



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

CHIEF, DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS – LAND DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Land Development Division

Anticipated Hiring Range: \$169,000 - \$181,000 Annually
Excellent Benefits

SanDiegoCounty.gov



The Position

The County of San Diego is seeking a dynamic, independent, and innovative leader to fill a vacancy for **Chief, Departmental Operations-Land Development Division**. This unclassified management level position is in Planning & Development Services (PDS) and will report to PDS executive management.

The Chief provides strategic leadership and operational oversight for all land management functions within the department. This position is responsible for directing and coordinating all Land Development permitting activities, including the review and approval of grading permits, improvement plans, and Final and Parcel Maps. The Chief serves as a key advisor to executive leadership and represents the department in high level discussions with community partners, government agencies, and stakeholders. The position plays a pivotal role in protecting natural resources, enhancing community spaces, and guiding responsible land governance. Through innovative leadership and strategic direction, this position strengthens the department's ability to deliver lasting value to the public and future generations.

Key Responsibilities include:

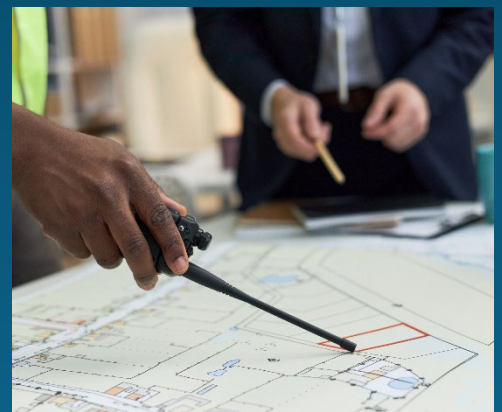
- Oversees permitting, regulatory compliance, environmental monitoring, and alignment with local, state, and federal requirements.
- Manages complex projects and multi-disciplinary teams, ensuring performance, quality, and accountability.
- Collaborates with internal divisions, local jurisdictions, tribal governments, and community organizations to advance shared goals.
- Provides expert guidance to executive leadership on land use issues, emerging trends, risks, and opportunities.
- Directs budget development, resource allocation, and operational efficiencies within assigned programs.
- Represents the department in public meetings, stakeholder forums, interagency workgroups, and policy discussions.
- Champions innovation, data driven decision-making, and continuous improvement across all land development functions.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate excels in a dynamic, high visibility environment and brings wide-ranging experience in land development operations, permitting, regulatory compliance, and complex project delivery. This leader demonstrates strong skills in negotiating, partnership development, and results driven performance management. The ideal candidate has a solid background in land use planning, environmental programs, and resource stewardship, and is adept at navigating diverse stakeholder interests while advancing sustainable, practical solutions. A proven ability to build relationships, foster collaboration, and consistently deliver outcomes is essential.

The ideal candidate will also possess a professional history that demonstrates the following leadership attributes and competencies:

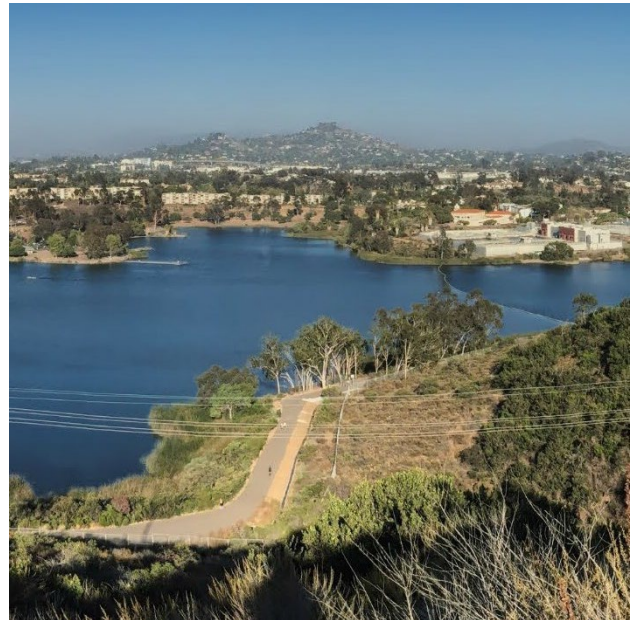
- Proven leadership experience in land development operations, environmental review, permitting, or related fields.
- Strong planning and organizational management capabilities.
- Knowledge of land-use laws, environmental regulations, permitting processes, and conservation practices.
- Skilled in building partnerships, navigating complex stakeholder environments, and communicating with diverse audiences.
- Ability to lead multidisciplinary teams and manage high impact projects.
- Commitment to sustainability, public stewardship, and collaborative problem-solving.



The Department

Planning & Development Services strives to balance community, economic, and environmental interests to ensure the highest quality of life for the public in the unincorporated region of San Diego county.

We create and implement balanced land use plans, such as the general plan, that protect natural resources and provide opportunities for housing for all. We engage with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that housing and economic development, the environment, and equity are at the forefront of everything we do, and that our work is tailored to the needs of our communities. The PDS team protects our communities by making sure that new development and buildings are engineered and constructed in a way that is safe and resilient in our changing world. PDS is in the field every day, working hand in hand with residents to help them meet the standards that keep our neighborhoods and natural areas healthy and beautiful.



PDS is responsible for long-range land use planning, including building, code compliance, County of San Diego's General Plan and Community Plans, Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Zoning Ordinance. The department evaluates land use projects for regulatory compliance, sustainability, and environmental impacts. PDS also provides review, permit, inspection, and code compliance services throughout the unincorporated county to ensure healthy, safe, and thriving communities. PDS advises the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission on all land use projects, policies, and programs in the unincorporated county.

PDS has eight major divisions:

- Building Services
- Support Services
- Sustainability Planning
- Policy, Outreach and Data
- Project Planning
- Code Compliance
- Land Development (Final Engineering)
- Long Range Planning

Please visit [Planning & Development Services](#) for more information.

LAND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The Land Development Division provides engineering and review services for construction and development projects throughout the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. The Division guides private and public development through technical review, permitting, and regulatory coordination to ensure projects meet County standards for safety, environmental protection, stormwater management, and infrastructure design. By partnering with developers, community groups, and other agencies, the Division supports well-planned growth, protects natural resources, and helps deliver high-quality development that enhances the region's communities and preserves the character of the unincorporated area.



Work Where You Play!

From our world-class beaches to almost year-round sunny weather, the County of San Diego offers our residents much more than sun and waves. Downtown you can watch a Padres game at Petco Park or enjoy one of the fine-dining restaurants in the Gaslamp Quarter.

Heading east you will eventually find mountains, that may be covered in snow depending on the time of year. Head south and you will start to truly see the diversity in both geography and cultures. And head west, you will run into over 70+ miles of pristine coastline.

San Diego County Facts:

- 3,359,630 (2023 Est. Population)
- 4,526 Square Miles
- 70 Miles of Coastline
- 18 Incorporated Cities

San Diego Weather Averages:

- Average Temperature: 72°f
- High Temperature: 73°f
- Low Temperature: 58°f
- Average Rainfall: 10.4 Inches



The County of San Diego and its employees embrace the vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all. Our values include: integrity, equity, access, belonging, excellence, and sustainability. Each of which are infused throughout our operations. While also embracing a mission of strengthening our communities with innovative, inclusive, and data driven services through a skilled and supported workforce. Click the following links to learn more about our [Strategic Plan](#) and our [Annual Report](#). At the County of San Diego, we believe that a government of the people and for the people works best *with* the people. By working together, we create meaningful opportunities, foster inclusive growth, and build a stronger future for everyone.



The County of San Diego is committed to valuing diversity and practicing inclusion because our diverse workforce is our greatest asset, and our customers are our number one priority.

Minimum Qualifications

Applicants must possess the following:

Five years of experience that demonstrates the ability to perform the essential functions of the classification which must include two years of management or supervision; AND a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, or certified equivalency for foreign studies.

OR, a combination of experience and/or education as stated above.

Notes: A master's or doctoral degree from an accredited U.S. college or university, or a certified foreign studies equivalency, may substitute for up to one (1) year of the required experience.

Qualifying experience will include CAO Group Analyst or Project Manager experience that involves leading projects.

Salary & Benefits

Compensation

The anticipated hiring range is \$169,000 - \$181,000 annually.

Salary placement for this position is dependent upon the qualifications of the successful candidate. Salary reviews are performance-based and goal oriented.

Benefits

- Fifteen days of paid vacation, thirteen days of paid sick leave, fourteen paid holidays, ten days of executive time off, and 3 days of paid emergency child and /or older adult leave per year
- Medical, dental, and vision insurance plans
- Disability Insurance, Life Insurance, and Accidental Death/Dismemberment Insurance
- Flexible Management Benefit Package – a monthly credit may be used to select benefits from a group of options
- Defined benefit retirement program
- Reciprocity with other governmental retirement systems may be granted; for further information, visit the website for the [San Diego County Employees Retirement Association](#)
- Deferred Compensation Program 457 and 401(a) plans
- May be eligible for a relocation allowance up to \$15,000
- View the detailed Benefit Plan for [Unclassified Management \(UCL\)](#)



How to Apply

Application Process And Recruitment Schedule

1. Complete the online application at www.sandiegocounty.gov/hr select Current Job Postings, Job Number 26092707U
2. Attach your résumé and cover letter.
3. Attach a copy of college degree, final transcript, diploma, or completion letter*.
4. Complete Supplemental Questionnaire with your application.

*Note: If qualifying with a letter of completion, a copy of your degree or final transcript must be submitted at time of appointment.

Key Dates:

- Interviews: Week of September 14, 2026
- Expected Start date: November 2026

Special Notes

The Department of Human Resources removes personally identifiable information from all recruitments. This practice, called Blind Applicant Screening, hides a candidate's personal information that could influence or bias a hiring decision. Personal information includes name, phone number, address, gender, age and race. This process helps contribute to a fair and equitable selection process leading to a more diverse and inclusive workforce. The most highly qualified candidates, based on the evaluation results, will be referred for an interview. Be sure to include your experience in meeting the minimum requirements in both the Work Experience section and the Supplemental Questionnaire section of the Application. Resumes will not be accepted in lieu of the application Work History and/or supplemental questionnaire.



Contact Information

You may direct any questions regarding the application and selection process to Jorge Puente, Executive Recruiter, at Jorge.Puente@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Questions regarding the position or department should be directed to Lydia Lopez, Human Resources Services Manager, at Lydia.Lopez@sdcounty.ca.gov.



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