Vacancies in Calendar Year 2024	Vacancy Rate
Confidential	10	1	10%
Executive	11	1	9.1%
IAFF L-1272	34	0	0%
Fire Management	4	0	0%
Management	57	5	8.8%
Mid-Management	82	5	6.1%
Operating Engineers Local 3 (OE3)	119	6	5.1%
Police Management	5	0	0%
Police Mid-Management	11	2	18.2%
Police Officers Association (POA)	56	8	14.3%
SEIU 521	43	5	11.7%

Position vacancies may occur for various reasons throughout any given year, including internal promotion or transfer of a staff member, retirement, resignation, termination, or due to the approval of a new position. When vacancies occur, the City's Human Resources Department works with the affected department to fill the position(s) to maintain operations; ensure continued quality & efficient services to the community; and to reduce the need for overtime.

Staff notes that there were vacancies among positions in the Confidential, Executive, Management, Mid-Management, OE3, Police Mid-Management, POA and SEIU bargaining groups as of December 31, 2024. There have been several recruitments since then. There are now zero vacancies in the Confidential, Executive and Police Mid-Management bargaining groups, or a 0% vacancy rate. There are two vacancies in POA, or a 3.6% vacancy rate, two vacancies in OE3, or a 3.4% vacancy rate and three vacancies in SEIU, or a 6.9% vacancy rate, four vacancies in Mid-Management or 4.9% vacancy rate and four vacancies in Management, or 7.1% vacancy rate.

## Recruitment and Retention of Staff

The City employs various recruitment strategies, including posting vacancies on the City's website and social media platforms as well as industry-specific job boards. Additionally, when we have critical staffing needs and few qualified candidates, we have offered signing bonuses. We have offered signing bonuses to lateral police offers and most recently for the Principal Engineer position. The City conducted a social media campaign last year to aide in the recruitment of Police Officers; increasing social media posts (one every two weeks), launched a new social media recruitment video, ran video ads on Spotify and You Tube,

launched targeted advertisement on Facebook and Instagram, installed wall decals at the Police Department and added decals to patrol vehicles, hung pole banners along Main Street, created retractable recruitment banners and produced postcard style recruitment materials. The City is also working on a campaign for Fire Department recruitments, although we are on track to fill current vacancies with the upcoming academy in the fall. The Fire Department piloted a program in 2024 to sponsor local Watsonville residents to attend Paramedic school, which, upon successful completion, allows them to be hired by the Watsonville Fire Department. In general, the City can fill most positions with a healthy pool of candidates to select from, but public safety positions and upper level management\high level professional positions are often more challenging to fill due to a smaller pool of qualified candidates.

The City also employs various strategies for retaining existing staff, including striving to maintain competitive compensation. When operationally feasible, it offers 4/10 and 9/80 alternative work schedules and the ability to telecommute one day per week to provide flexibility to employees. The City supports professional development and career growth for employees and encourages a work environment that is supportive, collaborative, and community-focused.

### **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) DETERMINATION:**

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” with the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) in that is an administrative activity that will not result in a potentially significant impact to the environment.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This action aligns with Efficient and High Performing Government as it addresses vacancies and the efforts to attract and retain a well-qualified, diverse and professional workforce dedicated to public service.

**Efficient and Well-performing Government**

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

None

### **ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

None

### **ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (IF ANY):**

1. Bill Text – AB 2561