



ASSISTANT HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR



THE COMMUNITY

Santa Cruz is located in one of the most beautiful coastal areas of California on the sunny, northern side of Monterey Bay, 70 miles south of San Francisco, and 30 miles southwest of San Jose. Situated between magnificent redwood-forested mountains and the white-capped splendor of the Pacific Ocean, Santa Cruz is one California's most popular seaside communities, with twenty-nine miles of beaches and the historic Beach Boardwalk seaside amusement park. The mild Mediterranean climate invites all to enjoy the numerous forest and mountain trails, spectacular ocean vistas, and rich and varied marine life year-round. Recreational facilities in Santa Cruz include seventeen state parks and beaches, golf courses, and a small craft harbor. As the gateway to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Santa Cruz offers a full range of activities for water sports enthusiasts, including kayaking, sailing, ocean fishing, and surfing.

Santa Cruz has numerous art galleries and a thriving music scene. A wide variety of outstanding cultural and special events are offered year-round, including Santa Cruz Shakespeare, the Cabrillo Music Festival, the "Woodies on the Wharf" vintage car parade, the Santa Cruz Blues Festival, and many exciting national surfing competitions. Area museums include the Museum of Art and History, the Museum of Natural History, and the Surfing Museum.

The City's population is approximately 63,000; however, Santa Cruz serves a larger regional population as the county seat of Santa Cruz County and a major tourist destination. Santa Cruz is a diverse community comprising a range of ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and life experiences. It also features unique neighborhoods, incredible architecture, parks and open spaces, and opportunities for community connection. Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods are a living historical treasure, with a significant number of Victorian homes and turn-of-the-century buildings.

Santa Cruz has a flourishing and diverse local economy based on tourism, retail, agriculture services, and high-tech industry, supplemented by an expanding green economy in response to climate change. As the economic, cultural, and governmental center of the region, it offers a compelling environment full of opportunity. Nearby institutions of higher learning include the University of California, Santa Cruz, Cabrillo College, and Five Branches University. Pacific Avenue, located in the City's downtown, is home to branch offices of several high-tech companies. The downtown business district is a vibrant commercial and entertainment hub with growing mixed-use and housing projects to expand live-work-play opportunities.

Visit the [City's website](#) to learn more about this dynamic community and see [Downtown Santa Cruz](#) for the latest scoop on events and happenings.



THE CITY ORGANIZATION

Santa Cruz is a Charter City that operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The City Council is composed of the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and five Councilmembers. The Mayor is elected at-large and Councilmembers are elected by district and serve staggered four-year terms with a limit of two consecutive terms. The City Council appoints the City Attorney and the City Manager.

With over 900 authorized staff positions and eight bargaining units, Santa Cruz is a full-service municipality. It operates four utilities including water, wastewater, stormwater, parking, and refuse collection/landfill operations, as well as a golf course. The City has a fire department with four stations, and a police department with 102 sworn positions. Library services are provided through a Joint Powers Authority agreement that includes the cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Scotts Valley as well as the County of Santa Cruz.

City operations in FY2026-27 are supported by a total budget of \$495 million, which includes a General Fund operating budget of \$170 million and Capital Investment Program budget of \$300 million.

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The HR Department is supported by a FY2026-27 budget of \$3 million and 15 team members who provide full-service programs and services to the City's eleven departments. HR service areas include recruitment and selection; labor relations; employee relations; benefits; leave administration; classification and compensation; professional development training; and workers compensation. Multi-year successor agreements are in place with six bargaining groups; negotiations with one union are expected to begin later this year.

Human Resources Mission

Attract, support, and grow a thriving and diverse workforce who deliver outstanding City services.

THE POSITION

The Assistant Director will join the Human Resources Department during an exciting period of growth and transformation. Working closely with the Director, this newly created position expands the department's executive leadership capacity to implement strategic initiatives, strengthen workforce governance, and build policies, programs, and procedures. The Assistant Director will help translate strategic priorities into sustainable systems and operational standards, ensuring the department is well positioned to meet the evolving needs of the City and its workforce.

The Assistant Director will manage the day-to-day activities of assigned human resources areas, develop short- and long-term goals, establish priorities, create and implement policies and programs, and oversee budgets and contracts. While the selected individual will supervise employees and lead functional areas, specific responsibilities will be determined based on their areas of expertise as well as departmental needs. Examples of priority areas and potential direct oversight responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Employee & Labor Relations
- Talent Acquisition and Workforce Strategy
- Classification and Compensation

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is a well-rounded public sector human resources leader who combines deep technical expertise with strong operational leadership and the ability to implement organizational change. This hands-on change agent will lead transformation initiatives that improve human resources operations through process evaluation, stakeholder engagement, change management, and continuous improvement. They are comfortable working in ambiguity and equally comfortable working with unions, coaching managers, redesigning business processes, implementing technology, and building the systems, policies, and organizations structure that allows HR to scale.

The ideal candidate thrives in a fast-paced environment, embraces continuous improvement, and has a demonstrated ability to solve organizational challenges through practical, sustainable solutions. This role requires exceptional communication, sound judgement and interpersonal, change, and conflict management skills in order to develop and mentor employees, foster teamwork and collaboration, implement new approaches and innovative ideas, and confidently navigate complex and sensitive situations.

Other Key Priorities

- Plan and implement learning management system and performance management system digitizing performance evaluations.
- Select and implement a case management system for use by Labor Relations.
- Lead legislative and regulatory affairs.

Qualified candidates will have five years of increasingly responsible professional government experience in the administration of a full-service HR program, including three years of administrative and supervisory experience and a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college in public or business administration, HR management, employee relations, industrial psychology, or related field; any combination of experience and education that provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for success in the position will be considered. Depth in labor relations will be considered favorably but is not required.

This is an exciting opportunity to help shape the future of Human Resources in Santa Cruz. The successful candidate will help build an integrated, responsive, and forward-looking Human Resources Department that supports employees, managers, executive leadership, and the community for years to come.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary range is \$152,604 - \$196,704. Placement within the range is dependent on qualifying experience. The city offers a competitive benefits package that includes, but is not limited to:

Retirement: California Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) Classic members 2% @ 60 formula (12% employee contribution). New to CalPERS 2% @ 62 (13.5% employee contribution).

Medical Plan: City pays up to 90% coverage depending on chosen plan.

Dental Plan: City paid for employee and family.

Vision Plan: City paid for employee and family.

Life Insurance: Group term life insurance is provided (\$25,000 policy).

Long term disability: City paid plan.

Vacation: Up to 20 days after six years of service (may be negotiated based on candidate's current accrual rate and total years of service).

Holidays: 12 eight-hour holidays and two four-hour holiday days per year.

Floating Holidays: 24 hours per year.

Sick Leave: 12 days per year.

Management Leave: 80 hours per year.

Management Benefit: \$1,300-\$1,500/year.

Longevity Pay: 2.5% of salary after 10 years of service.

Work Schedule: Some remote workdays may be available after successful completion of the probation period, based on business needs and work assignments, and will be determined in coordination with the Director.

Location: Work in a one-of-a-kind location! City Hall campus at 809 Center St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. Walk to the beach at lunch or take a quick stroll to the diverse options of eateries downtown and enjoy the community's laid-back, friendly vibe.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

The closing date for this recruitment is **11:59pm on Sunday, August 30, 2026.**

To be considered for this opportunity, upload a compelling cover letter, resume, and list of six professional references using the "Apply Now" feature at www.tbcrecruiting.com.



City of Santa Cruz maintains and promotes a working environment free from discrimination and harassment; and provides all current and prospective employees with equal opportunity in employment regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, medical condition, sex, gender, physical characteristics, marital status, age, sexual orientation, organizational affiliation or veteran status.

TB&CO.

Jennifer Curtis • 661.510.0076
TERI BLACK & COMPANY, LLC
www.tbcrecruiting.com

After the closing date, resumes will be screened against the criteria outlined in this brochure. Applicants with the most relevant qualifications will immediately be granted preliminary interviews by one of the recruiters. Candidates deemed most qualified will be invited to interview with Santa Cruz in October. Selection is anticipated shortly thereafter, following the completion of extensive background and reference checks on the top candidate. Please note that references will not be contacted until the end of the process and, at that time, will be done in close coordination with the candidate impacted.