

Alcala to be new mayor

By DIANE NOLAND

STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — Watsonville gets a new mayor Tuesday.

Expected to succeed Mayor Betty Bobeda is Councilman Al Alcala.

As mayor pro tem, Alcala is next in line for the office and will be nominated in the council's 7:30 p.m. session.

Alcala, owner of Alcala Insurance Agency and Cal-Mex Services, is a founder of the Latino Chamber of Commerce.

"It's a great honor," Alcala said. "I'll try to follow in the tradition of all the great mayors of Watsonville. I'll represent every constituent."

Since winning a District 1 seat on the council in Nov. 1991, Alcala has supported the 216-acre Riverside annexation project and the development of the Overlook Shopping Center near Ramsay Park. He has also supported social programs such as Loaves and Fishes food program for the poor and a tattoo-removal program for young people who have been involved in gangs.

Alcala ran unopposed for re-election Nov. 5, winning a second term.

Councilman Dennis Osmer, the

only remaining councilman who has not served as mayor, is expected to serve as mayor pro tem.

Bobeda served as mayor one year. First appointed to the council in 1991, she took the place of the late Johnny Kascmaryk and won election in 1993.

As mayor, Bobeda's priorities have been economic development, rejuvenating downtown and reducing violence. She went to Washington D.C. in July with the Watsonville Band, meeting with government officials on behalf of Watsonville.

In mid-January, Alcala said he will hold a "cafecito," a get-together with coffee and dessert in his new office.

"It will be open to the public from 7 to 8:30 (p.m.) to talk about problems and concerns and get to meet each other," he said. "That's not traditional but I have always wanted to do that — let (the people) know I'm there for them."



Alcala