



THE SOUND OF *Something Better*

# PLANNING DIRECTOR



Bakersfield, CA



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# The Opportunity

This is an exceptional opportunity for an experienced, dynamic, and forward-thinking leader to shape the future of the City of Bakersfield, a thriving community committed to sustainable strategic growth. The

Planning Director will play an instrumental role in the continued evolution of this vibrant metropolitan community, which enjoys big-city services while maintaining a small-town feel.

A critical component in shaping the future will be the completion of the City's comprehensive 2045 General Plan and the associated 6th Cycle Housing Element. The 2045 RISE campaign guides the preparation of these two pivotal planning tools, which will serve as integrated components in shaping the mission of the Planning Division and the City for the next 20 years.





## The Region

With a population of approximately 414,000 residents, Bakersfield is the ninth largest city in California, ranked between Oakland and Anaheim. Uniquely placed geographically, the successful candidate will be no more than a couple of hours drive from all things California, whether that's Disneyland, the Pacific Ocean, Sequoia's Big Trees and Yosemite's waterfalls, or the thrill of skiing at Mammoth Mountain. Right here at home, the 30-mile paved Kern River Parkway Trail winds through preserved riparian habitat where you might see rabbits, roadrunners, and other protected wildlife. Sunny year round, Bakersfield does get hot in the summer, but this region's Mediterranean climate provides for an all-seasons lifestyle. This position will encourage the City to focus on providing exemplary service to the department's wide range of clients, facilitating streamlined development processes, capitalizing on the department's new one-stop on-line electronic planning and permitting portal, and ensuring the City will continue to grow all segments of the economy. Bakersfield is the nation's top city for family activities. For more information on things to do in Bakersfield, please visit The Visit Bakersfield Website.



## THE ORGANIZATION

The City of Bakersfield is a full-service city, with thirteen departments, including police and fire. The City of Bakersfield operates under the Council-Manager form of government which vests authority in an elected City Council which, in turn, hires an appointed executive. The City Council is composed of seven members elected from the seven wards of the City on a nonpartisan basis to serve overlapping four-year terms. The Mayor is elected at-large to serve a four-year term as presiding officer at City Council meetings and as the official head of the City for legislative and ceremonial purposes. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council and serves at the pleasure of that body. The Planning Director is a civil service position. The City Council is the City's legislative and policy-making body. Acting as a whole, the City Council is responsible for passing ordinances and orders necessary for governing the City, as well as for setting the direction of City policy. The City Manager, with the help of the staff, provides the City Council with the information needed to fulfill its policy-making role.







## THE POSITION

Reporting to the Development Services Director, this position oversees all activities of the Planning Division. This Division is responsible for a wide range of planning initiatives, including land use, zoning, and environmental review.

This position currently oversees 17 department employees and directly supervises the Assistant Planning Director. The Fiscal Year 2024/25 budget for the Development Services Department is approximately \$18.4 million dollars.

### **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PLANNING DIRECTOR DUTIES INCLUDE:**

- Plan, organize, direct, and review the activities and operations of the Planning Division to ensure attainment of planning program goals and objectives.
- Communicate complex, technical planning issues and processes to internal and external stakeholders, City officials, governing boards, staff, and the public
- Develop and implement assigned work activities, policies/procedures, projects, and programs; participate in the forecasting of funds and administer approved budget.
- Knowledge and implement federal, state and local laws, ordinances and codes pertaining to a wide variety of planning topics.
- Represent the Division to outside agencies and organizations; participate in the outside community and professional groups and committees; provide ongoing technical assistance, as necessary
- Develop and sustain professional partnerships with stakeholders, governing boards, community members, elected officials, advocacy groups, the public, and the media.

### **PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW PLANNING DIRECTOR INCLUDE:**

- Oversee the current comprehensive General Plan update which began in 2023.
- Oversee the current 6th cycle Housing Element update (currently submitted for review by HCD)
- Review current processes and procedures in an effort to streamline the development process, including recommendations of additional resources.
- Oversee the development of an HCP/NCCP for our community



## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is an accomplished strategic leader and creative problem solver who can see the big picture and possesses an unwavering commitment to public service, their employees, colleagues, the organization, and the community. The successful candidate will be someone who is enthusiastic about the opportunity and challenges of overseeing the Planning Division within the Development Services Department. The Planning Director must be a strong decision maker who is committed to their decisions, exhibiting a firm yet adaptable approach to planning initiatives.

### **ADDITIONAL DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES INCLUDE:**

- Superior written and verbal communication and presentation skills
- Strong background/knowledge in the California Environmental Quality Act and associated issues, including experience in the preparation of Environmental Impact Reports and participation in litigation.
- Solid understanding of local and state planning regulations and building codes, along with their applicability and relevance to various projects.
- Knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements related to the housing crisis.
- Knowledge of code enforcement regulations and practices, particularly in relation to homelessness response.
- Finally, the ideal candidate will have demonstrated dedication to the delivery of excellence through their prior work experience.





## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor 's Degree in Public or Business Administration, City or Regional Planning, Urban Planning, or a related field; **AND**
- Five (5) years of professional planning experience in a governmental agency; **AND**
- Two (2) years of supervisory experience;
- Additional post-graduate education in the above-mentioned areas may be substituted for the planning experience on a year-for-year basis to a maximum of two (2) years;
- A Master's degree will be considered equivalent to two (2) years of the required experience.

## COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The annual salary range for the Planning Director is \$137,458.88 - \$167,086.40. Starting salary will be dependent upon experience. Please note:

The City offers a competitive benefit package including CalPERS retirement depending on current status in CalPERS or reciprocal public pension program. For more information on employee retirement, visit the City's Human Resources website: [City of Bakersfield Retirement](#)

For more information on employee benefits, visit the City's benefits website: [City of Bakersfield Benefits](#)

## Application & Selection

This position will accept applications from February 14th, 2025 and will run continuously until a sufficient number of qualified applicants have been received. First application review will take place on March 10th, 2025. Please visit [City Job Listings](#) to apply.

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 an oral interview with City Human Resources.