



FAQ

Regarding the New Lathrop Police Department



Q: Why is the City of Lathrop establishing its own police department?

A: Lathrop is the fastest-growing city in San Joaquin County and the only incorporated city without a police department. For over three decades, Lathrop has contracted police services to the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department. While we will always remain grateful for their service to our community, contracting police services through the Sheriff's Department made sense when our city and county were smaller. The operational cost savings from having our own police department will allow us to have more sworn officers and support personnel.

Q: When will our new police department begin operations?

A: The City Council approved forming our own police department in early April 2021. The transition has started and is scheduled to be completed by July 2022. At that time, our new police department will become the law enforcement agency for the City of Lathrop.

Q: What changes should we anticipate?

A: With our own police department, the new police chief will conduct operations with direction from our city manager. The citizens of the City of Lathrop will be able to provide feedback and recommendations to inform the policing philosophy and the style of policing based on community priorities and values. Citizens can anticipate a responsive police force that can quickly address the needs of our city as they continue to evolve.

Q: Will we still have the same amount of police patrolling the neighborhoods of Lathrop?

A: By creating our own police department, the City of Lathrop will add five sworn officers, along with two new community service officers to support them and an additional six non-sworn personnel. While our personnel numbers will increase, our costs to provide police services will be lower year-over-year going forward. To further support our new police department and promote a holistically positive work environment within the department, we will fund enhanced human relations, IT and finance operations. In short, we will have more police officers and more support staff behind them, resulting in better policing outcomes all around with lower costs to the taxpayers.

Q: What are the economic benefits of this change? Can we afford this?

A: Creating our own police department provides the City of Lathrop with many economic benefits. Currently, our contract with San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department police services is \$9.1 million for the next fiscal year plus \$500,000 for city staff and supplies. Additionally, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department charges \$355,000 in start-up fees for each new position added to the Lathrop Police Services department. With our own police department, we will add 13 sworn and non-sworn police personnel while reducing the average cost per employee substantially.

Q: Couldn't the Sheriff's Department/County simply reduce its costs to the city?

A: While some of these costs are under the discretion of San Joaquin County, pension expenses are under the control of their retirement system. The City of Lathrop has requested that other costs related to the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department police services contract be reduced, but to date, no cost savings have been realized, and projected obligations are expected to increase even further.

Q: What are other incorporated cities in San Joaquin County doing?

A: Lathrop is the only incorporated city in San Joaquin County without its own police department. Smaller cities, like Escalon with a population of just 7,500, have established their own police departments.



Q: When will the new police staff be recruited?

A: The City of Lathrop is currently in a planned transition process towards installing its own police department. Currently, the position of Chief of Police is being advertised, and interested parties are conducting their due diligence. It is anticipated that a Chief will be selected in July 2021. After that, a linear recruitment progress through the ranks is tentatively scheduled as follows:

	<u>Announcement</u>	<u>Selection</u>
• HR Director:	July	September
• Commanders:	August	October
• Sergeants:	October	November-December*
• Lateral Officers:	December	December-April*
• Other Staff:	January	March-April*

** This allows for the background process and phased hiring based on specialty assignment, needs during the start-up, and training.*

Q: How can I receive updates about the transition process?

A: Anyone who would like to receive updates about the City of Lathrop Police Department transition process can sign up to receive notification on the city's website.



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