



# CITY OF LAS VEGAS

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## CITY MANAGER SEARCH PROCESS

**LAS VEGAS, NM** – The Mercer Group Inc., a nationally recognized professional recruitment firm was contacted by Las Vegas Mayor Tony E. Marquez Jr. on January 7, 2009 to assist in the search for a new City Manager for Las Vegas. The Mercer Group has offices in Atlanta and in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

To initiate the recruitment process an interview with Mayor Marquez was held on January 8<sup>th</sup> at the Office of the Mayor to go over the search process and to define the qualifications and expectations for the city manager position.

During the interview with the Mayor, he stated a preference for an experienced city manager with the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

A City Manager who:

- ✓ Is ready to start work on day one; has demonstrated professional experience as a City or County Manager and requires no on the job training.
- ✓ Is proficient in management, with the ability to develop and lead the management team of the City, and is effective in delegation and follow-up.
- ✓ Is proficient in local government budget preparation, knowledgeable in the procurement process, and in maintaining effective internal fiscal controls.
- ✓ Is highly motivated and willing to devote the time and energy needed to assist the Mayor and Council in achieving its vision and strategic objectives.
- ✓ Is an effective coach and mentor in developing, training, and improving the performance of the city employees.
- ✓ Is able to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the organization and make sound recommendations to the mayor and council on how to improve the operation.

- ✓ Understands that his/her role is to carry out the objectives of the mayor and council, and to keep the governing body fully informed of all major activities.
- ✓ Is able to roll up his/her sleeves, someone who can get things done, a person who follows up on work to be done; and ensures that it is done in a timely manner.
- ✓ Is a team player, and a person who can build an excellent relationship with the mayor and council, and the management team.
- ✓ Is a person with high ethical standards, demonstrated integrity, and leads by example.
- ✓ Is an effective communicator. A manager who can improve communications between the staff, the department heads, and most important, the governing body.
- ✓ Is not politically ambitious. A manager who subscribes to the ICMA Code of Ethics, and will promote ethical conduct amongst all employees.

Mr. Gustavo Cordova, Senior Vice President with the Mercer Group was assigned as project manager for this search. Most executive searches take from 60 to 90 days to complete. However, in this case, the Mayor requested that an expedited search be conducted so that a slate of candidates is compiled, assessed and ready for panel interviews on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The panel will rate and rank the candidates and provide its recommendation to the mayor in the following days.

The Mayor advised the Mercer Group that the position was being advertised locally and to coordinate with the City's Human Resources Director for any local applicants who were interested in the position.

Due to the expedited nature of this executive search, the Mercer Group did not rely on traditional methods of posting the recruitment profile on websites such as the Municipal League, the Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, or the International City Management Association. Instead, it relied on its internal database and networking contacts to seek out qualified candidates who might be interested in the city managers position.

Only three local applications were received by the City's Human Resources Director from interested persons who responded to the local posting. The Mercer Group also conducted its own search for qualified candidates throughout New Mexico and the surrounding states.

Many potential candidates were screened during this period. Each of the potential candidates was required to respond as their qualifications and how they meet the

knowledge, skills, and abilities noted above. The resumes of the top six candidates will be submitted to Mayor Marquez for his overall review. Each of these candidates met the qualifications for the position.

The Mayor authorized the Mercer Group to schedule the six finalists for a formal interview, and to initiate a complete background investigation. The background investigations for these finalists commenced in late January and the candidates were notified of their selection for consideration.

The Mayor has agreed to appoint a Screening Committee of local citizens, and has asked the Mercer Group to also serve on the committee. Mayor Marquez will be announcing the names of the finalists within the next few days.

The finalists have been invited to come to Las Vegas on Tuesday, February 3, 2009 to meet with city management and with the department heads. A tour of the City departments is being organized so that the finalists are briefed on major issues and to meet the staff. An informal reception is also planned that evening so that the members of the Council, the department heads, and the community can come and meet the finalists.

The Mayor will make the final selection, and may schedule follow up interviews with the top finalists. Mayor Marquez said, "It is my hope that this extensive search process will result in the appointment of an experienced manager who will assist the governing body in improving city governance and the services we provide to our citizens."