



**City of Lathrop**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Lathrop Announces Hiring of Police Chief for New Police Department**

**Lathrop, CA, September 10, 2021** - Following a highly competitive recruitment and selection process, the City of Lathrop is pleased to announce the hiring of its first Police Chief, Raymond Bechler. The City of Lathrop is currently in the process of establishing its own Police Department, slated to begin full operations on July 1, 2022.

A native of Citrus Heights, California, Bechler started his law enforcement career in 1987 at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. In 1990, Bechler returned home to serve with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. Bechler accepted a management position with the then-brand-new Citrus Heights Police Department during its start up in 2006. In 2011, Bechler was selected as a Captain with the Oceanside Police Department where he served until 2015. For the past six years, Bechler has served on the Contra Costa Sheriff's Department where he currently oversees the implementation of programs that provide enhanced medical and mental health services to inmates

Bechler is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, the CA POST Command College, and has a Master's Degree from CSU-Long Beach.

"Being selected as the city of Lathrop's first Police Chief is the greatest honor of my Law Enforcement career," said Bechler. "I am extremely humbled and honored to serve such a family-oriented and progressive community. I look forward to establishing a hard-working, inclusive, and transparent police department focused on improving the quality of life to all who live, visit, and work in our city."

Bechler will lead Lathrop's brand-new Police Department and joins the city as the transition to its own law enforcement agency continues along on schedule. Working at the direction of Lathrop City Manager Stephen J. Salvatore, Bechler will aid in the hiring process for Commanders, Sergeants, Officers, and other essential personnel while also helping to establish the foundation of the culture and work ethic for the new department.

Respondents to a community survey provided to every household in the City of Lathrop shared that their ideal Police Chief would be community-minded, forward-thinking, and an exceptional leader. Salvatore and members of several interview panels agree that Bechler will exceed the expectations of the residents of Lathrop and be instrumental in launching the new Police Department.

“I have complete faith in Ray’s experience and abilities to meet the expectations and vision the community has for its own Police Department,” said Salvatore. “What impressed me most about Ray’s experience is his knowledge of both sheriff’s office and local law enforcement operations as well as his participation in a similar transitional process in the City of Citrus Heights. Ray will definitely be a huge asset while we are transitioning our force. Ray is a true professional, highly motivated results-oriented person with a strong work ethic and a proven track record. I am looking forward to Ray joining our team and building a department that Lathrop will be proud of for years to come.”

For over 30 years, the City of Lathrop has contracted with the San Joaquin County Sheriff’s Department for law enforcement services. Beginning July 1, 2022, the residents of Lathrop will have their own Police Department to protect and serve the city. Operating out of a brand-new, state-of-the-art headquarters facility, the Lathrop Police Department will provide the type of community-oriented services that residents have come to expect for their city. With more sworn officers and support staff, while providing long-term cost savings to the taxpayers, the City of Lathrop is taking yet another sound step to protect its resources while investing in amenities that improve the quality of living for all of its residents.

To keep up to date with the transition process for the new Police Department, be sure to bookmark:

<https://www.ci.lathrop.ca.us/city-manager/page/lathrop-police-department-transition>

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