The City of McKinney

McKinney’s brand is Unique by Nature. Located on the northeastern corner of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and the county seat of Collin County, McKinney has many unique assets that other cities do not, including a rolling terrain and a vibrant historic downtown centered around the former Collin County Courthouse – now the McKinney Performing Arts Center.

McKinney’s growth has been explosive. From just over 20,000 residents in 1990, it has more than doubled every ten years. It reached almost 56,000 in 2000 and over 132,000 in 2010. Currently McKinney’s population is estimated at 161,905. With its jurisdictional boundaries set, McKinney has much open land to its northwest and the City’s population is expected to climb to 350,000 before it is built out. During this period of incredible growth and prosperity, McKinney has maintained the appeal for its residents by investing in parks, open space and other amenities. Throughout this, McKinney’s historic downtown remains its crown jewel, home to many community events, thriving local businesses and restaurants.

Conservative values are prominent in Texas, and especially so in Collin County. While fiscally conservative, diversity is valued in McKinney and reflected in the makeup of the community. Numerous community events provide opportunities for residents and visitors alike to congregate, socialize, and enjoy McKinney.

The Opportunity

McKinney, Texas

The City of McKinney, Texas has the two most desirable aspects that a City Manager could ever hope for. Professionally, it is a well-resourced community experiencing tremendous growth and with much more growth anticipated in the years ahead. Personally, it is the “#1 Best Place to Live in America.” Strong and successful planning by City leaders, coupled with an involved community, have moved McKinney into prosperity.

The City’s population has grown by over 50% in the last ten years. Currently at over 160,000, it is expected to reach 350,000 at build-out. There is much rewarding work to be done by a talented City Manager during this period. Infrastructure, operations, diversification of development, staff development, and service deliveries all must grow, without sacrificing the qualities that make McKinney so desirable.

McKinney currently holds Money Magazine’s title as the #1 Best Place to Live in America, and it has consistently placed high on the list for the last several years. Over 95 percent of McKinney’s residents are either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the quality of life in McKinney.

Clearly, the quality of life and the growth are coupled in McKinney’s recipe for success and these ingredients create an ideal environment for a top-quality City Manager.

161,905
POPULATION

350,000
BUILD-OUT POPULATION

58mi²
AREA

114 mi²
PLANNING AREA
McKinney operates as a council-manager form of government with home rule status. The City Council consists of seven voting members, four of which are elected from districts and two members plus the Mayor elected at large. All members are elected for four year terms, with a limit of two terms per office.

The City Council appoints three positions, the City Manager, City Attorney and the Municipal Judge. The City Council contracts with an external firm to serve as City Attorney, although the primary attorney for the City is fully imbedded in City Hall. The City Manager is the chief executive for the City and leads a highly dedicated professional City staff, including a Deputy City Manager and two Assistant City Managers.

With 975.4 FTE positions, the City of McKinney is composed of the following departments: Airport, Communications and Marketing, Development Services, Emergency Management, Financial Services, Fire, Housing and Community Development, Human Resources, Information Technology, Library, Municipal Court, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Purchasing, and Utility Billing. With an annual operating budget of $117 million and an all funds budget of $295.3 million, McKinney's conservative approach to its finances has earned an S&P AAA bond rating and has created a fiscally sound organization.

City Manager Responsibilities

The City Manager of McKinney, Texas is an at-will, executive position who serves at the pleasure of the City Council. The present vacancy follows the resignation of the prior City Manager, Mr. Jason Gray. The City of McKinney has engaged Mr. Tom Muehlenbeck as the Interim City Manager. Mr. Muehlenbeck is most known for his service as the City Manager for Plano, Texas for over twenty years. It is anticipated that Mr. Muehlenbeck will continue as Interim City Manager through the conclusion of this recruitment to ensure a smooth transition for the City of McKinney. The City Manager is assisted by a Deputy City Manager, first in line in the Manager’s absence, and two Assistant City Managers.

Key strategic executive leadership responsibilities of the City Manager include:

- Directing the implementation of the City Council’s goals, objectives, policies, and priorities through leadership;
- Assuming full management responsibility for assigned staff and departments; recommending and administering policies and procedures;
- Promoting effective and efficient delivery of programs and services through the application of strategic management tools;
- Ensuring the overall fiscal health of the organization, including developing the budget, approving the forecast of funds, and providing oversight over expenditures;
- Providing options and alternatives on a variety of complex topics and programs so that the Council may consider an array of choices, inclusive of staff recommendation and fiscal impacts, in order to set future policy direction based on sound and professional advice and counsel;
- Guiding and facilitating discussions and establishing strategies to address capital improvement projects and growth of municipal operations across the full spectrum of the organization;
- Leading efforts of strategic planning and development of performance measurements that are tied to the budget and are both achievable and capable of being implemented;
- Engaging in intergovernmental activities in the local, state, and regional arenas that promote the mutual interest of those jurisdictions; and
- Creating a culture of effective communication throughout all levels of the organization as well as throughout the community.

Additional information about the City of McKinney, including the City’s budget, organizational chart, and staffing levels is available on Ralph Andersen & Associates’ website.
Challenges and Opportunities

Certain aspects of McKinney’s future are well known, and the next City Manager of McKinney will certainly face the following challenges and opportunities:

• The current Council is committed to an environment of mutual respect between the governing body and the professional staff.

• McKinney welcomes its present growth and the inevitable continuation, but must shape three important aspects of it. First, new development must be more diverse, with more commercial and less residential building. Retail, dining, and other diverse commercial construction is needed to support the tax base for municipal operations and other taxing bodies, to include the seven school systems that are within its boundaries. Second, the community must be educated on the need to diversify its growth to ensure McKinney’s prosperity. The City must communicate the clear connection between diverse economic development and the quality of life for its residents. Finally, all of this growth must occur without destroying the small town atmosphere that is so endearing. McKinney must become a small town of 350,000 people.

• The McKinney National Airport is an uncommon and valuable resource for the community, yet its value is not widely known outside of city hall and the airport’s corporate clients. Not only is it an uncommon resource that can be leveraged to help attract corporate economic development, but it substantially adds to the tax base and adds to the aforementioned diversification of McKinney’s economy. Each corporate jet based in McKinney equates to several homes on McKinney’s tax rolls, or one “big box” retail store.

• McKinney is a community of professionals, from its residents, to its Council, and its staff. This community of professionals cares deeply about McKinney and has made significant investments in its future, including clearly defined goals, a strategic plan, and the current development of a new comprehensive plan.

• Over the past several years, a significant turnover has occurred in McKinney’s senior staff. While some of this turnover has been market driven, some has not. A number of director level positions are currently being recruited and will likely be filled during Mr. Muehlenbeck’s tenure. An Assistant City Manager position will remain vacant so that it may be selected by the next City Manager.

• McKinney’s explosive growth has outgrown many of its internal systems. As an example, an RFP will soon be issued for McKinney’s first ERP system. While much recent work has been done, an understanding of municipal systems and experience with their implementations will be beneficial.
The Ideal Candidate

In addition to being ethical, well qualified, and experienced, the next City Manager in McKinney must possess certain traits that will be essential for success:

• The McKinney City Council seeks stability and desires to recruit and retain a City Manager that will enjoy serving McKinney for many years. This desire for stability is strongly shared by the professional staff, the community leaders, and all other segments of the community.

• The City Council seeks a City Manager that has proven, successful, experience managing a growing community. Knowledge of, and skill with using municipal development tools is a fruit of this experience. The distinction between the expertise gained from managing an expanding city versus one that is built-out is extremely important to the City Council. Experience in the Texas political environment is a plus.

• The next City Manager must be courageous and be willing to say what needs to be said, even if it is unpopular, and even if it threatens his/her standing. When delivered in a tactful and respectful manner, a strong voice is welcomed but must be grounded in experience, wisdom, and vision.

• The City Council not only seeks to better communicate the good things about McKinney, but also strongly desires to engage the public on the issues it faces. Experience in effectively communicating a City’s message is sought, especially through the use of social media.

• An approachable, inclusive, and collaborative style works well in McKinney, an organization that actively seeks stakeholder input to help form important decisions.

• Honest, abundant, and equal communication with members of the City Council is essential.

• The City Manager must represent the City of McKinney in all arenas and must consistently present a professional demeanor that is amenable to citizens, community leaders, and corporate interests.

• The next City Manager must become deeply involved in the community and in multiple arenas, such as service clubs, non-profits, and community events.

• A strong commitment to McKinney, demonstrated by a robust work ethic, is required.
Education and Experience

Education: A Bachelor’s degree in public administration, business, or a related field from an accredited university. A Master’s degree in a related field is highly desired.

Experience: Ten years of municipal experience, with five years as a City Manager or Assistant City Manager (or equivalent) is required. Specific experience in high-growth cities of at least 100,000 is highly desired, as is extensive past work in negotiating and managing economic development projects.

Residency: Residency is not a prerequisite for employment, but the selected candidate must reside within the incorporated boundaries of the City of McKinney, Texas during his/her tenure as City Manager.

Compensation

The successful candidate will receive a highly competitive salary with an excellent executive benefit package that considers the candidate’s salary history and track record of career success. The City Council will negotiate a mutually agreeable employment agreement with the selected candidate including assistance with moving and relocation, if appropriate. Further details on compensation may be obtained through Ralph Andersen & Associates.

The Recruitment Process

This is a confidential process and will be handled accordingly throughout the various stages of the process. Candidates should be aware that references will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established.

All interested candidates should Apply Immediately to Ralph Andersen & Associates by submitting a compelling cover letter, comprehensive resume, and three years of salary history to apply@ralphandersen.com. Preliminary Skype interviews will be conducted as necessary. Top candidates will be invited for a comprehensive interview process tentatively set for late April and May. Additionally, a supplemental questionnaire may be required with responses to specific questions and submittal of sample work products.

Applicants selected for interview will be subject to a thorough background investigation prior to interview, and must sign a waiver understanding that their candidacy will become public under the Texas Public Information Act if selected as a finalist.

For further information or questions on the recruitment process, please contact Mr. Greg Nelson at (916) 630-4900. Confidential inquiries are welcomed.

For More Information Visit the City Online at www.McKinneyTexas.org
City Manager Recruitment Schedule

- **Recruitment Opens**: February 23rd
- **Review of Resumes Complete**: March 28th
- **Background Investigations on Selected Top Candidates Begin**: April 13th
- **First Round of Interviews with City Council**: April 13th
- **Selection of Finalist Group and Public Announcement of Finalists**: April 29th
- **Public “Meet the Candidates” Reception**: May 2nd
- **Final Interviews with City Council and Selection**: May 10th
- **Final Interviews with City Council and Selection**: May 11th

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