



Executive
Search & Recruitment Services
for

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 30, 2021

THE MERCER GROUP, INC.

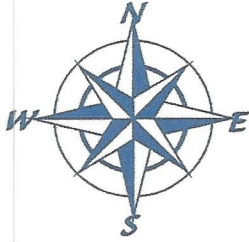
Dona Higginbotham

Senior Vice President

3245 S. Atlantic Ave., Suite 607

Daytona Beach Shores, Florida 32118

www.mercergroupincflorida.com



Mercer Group Florida LLC

Consultants To Management

July 30, 2021

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization
2570 West International Speedway Boulevard, Suite 100
Daytona Beach, Florida 32114-8145

The Mercer Group, Inc. understands River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization is looking to engage the services of an executive search firm to conduct executive search and recruitment services for an Executive Director.

The Mercer Group, Inc. dba Mercer Group Florida is pleased to assist and to recruit exceptionally well-qualified candidates for the position of Executive Director. If selected to conduct the recruitment for this position, we will have no difficulty beginning immediately to ensure a smooth process. It is our understanding that the scope of work, minimum responsibilities, and search and recruitment services shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Development of Candidate Profile and Recruitment.
- Production of Recruitment materials
- Strategy Outreach to best-fit candidates and Advertising Campaign.
- Candidate Screening.
- Background check
- Candidate selection, background and offer.
- Appointment and follow-up.

The objectives that we will meet to find the best qualified candidates for the Executive Director position are as follows:

- To conduct needs assessment for the new Executive Director.
- To develop a comprehensive position profile.
- To encourage top level people to apply who would otherwise be reluctant to respond to an advertisement.
- To save a considerable amount of the Organization's time in establishing a position profile and reviewing applicants.
- To comply with appropriate personnel regulations and state laws (i.e., EEO, Affirmative Action and ADA).
- To assess the qualifications and suitability of candidates independently and objectively for the position.

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization
Page Two

- To respond to all candidate inquiries and produce all correspondence during the search.
- To recommend a pool of finalist candidates.
- To assist in finalist selection.
- To assist staff with coordinating finalist candidate interviews.
- To preserve the confidentiality of inquiries to the degree possible under Florida law.
- To assist the Organization in reaching a final decision.
- To assist in negotiating a compensation package with the successful candidate.
- To keep the liaison closely involved in key decisions and informed of our progress.

The purpose for engaging the services of an executive search firm is to seek out and recruit experienced candidates and to assist the Organization in selecting highly qualified individuals who meet the profile and needs of the Organization and who might not otherwise apply. The Mercer Group, Inc. is well-qualified to assist with this project. Most recently we have successfully completed and/or currently engaged in searches for the Cities of Largo, Deltona, Port Orange, DeBary, St. Petersburg, Temple Terrace, St. Pete Beach, Cocoa, Gainesville, Dunedin, Fort Myers, Deerfield Beach, Hallandale Beach, Hollywood, Key Biscayne, Mary Esther, New Port Richey, Orange Park, Palatka, Palm Beach, Palmetto Bay, Plant City, Pompano Beach, St. Cloud as well as Hernando County, Hillsborough County, Citrus County, Polk County, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority and TBARTA. These are just the **Florida** recruitments; there are many more in the Southeast and nation-wide. www.MercerGroupIncFlorida/ExecuteRecruiting

The Mercer Group, Inc. has been in operation for over thirty years with corporate headquarters in Atlanta and branch offices in thirteen (13) states, including **Volusia County Florida**. The Mercer Group, Inc. has the resources available to conduct this search and avoid untimely delays in the process. A list of City and County Administrator searches is attached for your reference. Mercer Group Florida LLC, a minority owned LLC, has been in operation since June 2010 and focuses primarily in Florida.

If selected, I will personally lead this recruitment from our Daytona Beach Shores office; with over 20 years of recruiting experience, I am uniquely qualified to lead this search for The River to Sea TPO's Executive Director.

The Mercer Group Florida fees for the Executive Search/Recruitment Services are:
\$17,750.00 plus expenses not to exceed \$2,250.00.

Thank you for the opportunity to assist River to Sea TPO with this important assignment. Please contact me directly at 954-559-8865 if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Dona Higginbotham

Dona Higginbotham
MERCER GROUP FLORIDA

Executive Summary of what The Mercer Group offers River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization

Qualifications and Staffing

The Mercer Group, Inc. has been in operation for over thirty (30) years with offices in thirteen (13) States, including **Volusia County, Florida**.

Mercer Group Florida, a minority owned company, has been in operation since June 2010.

Dona Higginbotham will be partnering with the River to Sea TPO for the Executive Director Search and Recruitment Services and will serve the Organization from our Daytona Beach Shores location. More information about current and previous searches is available at: <http://mercergroupincflorida.com/about-us>

Understanding the Project & Our Approach

Services provided include, but are not limited to:

- position analysis
- preparation of position profile
- recruitment for the position
- inviting potential candidates to apply
- reviewing and screening all applications
- conducting screening interviews
- recommending a list of final candidates
- reference checks
- background checks of selected candidates
- coordinating final interviews
- contract negotiating as required
- following up following placement of Executive Director

Our 7-Step Search Process

We recommend a seven (7)-step search process as follows:

1. **Position Analysis** - Define work relationships, job qualifications and requirements for the position - the "Position Profile".
2. **Recruitment Process** - Recruit State-wide, regionally, and nationally for the position and network to locate qualified candidates.
3. **Resume Review** - Identify qualified candidates.
4. **Candidate Screening** - Thoroughly screen prospective candidates.
5. **Background Investigation** - Thoroughly evaluate prospective candidates.
6. **Interview Process** - Make recommendations and assist in selection.
7. **Negotiation and Follow-up** - Facilitate employment and follow-up to ensure complete integrity of the process.

The **Candidate Screening** will be handled personally and thoroughly by Ms. Higginbotham of the Mercer Group Florida.

Schedule

While the schedule and timeline will be determined by the River to Sea TPO following our consultations, the schedule we recommend provides for the successful candidate to be selected within 12 weeks from start to finish or an alternate schedule as determined by the Board.

PROJECTED TIMELINE	DELIVERABLE
One week following execution of agreement	Kickoff Meeting with designated individual(s)
Week One	Interviews/Consultation (as desired) to: *Develop Characteristics & Attributes of a Successful Candidate. *Develop Compensation Package and Job Description
Week Three	Approve Recruitment Materials
Week Three - Search Officially Opens	Recruitment of Qualified Individuals Ads Placed
Weeks Three through Seven	Send Recruitment Materials Invitation Letter
Weeks Three through Seven	Outreach Telephone Calls/Email
As received	Acknowledge Receipt of Application Materials
Week Seven	Closing Date for Receipt of Applications
Ongoing through Week Seven	Screen Applications Against Selection Criteria Consultant Interviews of Top Candidates
Week Nine	Meet with the designated liaison to Review Top Candidates and assist in the selection of Finalists.
Weeks Ten	Conduct Reference and Background Checks Final Candidates (conditional offer may be made to candidate)
Week Ten	Send Interview Guide of Selected Finalists
Week Twelve	Conduct Interviews of Selected Finalists
Week Twelve	Selection of Candidate
Week Twelve	Negotiate Agreement
Close of search process	Notify Candidates Not Selected

Reasonable Fees

The Mercer Group. proposes a **fee of \$17,750.00, plus expenses not to exceed \$2,250.00, for the Executive Search/Recruitment Services** for the River to Sea TPO.

SEARCH / RECRUITMENT SERVICES	FEE
Position Analysis	2,750
Outreach Campaign	2,750
Resume Review	2,875
Candidate Screening	2,875
Background Investigation	3,250
Interview Process	2,750
Negotiation and Follow-up	500
TOTAL FEE	\$17,750

The **only** additional cost to the Organization, will be the costs related to bringing candidates to the River to Sea TPO for in-person interviews. Transportation, hotel, meals, etc.

Guarantees

We make ten (10) guarantees of our search and recruitment work for River to Sea TPO.

1. **Client Organization:** The client is defined as the entire entity, including all departments, divisions, sections and groups. This assures that all our guarantees apply to the entire client organization.
2. **Two-Year Off Limits:** We will not recruit candidates from a client organization for two years after completion of a search assignment without the full agreement of the client.
3. **Placement Off Limits Forever:** We will never recruit a candidate whom we have placed in a client organization as long as he/she is employed by that organization without the full agreement of the client.
4. **Continue the Search:** If, for any reason, the client does not feel comfortable selecting a candidate from our original recommended group of candidates, we will continue the search until the client can make a selection.
5. **Replacement of Successful Candidate:** If the candidate we place with the client leaves the client organization for any reason during the 12-month period following the date of placement with the client, we will replace the candidate for out-of-pocket expenses only and **there will be no professional fees** charged by The Mercer Group Florida to make the new placement.

6. **Parallel Candidate Presentation:** We will not present a candidate simultaneously to more than one client. This permits our firm to represent one client organization without any conflicts of interest.
7. **Client Conflicts:** If asked, we will disclose to our clients the names of the organizations which are "Off Limits" that logically would be target organizations on the new search assignment.
8. **Deceptive/Misleading Search Techniques:** We commit to our clients and to our prospective candidates that we will not use any search techniques which may be considered as deceptive or misleading.
9. **Resume Floating:** We will not float resumes to organizations in the hopes that we can collect a fee if that individual is hired.
10. **Not Represent Individuals:** We assure our clients and individuals who may become candidates that we will not collect a fee from candidates whom we may recommend for a position.

Mercer Group Florida looks forward to partnering with the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization.

THE MERCER GROUP, INC.
Dona Higginbotham
Senior Vice President
3245 S. Atlantic Ave., Suite 607
Daytona Beach Shores, Florida 32118
Cell: 954-559-8865
www.mercergroupincflorida.com

Mercer Group Inc. City and County Administrator Searches 2015 - 2021

City Managers/Administrators

Aberdeen, Washington – City Administrator - 2018
Avondale Estates, Georgia – City Manager - 2018
Beacon, New York - City Administrator – 2015
Berwyn Heights, Maryland – Town Manager - 2018
Billings, Montana – City Administrator – 2018
Brunswick, Georgia—City Manager - 2020
Biscayne Village, Florida – Village Manager - 2018
Bowie, Maryland – City Manager – 2016
Bryan County, Georgia – Assistant County Manager - 2021
Cartersville, Georgia – City Manager – 2018
Charlotte, North Carolina – City Manager - 2008
Cheverly, Maryland – Town Administrator - 2019
City of South Fulton, Georgia – City Manager - 2018
Clarkston, Georgia – City Manager - 2018
Cleveland, Tennessee – City Manager - 2016
Clinton, North Carolina – City Manager - 2018
Cocoa, Florida – City Manager - 2020
College Park, Maryland - City Manager - 2015
Coventry, Rhode Island - Town Manager - 2015
Creedmoor, North Carolina - City Manager - 2015
DeBary, Florida – City Manager – 2019
Delray Beach, Florida – City Manager - 2018
Delta, Colorado – City Manager - 2015
Deltona, Florida - City Manager - 2015
Dover, Delaware – City Manager – 2020
Dunedin, Florida – City Manager - 2016
Emerald Isle, North Carolina – Town Manager - 2019
Fairburn, Georgia – City Administrator - 2018
Forest Lake, Minnesota – City Administrator – 2018
Fort Myers, Florida – City Manager - 2021
Franklin, New Hampshire – City Manager – 2018
Goldsboro, North Carolina – City Manager - 2019
Great Falls, Montana – Deputy City Manager - 2016
Hallandale Beach, Florida – City Manager - 2019
Hampton, Virginia – Assistant City Manager - 2018
Hartford, Vermont – Town Manager - 2015
Hastings, Minnesota – City Administrator – 2019
High Point, North Carolina – City Manager - 2021
Indian River Shores, Florida – Town Manager - 2018
Indian Trail, North Carolina – Town Manager - 2020
Isle of Palms, South Carolina – City Administrator - 2019
Largo, Florida – City Manager – 2016
Las Cruces, New Mexico – City Manager - 2015
Lebanon, New Hampshire - City Manager - 2015
Mankato, Minnesota – City Manager - 2020
Manteo, North Carolina – Town Manager - 2018
Marco Island, Florida – City Manager - 2017
New Carrollton, Maryland – City Administrative Officer - 2016
New Shoreham, Rhode Island – Town Manager - 2016
Norcross, Georgia – City Manager - 2020
Oxford, North Carolina, City Manager – 2017
Palatka, Florida—City Manager –2019
Palmetto Bay, Florida – Village Manager - 2020
Pocomoke City, Maryland - City Manager - 2015
Polson, Montana—City Manager-2020
Poolesville, Maryland – Town Manager - 2019
Port Orange, Florida - City Manager - 2015

Portsmouth, Virginia - City Manager - 2015
Portsmouth, Virginia - Deputy City Manager - 2015
Poughkeepsie, New York - City Administrator - 2016
Rosenberg, Texas - City Manager - 2015
Roosevelt City, Utah - City Manager - 2020
Roswell, Georgia - City Administrator - 2018
Scottsdale, Arizona - City Manager - 2016
Seabrook Island, South Carolina - Town Administrator - 2017
Sidney, Nebraska - City Manager - 2020
Social Circle, Georgia - City Manager - 2021
South Kingstown, Rhode Island - Town Manager - 2018
Southern Shores, North Carolina - Town Manager - 2020
South St. Paul, Minnesota - City Administrator - 2018
St. Cloud, Florida - City Manager - 2015
Takoma Park, Maryland - City Manager - 2015
Temple Terrace, Florida - City Manager - 2016
Town of Berwyn Heights, Maryland - Town Manager - 2020
Village of Palmetto Bay, Florida - Village Manager - 2020
Westminster, Maryland - City Administrator - 2016
West St. Paul, Minnesota - City Manager - 2017 - 2021

County Managers/Administrators Searches 2013 - 2021

Archuleta County, Colorado - County Administrator - 2013
Brevard County, Viera, Florida - County Manager - 2017
Citrus County, Florida - County Administrator - 2014
Forsyth County, Georgia - County Manager - 2017
Gaston County, North Carolina - Assistant County Manager - 2019
Glynn County, Georgia - County Manager - 2021

Liberty County, Georgia - Asst. County Administrator - 2019
Los Angeles County, California - Assistant Chief Executive Officer & Legislative Affairs - 2018
Pickens County, South Carolina - County Administrator - 2016
Powhatan County, Virginia - County Administrator - 2017

Transportation/Transit Authorities

Bellevue, Washington, Transportation Director - 2019
Charleston, South Carolina - Director of Transportation - 2016
Collier County - Naples, Florida - Transit Manager - 2017

REFERENCES

Reference**Position(s) Filled / Year**

Mayor Kevin Anderson
City of Fort Myers
P.O. Box 2217
Fort Myers, Florida 33902
Phone (239)-321-7020

City Manager 2021

Councilmember Liston Bouchette
City of Fort Myers
P.O. Box 2217
Fort Myers, Florida 33902
Phone: 239-340-4040

City Manager 2021

Mayor Karyn Cunningham
Village of Palmetto Bay
9705 East Hibiscus Street
Palmetto Bay, FL 33157
Phone: 305-799-0695

Village Manager 2020

Mayor Terrell Hill
City of Palatka
201 N. 2nd Street
Palatka, FL 32177
Phone: 386-937-1846

City Manager 2019
Finance Director 2020

Don Holmes, City Manager
City of Palatka
201 N. 2nd Street
Palatka, FL 32177
Phone: 386-329-0159

City Manager 2019
Finance Director 2020

George Keller, Deputy City Manager
City of Hollywood, Florida
2600 Hollywood Blvd
Hollywood, Florida 33022-9045
Phone: 954-232-4186

Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts 2020
Deputy Director Public Utilities/Finance 2020
Director of Financial Services 2020
Deputy City Attorney 2020



City of Fort Myers
Kevin B. Anderson
Mayor

May 21, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am both pleased and honored to write this letter of reference for Dona Higginbotham of Mercer Group Florida. This was my first opportunity to work with a search firm in my official capacity as Mayor of the City of Fort Myers. The City Council interviewed four potential firms and Mercer was rated either first or second among all councilmembers. My decision to rank Mercer number one was an easy decision thanks to Ms. Higginbotham's outstanding presentation.

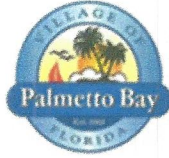
Ms. Higginbotham demonstrated a firm of understanding of the needs of the position. She interviewed each councilmember and me extensively to determine what qualities we were looking for in our next city manager. From a list of 113 applicants, she presented us with 10 highly qualified candidates. It was a challenge to pare the list down to three.

After doing so, Ms. Higginbotham coordinated the candidates' visit to Fort Myers, a citizen review panel, a meet-and-greet between the public and the candidates, meetings with staff, and one-on-one interviews with the elected officials. Throughout the entire process Ms. Higginbotham was nothing less than professional, responsive, efficient, and well prepared to fulfill her obligations.

It was an absolute pleasure working with her and I look forward to future opportunities to work together again.

Sincerely,

Kevin B. Anderson
Mayor



December 16, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

It gives me great pleasure to provide this letter of recommendation on behalf of the Mercer Group.

The Mercer Group recently provided consulting services for the Village of Palmetto Bay's Village Manager search. Ms. Dona Higginbotham, the firm's Senior Vice President, conducted a national search for the position. Palmetto Bay is a small municipality in South Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Under normal circumstances, a national search for this position, given the limitations we placed on salary and benefits, would have been difficult, but the challenges of conducting a search during a global pandemic added an additional hurdle for the Council and the firm. Ms. Higginbotham was not only professional and thorough, but she conducted her work with a personal and hands on approach. She spent time both virtually and in person to discuss with each member of the Council the qualities we were looking for in a Village Manager, advertised the position, reviewed the resumes, interviewed the many that applied and brought to the Council the most qualified individuals as semi-finalists. I am proud to say that the search garnered a candidate that not only brings experience and expertise but also checks all our search criteria boxes!

As someone who has worked in public service my entire professional career both as teacher and public school advocate for thirty-five years, and an elected official in my hometown of Palmetto Bay for six years, I have had the opportunity to work with many individuals and businesses, large and small, in our diverse community.

We had many choices of firms to contract with, but I am so pleased we choose to work with the Mercer Group. It is rare to have the opportunity to find consultants that embody not only work ethic and skill but provide the professional and personal touch. The Mercer Group and Dona Higginbotham are rare finds in consulting world.

Should you have any further questions, I can be reached by phone anytime at 305-799-0695 or by email at kcunningham@palmettobay-fl.gov.

Warm regards,

Mayor Karyn Cunningham
Village of Palmetto Bay
9705 East Hibiscus Street
Palmetto Bay, FL 33157

December 18, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

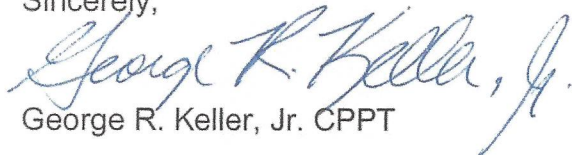
Please accept this correspondence as my sincere and firm letter of reference for Dona Higginbotham of Mercer Group Florida. On behalf of the City of Hollywood, FL, I have had the pleasure and success of working directly with Ms. Higginbotham and Mercer Group Florida on multiple occasions in recent years in the search for key senior management personnel. The two most recent experiences involved finding and securing individuals to serve as major department directors for our municipality. In both cases, the City had followed traditional "in house" public advertising and search processes on a national scale repeatedly over an extended period of time. Unfortunately, both efforts proved unsuccessful in identifying a match despite prolonged and persistent actions via all of our internal resources.

We then turned to Mercer Group Florida and Ms. Higginbotham. In both cases, new candidates were identified and the single right fit was secured for each key position, in a fraction of the time already spent by the City. Ms. Higginbotham's professional services cost structure was also very competitive compared with other major search firms, and in fact was lower than most. In retrospect, the City should have used the services of Ms. Higginbotham from the initial outset saving a good deal of time and expense.

Ms. Higginbotham has proven through our collective experiences to be very insightful, persistent, and sensitive to the needs of our organization. She has always conducted herself and represented our City as an ethical professional whom we could trust and depend upon to follow our needs and directions, especially in the most sensitive and difficult of search efforts. She has always conducted her thorough due diligence in finding, evaluating and proposing candidates; and only those that were credible and of substance. Her respected reputation and that of Mercer Group Florida is well earned and deserved. The City will look to use her services again in the future.

You are welcome to contact me directly at 954-232-4186 should you desire any additional information.

Sincerely,


George R. Keller, Jr. CPPT

Deputy City Manager

2600 Hollywood Boulevard
P.O. Box 229045
Hollywood, Florida
33022-9045

hollywoodfl.org

