



CITY OF  
**LA MESA**  
*JEWEL of the HILLS*



# Assistant Community Development Director





## OUR COMMUNITY

Founded in 1912 and centrally located in the rolling hills of San Diego County with a population of approximately 60,000, La Mesa is known as the *Jewel of the Hills*. A near perfect climate, tree-lined streets, walkable neighborhoods, easy access to retail and commercial areas, and a quaint Downtown Village make La Mesa a highly desirable community in which to live and work. There is more to the *Jewel of the Hills* than just geography. It's about the myriad of people who have called La Mesa home for the last 100 years whom we honor for their extraordinary accomplishments as well as their devotion to the community. Spanning nine square miles, the City's increasing popularity is not going unnoticed. Niche's 2023 Best Places ranks La Mesa as one of the best suburbs for young professionals in California and one of best and most diverse places to live in the San Diego area.

La Mesa is also a much sought-after business location due to its regional centrality and superior transportation network that includes three major freeways and two trolley lines, plus quick and easy access to a major international airport. The City is home to more than 5,000 businesses representing a wide array of industries with Sharp-Grossmont Hospital, the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, Walmart (two locations), Kaiser Permanente, and Costco being the largest employers. A main attraction for many La Mesans is the ability to live, work, shop and play in the community in which they live. The Downtown Village serves as the historic center of the community and is filled with one-of-a-kind retail shops, vintage stores, and dining options, while also being a gathering place for many civic events and celebrations including a weekly [farmers market](#), summertime classic [car shows](#) and annual [Oktoberfest](#) which is one of the largest in the west. Also, within city limits, [Grossmont Center](#) serves as a regional dining, shopping and entertainment hub with over a million square feet of space.

The community's amenities support a healthy living lifestyle. Fifteen beautiful municipal parks are located within La Mesa's borders as are award winning urban trails, jogging paths, and other recreational facilities including a municipal pool and sports complex.

La Mesa is served by two school districts. The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District operates most of the elementary and middle schools while Helix Charter High School is part of the Grossmont Union High School District. There are also numerous private schools in the area. Local higher education options do not get any better with the University of California San Diego, San Diego State University and the University of San Diego all in close proximity. In addition, several community colleges serve the region.

## CITY GOVERNANCE

La Mesa is a general law city which uses a council-manager system of government with a directly elected mayor. The city council consists of a mayor and four councilmembers, all of whom are elected from the city at large and serve four-year terms. La Mesa employs a Council-Manager form of government. In this arrangement, the council is responsible for determining policy, and the City Manager ensures that such policy is implemented. The City Council appoints the City Manager and City Attorney, as well as a full complement of Boards and Commissions.

In addition to the Police Department and offices of the City Manager and City Clerk, other city departments include Community Development, Community Services, Finance, Fire and Public Works. The City has 272 full-time budgeted employees. The 2023-2024 budget is \$151,804,620.

**Mission:** Our mission is to reliably deliver high-quality public services that enhance the quality of life for all.

**Organizational Values:** Welcoming, Accessibility, Accountability, Excellent Customer Service, Integrity

### City of La Mesa Five-Year Goals

Maintain a community where residents and visitors feel safe.

Ensure a strong financial outlook through careful planning, sustainable service levels, and fiscal sustainability.

Promote a high quality of life that current and future generations can afford to call home.

Invest in infrastructure to serve the needs of the community.

Nurture an organizational culture where employees are recognized for the delivery of high-quality services to the community.

To learn more about the City of La Mesa, go to:  
<https://www.cityoflamesa.us>

## THE DEPARTMENT

The Community Development Department is responsible for land development programs and services to help create a safe, healthy, and economically viable community. These programs provide guidance for new development and property maintenance as well as a long-term vision for the City contained in the General Plan. Divisions include Building, Housing, Planning, Code Compliance, and Engineering which provide various services such as building permits, environmental review, housing programs, redevelopment activities, plan review, code inspection, and planning and zoning review. Currently there are 14 positions in the department. .

## THE POSITION

This position assists the Director in planning, directing, managing, and overseeing the functions, programs, and operations of the Community Development Department including planning, building, code compliance, and administrative staff; including supervision of the work of department

and contracted staff in the performance of complex and advanced professional duties and responsibilities supporting the City's current and advanced planning functions. Key areas of focus for the Assistant Community Development Director include current and long-range planning, housing (including state mandated RHNA requirements), research and data review, working with key stakeholders such as SANDAG and LAFCO, support of economic development, code compliance, building permits, and operations.

### Responsibilities:

- Oversee the provision of Community Development Department service and activities including managing permit processing and development review procedures, staff representation for advisory Boards and Commissions and City Council, preparing and presenting high-level reports and other necessary correspondence; review and recommend changes to procedures to reflect local policies and changes in State regulations.
- Oversee staff involved in the Community Development Department; plan and organize multiple tasks and assignments; select, train, assign, evaluate, and discipline subordinate staff.
- Manage and participate in the development and implementation of goals, objectives, policies, and priorities for assigned programs; recommends and administers policies and procedures.
- Assist in the preparation and monitoring of the Community Development Department budget; participate in the forecast of funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies.
- Direct, coordinate and review the work plan for assigned professional planning services and activities; assign work activities and projects; monitor work flow; review and evaluate work products, methods and procedures; monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures; recommend appropriate services and staffing levels; meet with staff to identify and resolve problems.
- Administer local zoning, subdivision, code enforcement and land use and development regulations for the City, including interpretation and application of local ordinances and development of implementation policies and procedures.
- Coordinate development review and permit processing procedures with other City departments and governmental agencies in accordance with local, State and Federal requirements.
- Communicate effectively and serve as the liaison with other staff, departments, the public, outside agencies, the business and development communities, Boards, Commissions, and City Council; with other divisions, departments and outside agencies; promote and maintain effective business relationships with the housing and development community; negotiate and resolve sensitive and controversial issues.
- May direct and oversee the development and implementation of public outreach activities; oversee and participate in a variety of public relations, outreach, and educational work related to the Community Development Department and its services and activities.
- May participate and/or manage negotiations and agreements for property development.
- May participate in contract administration, oversight, direct, and accountability for the use of professional services needed to support staff and projects including project scoping, selection, contract development, and implementation in accordance with City policies and procedures.
- Read and understand complex federal, state, and county laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines; analyze complex policy related to economic development and analyses, redevelopment, financial analyses, and/or housing issues; prepare and implement related studies and plans.
- Perform complex advanced planning work and manage long-term special project assignments in the Department.
- Prepare and administer revisions to planning and zoning regulations; analyze and recommend action on all types of development entitlement and other applications, including but not limited to subdivisions, zone changes, zoning and general plan amendments, specific plans, planned developments, variances, and conditional use permits; administer and enforce zoning and planning regulations.
- Prepare and review environmental impact reports or initial studies; manage contracts for preparation of environmental studies by consultants; supervise long-term environmental planning functions.
- Prepare official population estimates and projections, housing statistics and economic studies; maintain basic information and statistical data bases for the City; report such data on housing and population to State and Federal agencies as required for the City.
- May represent the City on regional advisory boards and committees involving multi-agency issues such as regional growth and environmental management.
- Attend and participate in professional group meetings; stay abreast of new trends and innovations in current and advanced planning, economic development, redevelopment.
- Respond to and resolve difficult and sensitive citizen inquiries and complaints.
- Perform related duties as assigned.





## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The new Assistant Community Development Director will have exceptional management, interpersonal, and communication skills, with a hands-on and proactive approach to addressing a broad range of urban planning and development related challenges. The ideal candidate will be a positive and collaborative leader with effective decision-making skills who will focus on what is best for La Mesa's community today and in the future. A passion for local government and a strong desire to make a positive impact on this community is a must. As this is a fast-paced and busy working environment, the selected candidate should be even-keeled and able to exercise patience and a supportive management style, with the ability to adapt to changing priorities. The qualified candidate will inspire and empower motivated and solid staff, as well as be an accomplished manager to serve as a model for La Mesa's workforce. The successful candidate will demonstrate and encourage teamwork and collaboration to ensure high performance and quality project deliverables. This position requires a leader who is willing to enthusiastically roll up his/her sleeves and be a working manager. A proven track record of building and maintaining positive working relationships and consistent communication throughout all organizational levels is required.

It will be very important that the new Assistant Director have a commitment to excellent customer and public service. This is an exciting growth opportunity to join a hardworking and successful department with an experienced Director known for positive mentorship, and a stable long-tenured City Manager who provide excellent leadership that promotes empowerment and autonomy.

### Key Attributes and Characteristics

- Exceptional leadership skills.
- Outstanding character, integrity, and professionalism.
- Flexible and innovative in presenting solutions and strategies.
- Strong business acumen with the ability to work effectively with the business and development community as well as community partners and stakeholders.
- Strong personnel management and a motivational leadership style; able to delegate authority and responsibility while promoting individual accountability and high performance.
- Extensive knowledge of current trends and best practices that impact and influence all aspects of planning and economic development.
- Ability to clearly explain complex issues to a wide variety of constituents.
- Calm under pressure and an active listener, possessing a positive attitude and a good sense of humor.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major work in urban or regional planning, architecture, public administration, or a related field considered useful in urban planning, redevelopment, and building codes administration.
- A Master's degree in a related field, and American Institute of Certified Planners Certification (AICP) are strongly desired.
- A minimum of five (5) years of progressive, increasingly responsible experience in municipal planning, building, architecture, engineering or construction technology.
- A minimum of two (2) years of administrative and supervisory responsibility at the local government level.
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) experience is strongly desired.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

**The salary range for the Assistant Community Development Director is \$135,200 - \$164,340, commensurate with the candidate's experience and qualifications. A 3.5% salary increase is scheduled for July 1, 2024.**

**In addition to a competitive salary, the City offers an attractive compensation and benefit package that includes:**

- **Retirement** – Participation in the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS). If you were hired before December 31, 2012 2.5% @ 55 (8% employee contribution plus 1% cost sharing) 1 Year final compensation formula. If you were hired on or after January 1, 2013 2% @ 62 (7% employee contribution) 3 Years final compensation formula.
- **Cafeteria Benefits Plan** – City contributions for the purchase of health, dental and vision benefits for employee and eligible dependents. Monthly city contributions: Employee only \$754.72; Employee + 1 dependent \$1,294.32; Employee + 2 or more dependents \$1,694.58.
- **Vacation** – Vacation accumulation begins on the first day of employment. Employees earn: 0-60 Months of Service, 80 hours; 61-120, months 120 hours; over 120, 160 vacation hours.
- **Vacation Buy Back** – Management employees may sell back anywhere from 40 to 80 hours of vacation in December of each year, based on their number of years of service.



- **Sick Leave** – Earned at the rate of 3.692 hours per pay period (96 hours per year).
- **Sick Leave Conversion** – Management employees may convert a portion (above 192 hours) of accumulated sick leave to an equal amount of vacation or pay, based on formula.
- **Holidays** – The City currently observes 14 paid holidays, that includes three floating holidays annually (Admission Day, Cesar Chavez’s Birthday, and Presidents Day).
- **Administrative Leave** – 64 hours per calendar year (use or lose).
- **Mobility Allowance** – \$250 per month (\$0 if issued a City vehicle).
- **Technology Allowance** – \$60 per month.
- **Deferred Compensation** - City employees have the opportunity to build their retirement savings and reduce taxable income by participating in the City’s Section 457 deferred compensation program or the post- tax 457 Roth deferred compensation program. The City’s plan is administered by the ICMA Retirement Corporation. Participation is handled through payroll deduction. The City does not make any contributions to this plan.
- **Social Security** – The City participates in Social Security.

To view additional benefits, please go to: <https://www.cityoflamesa.us/DocumentCenter/View/20483/Management-Benefits-November-Rev-Mar-2023>

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

The final filing date is Friday, April 5, 2024.

To be considered, please submit a resume, cover letter, and five work-related references (who will not be contacted in the early stages of the recruitment) to: <https://koffassociates.com/la-mesa-asst-comm-dev-dir/>

Resumes should reflect years and months of positions held.

For additional information, please contact:



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Website: <https://koffassociates.com/>

Resumes will be screened based on the criteria outlined in this brochure. Candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be given preliminary interviews by the consultant. Koff & Associates will report the results to the City. The City will then select candidates to participate in City interviews. Extensive reference and background checks will be completed on the selected candidate.

