



SIGNALHILL
California

Community Development Director





Transforming the Future of Signal Hill

Signal Hill is at a pivotal moment in its evolution, with significant opportunities to shape its economic and physical landscape. The City, with its reserves at 88% of the General Fund operating budget, has launched an [Opportunity Study Areas](#) (OSAs) initiative, covering approximately 210 acres—or 15% of the City’s developable land—to strategically guide redevelopment and economic growth. Backed by a recently completed economic feasibility study, the OSAs provide a roadmap for housing, retail, hotels, office, and industrial uses, offering extraordinary potential to diversify revenue, create jobs, and establish a vibrant central business district.

Signal Hill’s prime location—adjacent to key transportation corridors, the Port of Long Beach, and LAX—positions it as an ideal destination for businesses and developers seeking to invest in a community with strong growth potential. With broad support from both the City Council and community, the stage is set to attract high-quality development that will define the City’s next chapter.

The next Community Development Director will play a central role in realizing this vision. This is a unique opportunity for a forward-thinking, results-driven leader to engage developers, foster public-private partnerships, and lead a talented team in implementing projects that will reshape the community’s economic future. Success will require balancing the perspectives of the City Council, City Manager, and community while actively engaging developers to encourage financial investment and guiding transformative redevelopment that enhances Signal Hill’s economic vitality, diversifies its tax base, and maintains the City’s commitment to responsive service and sustainable growth.

The Position

With the retirement of the current Director, this is a unique opportunity to guide a high-performing department in a city recognized for its proactive planning, commitment to sustainability, and responsive service delivery. For a visionary leader, this role offers a chance to make their mark on the City.

The Community Development Director provides leadership and direction across four key functional areas: Planning, Building and Safety, Oil Field Services, and Neighborhood Enhancement/Code Enforcement. The Director oversees a team of professional staff and consultants, including direct supervision of a division manager and support personnel, and serves as a key advisor to the City Manager, City Council, Planning Commission, and Sustainable City Committee. The role includes oversight of development review and permitting, uniform building code compliance, oil field inspections and policy, housing programs, zoning enforcement, and neighborhood improvement initiatives. The Director also serves as secretary to the Planning Commission and represents the City in complex land use and development matters, requiring a balance of technical expertise, political acumen, and strong communication skills.

This executive leader works closely with the City Manager and peers in other departments to ensure alignment of priorities and efficient delivery of services. The Director is responsible for advancing departmental goals and key performance indicators such as timely permit and plan review turnaround, proactive code enforcement response, successful implementation of General Plan and zoning updates, and effective coordination of sustainability initiatives. Collaboration with regional, state, and federal agencies is an essential part of the role, particularly around development, oil field regulation, and environmental review. The successful candidate will bring a forward-looking perspective, guiding the City through both day-to-day operations and long-term strategic planning while fostering innovation, accountability, and community trust.

Priorities

- Cultivate strong, collaborative relationships with key stakeholders, including Signal Hill Petroleum, developers, the City Council, and the community, while actively improving and modernizing development review processes to be proactive, creative, and growth ready.
- Spearhead the implementation of the Opportunity Study Areas (OSA) plan, driving major mixed-use, residential (including affordable housing), and hotel projects, and attracting high-quality development that enhances the city's economic vitality and diversifies its revenue.
- Take the lead on finalizing and updating essential General Plan elements to maintain current status and incorporate new development legislation and funding opportunities.
- Empower, mentor, and strategically develop a cohesive, motivated, and technically skilled Community Development department team, fostering an environment that embraces continuous learning, innovation, and strong internal communication.
- Lead proactive enforcement of the Municipal Code to maintain and enhance the appearance of the City and ensure the safe, compatible operation of oil field facilities.



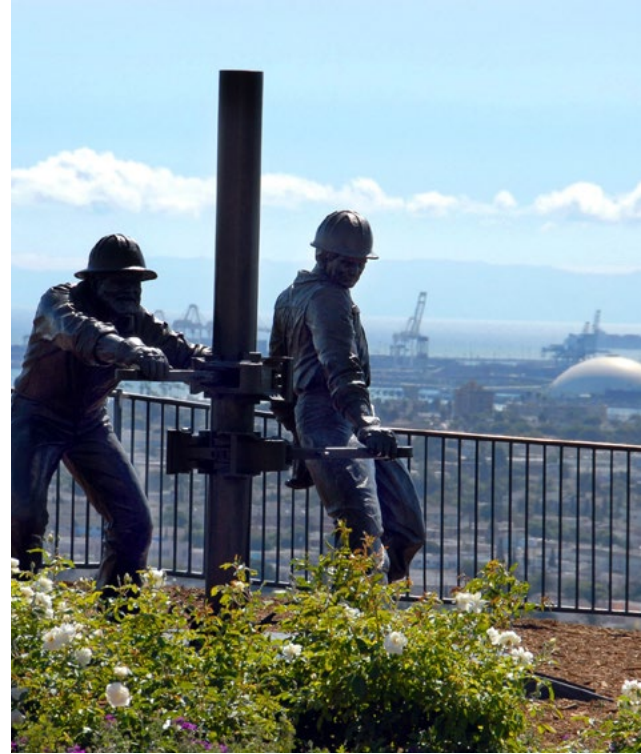
The Successful Candidate

The next Community Development Director for Signal Hill will be a visionary and decisive leader who thrives in a dynamic, fast-paced environment. The ideal candidate is an accomplished leader with a track record of delivering transformative projects, from mixed-use and residential developments (including affordable housing) to hotels and large-scale site redevelopments. With deep knowledge of California land use and environmental law, including CEQA and General Plan updates, the successful candidate understands how to balance regulatory requirements with the City's strategic growth objectives. Experience with brownfield redevelopment, oil and gas site considerations, and sustainable development practices will allow the next Director to advance projects that reflect Signal Hill's unique land use history while shaping a vibrant, forward-looking future.

As a "working director," this leader will be approachable and customer-oriented, combining a hands-on style with the ability to set clear strategic direction. The ideal candidate will bring strong operational expertise, proactively streamlining processes and leveraging new technologies to enhance efficiency and create a responsive, developer-friendly environment. Equally important, they will deliver a high level of service to residents, developers, and business partners, ensuring every applicant experiences a collaborative and transparent process.

A skilled communicator, the next Director will confidently present complex ideas to City Council, Planning Commission, developers, and community groups, articulating a clear vision while actively listening and building consensus. Political acumen, humility, and a solutions-oriented mindset will be critical to navigating diverse stakeholder interests, from oil operators to neighborhood associations.

The successful candidate will also be a strong team developer and mentor, fostering a cohesive, motivated, and high-performing staff while strategically utilizing consultants. They will bring decisive executive leadership, creativity, and a solutions-oriented mindset to complex challenges, finding balanced approaches that move projects forward without unnecessary bureaucracy. A strong project manager with exceptional negotiation skills, the ideal Director will help position Signal Hill for diversified economic growth, robust housing opportunities, and sustainable development. Above all, this leader will embody integrity, transparency, and collaboration — ensuring that the Community Development Department continues to serve as a trusted partner in advancing the City's vision for its residents, businesses, and future generations.



Qualifications

Minimum requirements include any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a closely related field, and seven (7) years of progressively responsible professional experience in municipal planning and community development is required including at least four (4) years in a supervisory capacity. A master's degree in urban planning, public administration, or a related field is desirable.

Inside The Organization

The City of Signal Hill, which is a Charter City, operates under a council-manager form of government, where the City Council serves as the legislative body, setting policy and strategic direction, and the appointed City Manager oversees daily operations and implements Council directives. Signal Hill prides itself on a highly functional and stable governing body, with long-tenured Council Members, one serving for over 30 years, contributing a wealth of historical knowledge and ensuring consistent decision-making. The City Council is known for its collaborative, apolitical approach, focusing on community betterment, and conducting efficient meetings, typically lasting no more than two hours. The Planning Commission and Sustainable City Committee also play vital advisory roles, deferring to staff on technical matters.

With a total City staff of 136.72 FTEs, Signal Hill maintains a close-knit, family-oriented, and welcoming organizational culture. The FY 25/26 Adopted City Budget is \$39,668,578, reflecting a fiscally prudent and stable environment with strong reserve levels. The City Manager fosters an open-door policy, valuing diverse ideas and promoting employee wellness and engagement. This culture extends throughout City Hall, where employees are encouraged to make an impact and see the direct results of their hard work in a community that is genuinely supportive of its staff. Signal Hill is a “can-do” organization, nimble and solution-oriented, actively seeking ways to say “yes” to residents and developers while upholding regulatory standards. The City is proud of its commitment to community welfare, notably achieving a “functional zero homeless” designation by successfully housing over 50 individuals.

Inside the Community Development Department

The Department operates with an adopted FY 25/26 budget of \$2,156,802 and is structured into four core Divisions: Planning, Building Safety, Neighborhood Enhancement, and Oil Field Services. The department, with 7.5 FTE, prides itself on a cohesive, motivated, and highly experienced team. Staff relations are characterized by strong communication, a collaborative spirit, and a commitment to customer service.

The Community

Perched on a hilltop in the center of the Los Angeles Basin, Signal Hill offers residents the charm of a close-knit community with all the amenities of a major metropolitan area just minutes away. Completely surrounded by the City of Long Beach and less than 20 miles from downtown Los Angeles, Signal Hill's location provides easy access to Southern California's world-class cultural, economic, and recreational opportunities while maintaining its own distinct identity.

Signal Hill is home to just over 12,000 residents in a 2.2-square-mile area, making it one of the smallest yet most unique cities in Los Angeles County. The community is known for its welcoming atmosphere, diverse population, and strong sense of pride. Families enjoy access to the award-winning Long Beach Unified School District, a wide range of local preschools and private schools, and proximity to several higher education institutions, including California State University, Long Beach. The city's neighborhoods are a blend of hillside homes with sweeping views, modern condominiums, and family-friendly residential areas that create a variety of living options within a compact setting.

Rich in history, Signal Hill was once home to thriving ranches and later became world-famous after the discovery of oil in 1921, transforming the community into a boomtown known as “Porcupine Hill” for its forest of oil derricks. While oil production remains part of the City's identity, today Signal Hill has evolved into a well-rounded community with a diverse economy that includes professional services, technology, retail, hospitality, and light industry. The City is also home to Signal Hill Petroleum, a major employer and community partner.

Residents and visitors alike enjoy the City's extensive parks and recreational amenities, including panoramic views from Hilltop Park, hiking and biking along Skyline Trail, and numerous neighborhood parks that serve as gathering spaces. Cultural events, public art, and community celebrations showcase the City's vibrant spirit and diverse heritage. With its central location, thoughtful planning, and strong community connections, Signal Hill offers an exceptional quality of life and continues to be recognized as one of Southern California's hidden gems.



Compensation and Benefits

The salary range is \$176,359.92 - \$231,399.57, depending on qualifications, with an excellent benefits package. In addition, there is an approved 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) scheduled for July 2026. Learn more about our options and employee-based benefits [here](#).



How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at jobs.crelate.com. Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. The position will be open until filled with a first review of applications beginning **October 17, 2025**.



Questions

Please direct questions to Serena Wright-Black at swrightblack@raftelis.com and Kelsey Batt at kbatt@raftelis.com.