City of Thousand Oaks

CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS

Planning Division Manager



RAFTELIS







The Position

The City of Thousand Oaks Community Development Department is seeking an experienced, collaborative, solutions-oriented leader to serve as its next Planning Division Manager. Operating under administrative direction, the Planning Division Manager is a division head responsible for planning, organizing, and managing the activities, major programs, services, and operations of the Planning Division within the Community Development Department. This position oversees advanced planning, current planning, and housing and redevelopment, while providing highly responsible and complex administrative support to the Community Development Director.

The Planning Division Manager provides strategic leadership and oversight of the City's current and long-range planning functions, guiding the development and implementation of plans, policies, and programs that advance the City's vision and priorities. The Manager oversees a broad range of planning activities, including land use, zoning, annexation, open space management, environmental review, and related regulatory initiatives. This role also plays a key part in developing and updating City ordinances and ensuring the effective administration and enforcement of zoning, housing, and related municipal codes.

A central responsibility of the position is managing complex planning projects and initiatives, from initial concept through implementation. The Manager establishes project priorities, allocates resources, develops schedules, and monitors performance to ensure projects are completed efficiently, within budget, and in alignment with City objectives. The position requires strong analytical skills, sound judgment, and the ability to navigate competing priorities while maintaining a high standard of service delivery.

The Planning Division Manager also provides leadership and direction to division staff, fostering a collaborative, accountable, and high-performing team. Responsibilities include workforce planning, staff development, budget preparation and administration, resource allocation, and continuous improvement of divisional operations. Working closely with City leadership, the Planning Commission, and other stakeholders, the Manager ensures the timely implementation of City Council priorities and Planning Commission initiatives while providing thoughtful guidance on complex and often sensitive planning matters.

The successful Manager will be a trusted advisor and effective problem-solver who brings a solutions-oriented approach to addressing community concerns, resolving challenging development issues, and balancing regulatory requirements with the City's long-term goals. Through strong partnerships, clear communication, and sound decision-making, this individual will help advance thoughtful, sustainable development and enhance the quality of life for the community.

Priorities

- Guide General Plan Implementation: Support the ongoing implementation of the City's 2045 General Plan, translating its long-term vision into actionable priorities that will shape the Community Development Department's work in the years ahead, while overseeing key specific plan updates.
- Advance the Zoning Code Update: Provide strategic leadership, technical oversight, and effective project management to guide the ongoing Zoning Code update through successful completion and implementation.
- Oversee Housing Element Implementation and Planning: Direct certification and implementation of the current Housing Element, including required rezonings and zoning code amendments, while preparing for the development and adoption of the next Housing Element cycle.
- Advance Key Development Initiatives: Provide strategic oversight and direction for high-profile development projects throughout the City, including supporting the project team in managing the post-entitlement phase of the recently approved Downtown Master Plan.
- Strengthen Operations and Modernize Processes: Refine division policies, procedures, and workflows to enhance operational efficiency, consistency, and customer service, while optimizing the City's existing land use management system, TO/24 (Tyler EnerGov).

The Successful Candidate

The City seeks a seasoned, dynamic, and business-forward planning professional who can hit the ground running as its next Planning Division Manager. A strategic thinker and resourceful problem-solver, the ideal candidate sees the big picture, anticipates emerging issues, and navigates complex challenges with practical, solutions-oriented approaches. Success in this highly visible role requires strong political acumen, emotional intelligence, and an appreciation for the community's priorities and interests. The Manager will bring confidence, objectivity, and sound professional judgment to a fast-paced and evolving planning environment.

The ideal candidate possesses strong technical expertise, a commitment to continuous learning, and a comprehensive understanding of physical planning and design, demographic and socioeconomic trends, and market analysis. This individual maintains current knowledge of federal, state, and local planning regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Subdivision Map Act, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legislation, and evolving state housing mandates. Technologically proficient, the successful candidate brings experience with modern land use management systems, preferably Tyler EnerGov, and the ability to interpret complex maps, site plans, architectural drawings, and statistical data to inform planning decisions and recommendations.

Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills are essential to success. The ideal candidate can translate complex technical information into clear, concise, and accessible presentations and recommendations for diverse audiences. Comfortable representing the City before the Planning Commission, City Council, community groups, and regulatory agencies, the Manager builds credibility through transparency, responsiveness, and professionalism. This individual cultivates productive relationships with developers, economic development partners, businesses, and residents, navigating sensitive planning matters with tact and diplomacy. Internally, the Manager brings a citywide perspective, fostering strong partnerships with departments such as the City Manager's Office and Public Works to promote coordinated, effective service delivery.



The Planning Division Manager will lead a collaborative, customer service-oriented team of approximately five full-time employees, creating an environment that emphasizes professional growth, accountability, and teamwork. An engaged mentor and coach, the ideal candidate invests in staff development, encourages collaborative problem-solving, and creates meaningful opportunities for career advancement. The Manager establishes clear expectations and workflows, empowers staff to take ownership of their responsibilities, and ensures effective communication between the division and departmental leadership. This individual proactively identifies shifting priorities, resource needs, and workload impacts to support informed decision-making and consistent service delivery.

Above all, the successful candidate is a principled, transparent, and accountable leader who leads by example, demonstrates the highest standards of integrity, and fosters a shared commitment to organizational success. A trusted partner to the Community Development Director and executive leadership, the Manager communicates proactively, exercises sound judgment, and approaches challenges with tact, diplomacy, and creativity. The ideal candidate cultivates a positive, collaborative team culture built on trust, mutual respect, and shared purpose. Flexible and adaptable, this individual brings thoughtful analysis and independent perspective to decision-making while demonstrating a strong commitment to carrying out established direction and achieving organizational priorities.



Qualifications

Minimum requirements include at least eight (8) years of increasingly responsible professional planning and/or housing and redevelopment experience including two (2) years of management and administrative responsibility. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in urban planning, business administration, public administration or a closely related field is also required.

A master's degree in urban planning (MUP) or pubic/business administration (MPA/MBA) and Certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is desirable.

Inside The City

The City of Thousand Oaks is a General Law City serving the public under the Council-Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of 5 members elected by district to serve 4-year terms with staggered elections every 2 years. The position of Mayor is rotated annually among the Council Members.

The Mayor and City Council appoint the City Manager who is responsible for implementing the goals, policies and objectives of the City Council. The City is currently comprised of 10 departments: City Manager, City Attorney, Strategic Communications & Public Affairs, City Clerk, Finance, Community Development, Human Resources, Cultural & Community Services, Public Works, and Information Technology.

The City contracts with Ventura County for police services and is served by the Ventura County Fire District. With an FY 2025/2026 Adopted Operating and Capital Budget of $303 million, and 401 FTE, the City's team and resources are aligned to achieve extraordinary goals, be responsive to community needs, complete important projects, and deliver exceptional internal and external customer service. The City strives toward its aspirational values of "service, flexibility, teamwork, performance, innovation, wellness, belonging and growth mindset" to drive positive change and enhance the quality of life for all residents. For more information, please visit www.toaks.gov.

The Community

Located between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara in Ventura County, the City of Thousand Oaks is a premiere community recognized for being one of the most desirable places in California to live, work, recreate, and raise a family. Incorporated in 1964 and within a 55.4 square mile area, the City is the second largest in Ventura County with a population of approximately 125,000 residents.

Thousand Oaks consistently ranks among the safest cities in the United States and is home to some of the nation's top schools. Residents enjoy access to high-quality cultural programs through the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. This is one of the largest performing arts centers between Los Angeles and San Francisco and features world-class entertainment, musicals, concerts, children's shows, ballets, and more. The City prides itself on its designated open space, which includes over 15,000 acres of natural, publicly owned open space and 150 miles of trails for hiking, biking, or leisurely walking. Thousand Oaks is a Tree City in the USA and has been named one of Ventura County's greenest cities.

The City's Downtown Master Plan and recently completed 2045 General Plan envision a vibrant, walkable downtown with mixed-use development, wide sidewalks, public plazas, and gathering spaces. The City's plans reflect the transformation of underused areas into dynamic hubs with housing, entertainment, and local retail while maintaining the city's signature open space and suburban character. New development will reflect the City's commitment to inclusivity, arts and culture, safety, environmental sustainability, and accessibility for the whole community.



Compensation and Benefits

The annual base salary range for the Planning Division Manager is $131,672 - $197,508. The City typically makes offers within the hiring range based on the candidate's experience and qualifications.

For a complete overview of the City's extensive benefits, review the detailed summary here. Highlights include membership in CalPERS (California Public Employees' Retirement System), a deferred compensation plan that includes a City match of up to 1%, and generous vacation, sick, and holiday leave. The City operates on a 9/80 work schedule, with flexible work options available. The Planning Division Manager is expected to maintain a consistent on-site presence to support effective leadership, collaboration, and departmental operations. Opportunities for remote work may be considered in the future.



How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at raftelis.com. Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. A first review of applications will begin **December 7, 2026**, and early application is highly encouraged.

Interviews are tentatively scheduled for **January 6, 2027**. Final interviews will take place on **January 20, 2027**. Selected candidates must be available for both dates.



For More Information

Please direct questions to Serena Wright-Black at swrightblack@raftelis.com and Robert Colichio at rcolichio@raftelis.com.