

NOTICE TO BID

(RFQ # 2026-004)

Posted: 08/27/2026

The City of Mercedes is requesting sealed qualifications (RFQ) from qualified individuals/firms interested in providing **EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM SERVICES**. Qualified applicants are invited to submit qualifications and proposals for the provision of these services. In order to be considered, proposals must address each of the requests for information included in this document.

All addenda, notices, additional information, etc. will be posted on the City of Mercedes website at www.cityofmercedes.com.

One (1) unbound original, three (3) bound copies, and one (1) electronic copy must be sealed and returned to the City of Mercedes, City Hall, no later than **3:00 P.M. CST on Wednesday, September 16, 2026**, to the attention of:

City Secretary
Mercedes City Hall
400 S. Ohio Ave.
Mercedes, TX 78570

All proposals must be clearly marked with “**RFP 2026-004 – EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM.**” Proposer is responsible for delivery of response by the date and time set for the closing of the proposal acceptance. Responses received after the date and time set for the closing will not be considered.

Proposals will be publicly opened and acknowledged after the submission deadline. The contract award is anticipated to be made on Tuesday, September 22, 2026, during a special meeting of the Mercedes City Commission.

All bidders **must be bonded** in accordance with state and local requirements.

All questions regarding the specifications or scope of work must be submitted in writing no later than September 10, 2026 at 5:00 P.M. to the City of Mercedes at:

Joselynn Castillo, City Secretary
400 S. Ohio Ave.
Mercedes, TX 78570
Phone: (956) 565-3114
jcastillo@cityofmercedes.com

The City of Mercedes reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and waive informalities in proposals received.

Joselynn Castillo
City Secretary

City of Mercedes
Request for Proposals/Qualifications
Executive Search Services for City Manager

Proposal Intent

The City of Mercedes, Texas, is seeking proposals from highly qualified municipal services firms to perform executive search services for the position of City Manager. Responding firms should have the knowledge, demonstrated experience, and expertise to recruit candidates that best suit the community's city management needs.

Proposals must be responsive to the City's request. The City shall determine the most responsive and qualified responding firm at a reasonable cost. Cost alone shall not be the determinative factor. The City reserves the right in its absolute discretion to make no award or contract.

About Mercedes

The City of Mercedes is a gateway city geographically positioned near the center of the Rio Grande Valley along Expressway 83, Mercedes functions as a bridge connecting major RGV hubs like McAllen and Brownsville. The City of Mercedes has a population of over 16,000 residents and growing.

The City of Mercedes has a Council-Manager form of government. The citizens of Mercedes elect a mayor and four (4) council members at-large. All council members and Mayor serve staggered, three-year terms. The City Council appoints the City Manager as well as City Attorney, Municipal Court Judges and Prosecutors.

Mercedes is a full-service city, including police, fire, ems, parks and recreation, library, planning, streets, and sewer and water utility operations. The City's existing budget is \$ 29.6 million including a \$19.3 million general fund. There are currently 158 full-time employees, 13 part-time employees, and 10 seasonal employees. The City has maintained a stable financial condition due to a number of proactive efficiency measures.

The City offers a high professional, stable, and friendly work environment. City staff maintain an outstanding relationship with the community, the City Council, and each other. Employees are committed to commonly shared values and as a result, employment with the City provides a rewarding environment working with individuals that care about each other and the community they serve.

Background of Previous City Manager

Currently, the Fire Chief serves as the Interim City Manager. The previous City Manager served for five (5) years and four (4) months prior to his resignation.

Scope of Work

Upon selection of a qualified firm, a professional services contract will be negotiated with the following scope of work.

Assist the Mayor and members of the City Council by providing the following services and related information:

- Assist the City with Operational Management,
- Develop a detailed project timeline and provide regular status updates to the Mayor and City Council;
- Develop a comprehensive recruiting profile for the City Manager position;
- Develop a recruitment brochure and include examples of flyers and brochures;
- Define the advertising strategy and marketing campaign to notify potential candidates of the opportunity to apply and identify where advertisements will be published;
- Direct solicitation of qualified candidates; receive resumes and review qualifications;
- Conduct review and screening of initial candidates, providing periodic status updates;
- Conduct detailed background and professional reference checks, including but not limited to verification of education background, criminal/civil litigation checks, financials/credit background checks, and media check on recommended finalist;
- Define the preliminary screening process and the detailed steps used to narrow the field of candidates to those that most closely match the needs of the City;
- Present a written report on employment background, personal strengths, accomplishments, recommendations, and personal and professional references for top candidates;
- Describe and facilitate the final interview process with the Mayor and City Council;
- Coordinate correspondence, travel arrangements, and recordkeeping;
- Provide recommended questions for on-site interviews;
- Administer all correspondence with applicants through the process, including notification of unsuccessful candidates; and
- Assist the City in developing a final employment offer for the selected candidate.

The responding firm or the City may propose additional tasks as deemed necessary to complete the assignment. Any additional work shall be compensated as agreed upon in the firm's contract with the City.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENT

Proposal should be concise and limited to the information requested. Each proposal shall include the following information in this format:

Introduction

A cover letter introducing the company and the individual who will assume the primary responsibility for the process and be the contact with the Mayor and City Council.

Understanding of Proposal

Statement of your firm's understanding of the services to be performed and your commitment to provide the services as indicated in the RFP/Q.

Qualifications and Experience

Specific qualifications regarding your firm's experience providing city manager search services, including resumes of the key personnel to be assigned to this project listing city manager recruitment services that they have provided or otherwise been involved with over the past three years. Provide an estimated proportion of work to be performed by principal, associates and support staff.

Work Plan

Provide a brief description of the work plan, methodologies and approach proposed to carry out the tasks set forth in the Scope of Work.

Costs

Submit a fee proposal to complete the entire scope of work, including any travel and incidental expenses. Proposals shall also include a list of personnel proposed to work on the project, estimated allocations of time each person is to work on the project, and hourly rates for those personnel, as applicable. Cost proposals are to include all estimated costs to the City.

Schedule

Provide a detailed timeline with proposed payment schedule, assuming the work will begin in October 2026.

References

Provide a minimum of three (3) municipal references for providing city manager search services within the past five (5) years. The references must be for services provided using the principal being recommended as part of this proposal. Include the name, entity, address, and daytime telephone number of each reference.

Forms

Forms found on pages 8 – 11 must be included and submitted with the proposal.

Bidding Proposal

The proposal must include an authorized signature binding the firm to the proposal for a ninety (90) day period.

SELECTION PROCESS

Each of the proposals received will be evaluated to determine if they meet the stated requirements of the RFP/Q. Failure to meet these requirements will be a cause to eliminate the responding firm from further consideration.

The City will not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal nor for obtaining the required insurance.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any technicalities, to accept or reject the proposal and to be the sole judge of the suitability of the proposals submitted.

The City Council will evaluate the proposals. In addition to evaluating the written materials, oral interviews may be requested. A recommendation to City Council may be prepared, generally based upon the following criteria, which are neither weighted nor prioritized:

- Demonstrated understanding of the services requested;
- Prior and recent experience in successfully performing similar work;
- Qualifications of the firm and the assigned individuals;
- Methodology and proposed approach in completing the work;
- Background and related experience of the primary and other individuals assigned to this engagement;
- Fees to be charged and overall cost effectiveness of the proposal; and
- Outcome of the reference checks.

SUBMITTAL DEADLINE AND SELECTION SCHEDULE

Proposals shall be submitted in the format described in this RFP/Q. One (1) unbound original, three (3) bound copies, and one (1) electronic copy in PDF format to be provided on a USB compatible flash drive properly labeled with the RFP/Q number 2026-004 shall be submitted. All proposal envelopes must be labeled on the outside with the responding firm's name and RFP/Q No. 2026-004 – Executive Search Firm.

Submittals will be accepted by the City Secretary of the City of Mercedes, Texas, until 3:00 P.M. CST, September 16, 2026 at this address:

City of Mercedes – City Hall
City Secretary
400 S. Ohio Ave.
Mercedes, TX 78570

It is the sole responsibility of the responder to ensure that the proposal is delivered to the City of Mercedes, Texas, prior to the 3:00 P.M. CST, September 16, 2026. Last submittals will not be accepted. The City's official clock for purposes of recording receipt and acceptance of proposal documents is located in the City Hall. It is important that the respondents follow the required format in preparing their responses. Proposals may be mailed or delivered by hand or common courier.

Questions regarding submission of the RFP/Q should be directed in writing by email to Joselynn Castillo, City Secretary, at jcastillo@cityofmercedes.com before 5:00 p.m. on September 10, 2026. Email requests must include the RFP/Q number 2026-004 in the email subject line. The issuance of a written addendum is the only official method whereby interpretation, clarification, or additional information can be given. However, it shall be the responsibility of each firm, prior to submitting the proposals, to visit the City's website at www.cityofmercedes.com/business-building-development/bids-and-contracts/ to determine if addenda's were issued and to make such addenda a part of the proposal.

The City anticipates completing its evaluation of the RFP/Q responses and making a recommendation at a City Council meeting on September 22, 2026. All firms are required to be present for a brief summary of their firm and to answer any questions.

REQUIREMENTS

BASIC SAFEGUARDING OF SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- a) The service provider shall apply basic safeguarding requirements and procedures to protect their information systems whenever the information systems store, process or transmit any information, not intended for public release, which is provided by or generated for the City. This requirement does not include information provided by the City to the public or simple transactional information, such as that necessary to process payments. These requirements and procedures shall include, at a minimum, the security control requirements "reflective of actions a prudent business person would employ" which are outlined in the Federal Acquisition Regulations FAR 52.204-2(b) and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations at 48 C.F.R. § 52.204-21(b)(2016).
- b) The service provider shall include the substance of this clause in subcontractor may have City contract information residing in or transiting through its information system.

Insurance Requirements

The service provider shall procure and maintain at its sole cost and expense for the duration of the engagement, the appropriate Worker's Compensation, liability, and errors and omissions insurance coverages, written by an insurer to transact insurance in the State of Texas.

The following is a list of standard insurance policies along with their respective minimum coverage amounts required during the entire course of the engagement:

1. Commercial General Liability
 - a. General Aggregate: \$2,000,000
 - b. Products & Completed Operations Aggregate: \$1,000,000
 - c. Personal & Advertising Injury: \$1,000,000
 - d. Per Occurrence: \$500,000
 - e. Fire Damage: \$50,000
 - f. Coverage shall be broad from CGL
 - g. No coverage shall be deleted from standard policy without notification of individual exclusions being attached for review and acceptance.
 - h. Waiver of Subrogation required.
2. Worker's Compensation

- a. Statutory Limits
- b. Employer's Liability: \$1,000,000
- c. Waiver of Subrogation required

The following shall be applicable to all policies of insurance required herein.

1. Only insurance carriers licensed by the state board of insurance to do business in the State of Texas will be accepted.
2. The City, its officers, agents and employees are to be added as Additional Insureds to all liability policies.
3. Upon request and without cost to the City, certified copies of all insurance policies and/or certificates of insurance shall be furnished to the City.
4. All insurance required herein shall be secured and maintained with a company or companies satisfactory to the City and shall be carried in the name of the service provider.
5. The service provider shall provide copies of insurance certificates required hereunder to the City on or before the effective date of the agreement resulting from this RFP/Q.

Notes:

1. By submission of your proposal in response to this announcement, you are certifying that neither your firm nor any of its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or excluded from participation in this procurement process by any Federal department or agency. Further, if such a debarment or suspension occurs during the course of the procurement, you shall so inform the City.
2. No submitting firm shall, directly or indirectly, engage in any conduct (other than the submission of the RFP/Q) to influence any City elected official(s) and/or City staff member(s) concerning award of a contract as a result of this solicitation. Violation of this prohibition may result in disqualification of the firm from further participation in the solicitation for services or goods sought herein, or from participation in further City solicitations or contracts.
3. The City will not be responsible for any costs incurred by anyone in the submittal process.
4. The City reserves the right to waive any irregularities, request additional information from any respondent, reject any respondent, or cancel the entire process, should the City determine any of the foregoing to be in the City's best interest.
5. The City reserves the right to terminate the contract for any reason by notifying the other party in writing thirty (30) days prior to the termination of the contract.
6. Certificate of Interested Parties: In 2015, the Texas Legislature adopted House Bill 1295, which added section 2252.908 of the Government Code and, it applies to contracts entered into on or after January 1, 2016. The law states that a governmental entity may not enter into certain contracts with a business entity unless the business entity submits a disclosure of interested parties to the governmental entity at the time the business entity submits the signed contract to the governmental entity. The law applies to all contracts of a governmental entity that require an action or vote by the governing body of the entity.

FORMS TO BE COMPLETED

Pages 8-11

CITY OF MERCEDES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP NUMBER # 2026-004

RFP TITLE: EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM

DATE DUE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

DUE NO LATER THAN 3:00 P.M.

RFP/Q's will be opened at the CITY OF MERCEDES CITY HALL, 400 S. Ohio Ave. Mercedes, Texas. on September 16, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. (as per City Secretary's time clock) on deadline due date.

RFPs received later than the date and time above will not be considered.

Please return RFP **ORIGINAL (marked "ORIGINAL") AND THREE (3) COPIES (marked "COPY")** sets and **an electronic (PDF format file only)** of your proposal for review by evaluation committee in a sealed envelope. Be sure that return envelope shows the RFP Number, Description and is marked "PROPOSAL 2024-004 – Executive Search Firm".

RETURN RFP TO:
by U.S. mail or delivered to the office of the Contracts/Ordinance Specialist.,
Mercedes City Hall
400 S. Ohio Ave.,
Mercedes, Texas 78570.

For additional information, clarifications and/or questions or to request addendum please contact: Joselynn Castillo at jcastillo@cityofmercedes.com.

YOU MUST SIGN BELOW IN INK. FAILURE TO SIGN WILL DISQUALIFY THE OFFER. All prices must be typewritten or written in ink.

Company Name: _____

Company Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone No. _____ E-mail: _____

Historically Underutilized Business (State of Texas) Certification VID Number: _____

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____

How did you find out about this RFP? _____ (ex: Newspaper, Web, Mail)

(Your signature attests to your offer to provide the goods and/or services in this RFP according to the published provision of this bid. When an award letter is issued, this RFP becomes the contract. If an RFP requires a specific Contract to be utilized in addition to this RFP, this signed RFP will become part of that contract. When an additional Contract is required, an RFP award does not constitute a contract award and RFP / Contract is not valid until contract is awarded by City Commission (when applicable), signed by City Manager and purchase order is issued.)

"NON-COLLUSION STATEMENT"

BY THE SIGNATURE BELOW, THE SIGNATORY FOR THE BIDDER AFFIRMS THAT THEY ARE DULY AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE THIS CONTRACT, THAT THIS COMPANY, FIRM, PARTNERSHIP OR INDIVIDUAL HAS NOT PREPARED THIS PROPOSAL IN COLLUSION WITH ANY OTHER BIDDER, AND THAT THE CONTENTS OF THIS PROPOSAL AS TO PRICES, TERMS OR CONDITIONS OF SAID BID HAVE NOT BEEN COMMUNICATED BY THE UNDERSIGNED NOR BY ANY EMPLOYEE OR AGENT TO ANY OTHER PERSON ENGAGED IN THIS TYPE OF BUSINESS PRIOR TO THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THIS BID. FURTHER, THE SIGNATORY AFFIRM, THAT THEY, OR ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMPANY, DID NOT CONTACT ANY EMPLOYEE OR MEMBER OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MERCEDES AT ANY TIME DURING THE SOLICITATION PROCESS FROM INITIAL ADVERTISEMENT THROUGH AWARD TO DISCUSS THE CONTENTS OF THIS PROPOSAL, OTHER THAN CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE PRIOR TO THE AWARDED OF THIS PROPOSAL. I UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO OBSERVE THIS PROCEDURE MAY CAUSE THE BID TO BE REJECTED. I ALSO AFFIRM THAT NO OFFICER OR STOCKHOLDER OF THE RESPONDENT (BIDDER) IS A MEMBER OF THE STAFF, OR RELATED TO ANY EMPLOYEE OR MEMBER OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MERCEDES EXCEPT AS NOTED HEREIN:

By signing this bid, the vendor (Bidder) makes the assurance that vendor has not been debarred or suspended from conducting business with the U.S. Government according to Executive Order 12549 entitled "Debarment and Suspension."

COMPANY _____ EMPLOYER I.D. NO. _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____

EMAIL _____

BIDDER (SIGNATURE) _____

PRINTED NAME _____

POSITION WITH COMPANY _____

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE For vendor doing business with local governmental entity		FORM CIQ
This questionnaire reflects changes made to the law by H.B. 23, 84th Leg., Regular Session. This questionnaire is being filed in accordance with Chapter 176, Local Government Code, by a vendor who has a business relationship as defined by Section 176.001(1-a) with a local governmental entity and the vendor meets requirements under Section 176.006(a). By law this questionnaire must be filed with the records administrator of the local governmental entity not later than the 7th business day after the date the vendor becomes aware of facts that require the statement to be filed. See Section 176.006(a-1), Local Government Code. A vendor commits an offense if the vendor knowingly violates Section 176.006, Local Government Code. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor.	OFFICE USE ONLY Date Received	
1 Name of vendor who has a business relationship with local governmental entity.		
2 ☐ Check this box if you are filing an update to a previously filed questionnaire. (The law requires that you file an updated completed questionnaire with the appropriate filing authority not later than the 7th business day after the date on which you became aware that the originally filed questionnaire was incomplete or inaccurate.)		
3 Name of local government officer about whom the information is being disclosed. Name of Officer		
4 Describe each employment or other business relationship with the local government officer, or a family member of the officer, as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A). Also describe any family relationship with the local government officer. Complete subparts A and B for each employment or business relationship described. Attach additional pages to this Form CIQ as necessary.		
A. Is the local government officer or a family member of the officer receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from the vendor? ☐ Yes ☐ No B. Is the vendor receiving or likely to receive taxable income, other than investment income, from or at the direction of the local government officer or a family member of the officer AND the taxable income is not received from the local governmental entity? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
5 Describe each employment or business relationship that the vendor named in Section 1 maintains with a corporation or other business entity with respect to which the local government officer serves as an officer or director, or holds an ownership interest of one percent or more.		
6 ☐ Check this box if the vendor has given the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts as described in Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), excluding gifts described in Section 176.003(a-1).		
7 Name of signatory Signature Date		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONNAIRE

For vendor doing business with local governmental entity

A complete copy of Chapter 176 of the Local Government Code may be found at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/LG/htm/LG.176.htm>. For easy reference, below are some of the sections cited on this form.

Local Government Code § 176.001(1-a): "Business relationship" means a connection between two or more parties based on commercial activity of one of the parties. The term does not include a connection based on:

- (A) a transaction that is subject to rate or fee regulation by a federal, state, or local governmental entity or an agency of a federal, state, or local governmental entity;
- (B) a transaction conducted at a price and subject to terms available to the public; or
- (C) a purchase or lease of goods or services from a person that is chartered by a state or federal agency and that is subject to regular examination by, and reporting to, that agency.

Local Government Code § 176.003(a)(2)(A) and (B):

- (a) A local government officer shall file a conflicts disclosure statement with respect to a vendor if:

- (2) the vendor:

- (A) has an employment or other business relationship with the local government officer or a family member of the officer that results in the officer or family member receiving taxable income, other than investment income, that exceeds \$2,500 during the 12-month period preceding the date that the officer becomes aware that

- (i) a contract between the local governmental entity and vendor has been executed;
 - or

- (ii) the local governmental entity is considering entering into a contract with the vendor;

- (B) has given to the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts that have an aggregate value of more than \$100 in the 12-month period preceding the date the officer becomes aware that:

- (i) a contract between the local governmental entity and vendor has been executed; or
 - (ii) the local governmental entity is considering entering into a contract with the vendor.

Local Government Code § 176.006(a) and (a-1)

- (a) A vendor shall file a completed conflict of interest questionnaire if the vendor has a business relationship with a local governmental entity and:

- (1) has an employment or other business relationship with a local government officer of that local governmental entity, or a family member of the officer, described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A);
- (2) has given a local government officer of that local governmental entity, or a family member of the officer, one or more gifts with the aggregate value specified by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), excluding any gift described by Section 176.003(a-1); or
- (3) has a family relationship with a local government officer of that local governmental entity.

- (a-1) The completed conflict of interest questionnaire must be filed with the appropriate records administrator not later than the seventh business day after the later of:

- (1) the date that the vendor:

- (A) begins discussions or negotiations to enter into a contract with the local governmental entity; or

- (B) submits to the local governmental entity an application, response to a request for proposals or bids, correspondence, or another writing related to a potential contract with the local governmental entity; or

- (2) the date the vendor becomes aware:

- (A) of an employment or other business relationship with a local government officer, or a family member of the officer, described by Subsection (a);

- (B) that the vendor has given one or more gifts described by Subsection (a); or

- (C) of a family relationship with a local government officer.