



# Planning Chief







# San Bernardino County, California Planning Chief

**Join our dynamic team at San Bernardino County**, where innovation and positive changemaking are at the heart of everything we do! We’re on the lookout for an exceptional leader to join our Land Use Services Department. As the Planning Chief, you’ll drive operational excellence within the Department where you will have the opportunity to help shape the future of our county’s policies and services. The Department has an annual budget of \$47 million and a dedicated team of 262 employees in five divisions. The Planning Chief directs the Planning Division of the Land Use Services Department. This position is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Planning Division and reports to the Assistant Director of Land Use Services.

This is more than just a job, this is an opportunity to be part of something transformative. Our mission is clear: to create vibrant, sustainable communities while preserving our precious natural resources. We’re more than just planners — we’re stewards of the environment, builders of strong economies, and champions of community development. As a key member of our executive team, you’ll have the opportunity to shape the future of San Bernardino County. We’re looking for passionate, forward-thinking leaders who thrive on challenge and are committed to fostering a culture of excellence. Here, you’ll find endless opportunities for both professional and personal growth as we work together to lay the groundwork for a sustainable and prosperous future. If you’re ready to make a real difference and be part of something bigger, join us in shaping the future of San Bernardino County. Apply today, and let’s build a brighter tomorrow together!

## The Community

San Bernardino County has a beautiful natural environment with towering mountains, lush palm trees, and a colorful variety of desert plants. The surrounding landscape provides a plethora of recreational opportunities, from boating on the serene waters of Lake Arrowhead to hiking the arid expanses of the Mojave National Preserve, exploring the scenic trails of Big Bear, or taking in the striking views of Joshua Tree. Beyond its stunning beauty, the County is a hub of economic activity, with sectors ranging from logistics and manufacturing to healthcare and tourism. The County’s history is deeply rooted in the pioneering spirit of the American West, evident in its numerous historic sites, museums, and cultural landmarks. The County spans 20,105 square miles with 24 incorporated cities. The community’s 2.2 million residents are incredibly diverse.

## The County

San Bernardino County, the largest County in the contiguous United States by area, has 25,000+ full-time employees and manages an annual budget of approximately \$9.7 billion. It is comprised of 42 departments and agencies, which are staffed by dedicated public service professionals who provide a wide range of vital services. The County’s organizational culture is defined by four pillars: value, innovation, service, and vision. To learn more about the County, visit: [County Website](#)

### COUNTYWIDE VISION STATEMENT

#### *WE ENVISION*

A COMPLETE COUNTY THAT CAPITALIZES ON THE DIVERSITY OF ITS PEOPLE, ITS GEOGRAPHY, AND ITS ECONOMY TO CREATE A BROAD RANGE OF CHOICES FOR ITS RESIDENTS IN HOW THEY LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY.

A VIBRANT ECONOMY WITH A SKILLED WORKFORCE THAT ATTRACTS EMPLOYERS WHO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE COUNTY’S UNIQUE ADVANTAGES AND PROVIDE THE JOBS THAT CREATE COUNTYWIDE PROSPERITY.

A SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM OF HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION, COMMUNITY HEALTH, PUBLIC SAFETY, HOUSING, RETAIL, RECREATION, ARTS AND CULTURE, AND INFRASTRUCTURE, IN WHICH DEVELOPMENT COMPLEMENTS OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT.

A MODEL COMMUNITY WHICH IS GOVERNED IN AN OPEN AND ETHICAL MANNER, WHERE GREAT IDEAS ARE REPLICATED AND BROUGHT TO SCALE, AND ALL SECTORS WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO REACH SHARED GOALS.

FROM OUR VALLEYS, ACROSS OUR MOUNTAINS, AND INTO OUR DESERTS, WE ENVISION A COUNTY THAT IS A DESTINATION FOR VISITORS AND A HOME FOR ANYONE SEEKING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND THE BEST LIFE HAS TO OFFER.



# The Land Use Services Department

The Land Use Services Department consists of five divisions, including Planning (Current and Long-Range), Building and Safety, Land Development, Code Enforcement, and Administration. The Department's 262 staff are dedicated to ensuring a balance in the areas of housing, business, and recreational needs for the diverse cultures and communities of San Bernardino County! This is accomplished through comprehensive regional planning and enforcement of building standards, land uses, and environmental impacts. The Department uses their approximately \$47 million annual budget to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to the County.

**To learn more about the Land Use Services Department visit:**  
**[Land Use Services – San Bernardino County](#)**

## The Position

San Bernardino County seeks top talent to join the organization at a transformative time. With the promise of challenge, exploration and adventure, individuals who thrive in a team based, fast-paced environment with a desire to address the most complex issues facing local government today are encouraged to apply. This critical leadership role will be involved in integrating various county services into a unified one-stop permit center. The County is looking for an experienced professional who possesses a passion for community building, public service, and a desire to make a meaningful impact. The role involves organizational strategy and aligning financial resources with strategic objectives. The Planning Chief will also demonstrate a commitment to community engagement and problem-solving. This role requires someone who can anticipate issues, think critically, and adapt to changing circumstances, yet act with urgency to resolve emerging issues.

Key priorities for the role include:

- » Program development.
- » Coach, mentor, and prepare staff to become leaders in the organization.
- » Identify and balance competing priorities and perspectives from the community and special interest groups.
- » Develop and implement process improvements and efficiencies.

### Planning Chief

The Planning Chief will report to the Assistant Director of Land Use Services and will have oversight of the Department's Planning Division, which includes 42 staff, including seven direct reports, and a budget of \$9.6 million. This role will lead the Department's efforts in urban and regional planning and development. This entails overseeing planning services, permit reviews, and stakeholder engagement related to land use and development projects. The Planning Chief is deeply involved in regulatory compliance, such as understanding CEQA and navigating the complexities of land-use policy and jobs housing balance. They are responsible for balancing the needs of various communities while adhering to legal requirements and promoting sustainable development practices. The ideal candidate for this role is a strong project manager with a high attention to detail and the ability to break down barriers, build consensus, ensure collaboration, and resolve complex issues. They will also be knowledgeable about compliance and enthusiastic about policy development, keeping the big picture in mind while artfully and functionally threading services to enhance communications and responsiveness across divisions. This is an Unclassified position in the County service. Incumbents in Unclassified positions serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority and do not attain regular status.

## The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for this role is a motivational leader who inspires excellence through a strong commitment to staff development, fostering growth, engagement, and high-performing teams; a strong project manager with a high attention to detail and the ability to break down barriers, build consensus, ensure collaboration, and resolve complex issues. They will also be knowledgeable about compliance and enthusiastic about policy development, keeping the big picture in mind while artfully and functionally threading services to enhance communications and responsiveness across divisions.





# Key Attributes

## Strategic Planning & Innovation

- » Brings experience with long-range planning, including leadership over complex, community-wide initiatives.
- » Has led innovative planning projects—including mixed-use, housing, and industrial developments—across urban, suburban, resort, and rural communities.
- » Understands and interprets planning frameworks: General Plan Guidelines, CEQA, Subdivision Map Act, Community Plans, and zoning codes.
- » Champions forward-thinking improvements in land use, development code updates, and streamlined permit processes.

## Leadership & Team Development

- » Leads and develops Principal Planners and multidisciplinary teams; ensures projects are completed on time and aligned with goals.
- » Creates a culture of accountability, empowerment, and results—without micromanaging.
- » Offers mentorship and leadership development, with a proactive mindset and the ability to anticipate challenges.
- » Balances technical oversight with emotional intelligence.

## Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement

- » Skilled collaborator and consensus builder across departments (fire, environmental health, public works, etc.) and with external stakeholders.
- » Experienced in community engagement and responsive to public, applicants, and agency concerns.
- » Navigates political and interagency dynamics with diplomacy and ethical integrity.

## Operational Excellence & Process Improvement

- » Leads continuous improvement in development services—from workflows and permitting to customer service and digital modernization.
- » Prioritizes efficiency and effectiveness: reducing processing time, optimizing resources, and enhancing service delivery standards.
- » Makes data-informed decisions to raise the quality of development support operations.

## Project & Program Management

- » Leads high-profile, cross-functional projects—from concept through implementation.
- » Drives progress through strategic planning, resource allocation, and coordination with boards and commissions.
- » Delivers clear, well-structured presentations and reports to governing bodies and public forums.

# Minimum Requirements

The selected candidate must possess the following qualifications or an equivalent combination of education and experience to successfully perform the essential functions of the position:

**Education:** Bachelor's Degree in planning, urban design, business/public administration, geography, or a closely related field. Master's degree preferred.

**Experience:** Seven years supporting active jurisdiction or practice in policy, permitting, and environmental services with a minimum of three years of leadership experience supervising or managing a planning department, division, team, or program. Demonstrated proficiency in verbal and written communication, including public speaking and delivering engaging presentations. Proven ability to collaborate effectively with both internal and external stakeholders.

Preference given to candidates with experience working with CEQA or other similar state environmental regulations.

**Certifications:** Certification with the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is encouraged.





# Salary and Benefits

The salary range for this position is **\$136,406 – \$195,478** annually, dependent on experience and qualifications.

The County also offers an alternative [Modified Benefit Option](#) (MBO) that provides a wage differential of 4% above the base salary rate (up to \$203,296 annually DOQ) with a complementing modified leaves package and benefits, including:

- » Use of increased pay rate to calculate County contributions to Retirement Medical Trust (RMT), 401(k), and 457(b) plans, leaves cash outs, and retirement contribution rates.
- » Flexible Paid Time Off (PTO) with cash out options.

## Leaves Package

- » 14 paid holidays plus one additional paid floating holiday with the Traditional Benefits Package.
- » 80 hours of administrative leave with a cash-out option.
- » Traditional Leave Package with up to 160 hours of vacation accruals (based on service hours) with cash out option and paid sick leave with unlimited accrual.
- » Modified Benefits Package with up to 200 hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) accruals annually (based on service hours) with an annual cash out option of up to 160 hours.

## Medical (Exempt Level C Benefit Package)

- » Medical and Dental Insurance for employees and eligible family members with premium subsidies.
- » Vision Insurance for employees and eligible family members.

## Retirement

- » County pension ([www.sbcera.org](http://www.sbcera.org)) vested after five years of service.
- » Retirement Reciprocity with CalPERS, CalSTRS, and 1937 Act plans.
- » 401(k) Defined Contribution Plan with 2 for 1 match up to 8% of the base salary.
- » 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan with County contribution 0.5 times Employee contribution, up to 0.5%.
- » Retirement Medical Trust (RMT) with County contribution (based on service hours).

## Additional Benefits

- » Tuition Loan Repayment up to \$10,000 for eligible loans.
- » County paid basic life insurance with voluntary supplemental life insurance options including accidental death and dismemberment.
- » County paid short-term and long-term disability benefits.

To explore our comprehensive benefits and services, visit the [Employee Benefits page](#).

## Application and Selection Procedure

To be considered for this exceptional career opportunity, submit your resume, cover letter, and a list of six work-related references (two supervisors, two direct reports, and two colleagues, who will ***not*** be contacted until final stages and only with prior permission of the candidate) by **August 4, 2025**. Resumes should reflect years ***and*** months of employment, beginning/ending dates, as well as the size of staff and budgets you have managed.

Please go to our website to submit your application: <https://www.cpshr.us/recruitment/2494>.

For additional information about this position, please contact:

**CPS HR CONSULTING**  
*Your Trusted HR Advisor For 40 Years*

### Erich WonSavage

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Resumes will be screened in relation to the criteria outlined in this brochure. Candidates deemed to have the most relevant qualifications will be invited to interview with the consultant. CPS HR Consulting will report the results to San Bernardino County. The County will then select candidates to be interviewed by a panel. A final interview process may be scheduled for selected candidates along with extensive reference and background checks.