

CITY MANAGER

Garden Ridge, Texas



EXECUTIVE
RECRUITMENT
PROVIDED BY



NATURALLY HOME

THE COMMUNITY

Located along the southeastern edge of the Texas Hill Country in Comal County, the City of Garden Ridge is “Naturally Home” to approximately 5,000 residents, a motto that reflects the community’s appreciation for its natural setting and hometown feel. The city derived its name from a series of ridges overlooking fields of wildflowers on the upslope of the famous Texas Hill Country on ranch and farmland owned and cultivated by immigrant and first-generation Germans. At about 7.1 square miles and incorporated in 1972, the city sits approximately 3 miles west of Interstate 35, 20 miles northeast of downtown San Antonio, and 12 miles west of downtown New Braunfels.

Garden Ridge is predominantly a bedroom community whose growth reflects one of the fastest-growing communities in South Texas. Residents enjoy native trees and rolling hills, along with the convenience of large-city amenities just a few miles down the road. As the region has grown, new residents are drawn to Garden Ridge’s natural beauty and small-town charm. Today’s Garden Ridge is a mixture of long-time residents who stay for the country feel of the city and newcomers who want to raise their families in a safe, close-knit community.

Here, you can find the beautiful Paul Davis Park, a prime location for various events throughout the year, including the monthly “First Friday” events featuring live music, good food, and great conversations. The community library also offers activities almost daily to suit any age, and a Community and Event Center boasting spacious rooms available for any event, from business dinners to birthday parties.

Garden Ridge is also known for its numerous annual events, including a 4th of July parade and celebration, and a candy-filled Trunk-or-Treat. Christmas has always been a particularly special time; in the early 1970s, families would gather and go caroling for elderly residents. On other evenings, the caroling would move in front of City Hall while City Council met. These traditions evolved into the city’s annual spectacular Christmas tree lighting event with entertainment from local schools, photo ops, food, and a visit from Santa to round out the special night.

Garden Ridge school children are served by Comal ISD, with district-wide enrollment topping 30,200, and universities in nearby San Antonio, Live Oak,



Seguin, San Marcos, and New Braunfels offer a range of opportunities for higher education. This includes everything from major state schools like Texas State University and Texas A&M University-San Antonio to smaller religious options like Texas Lutheran College and Howard Payne University's New Braunfels Center.

While the city is predominately built out residentially, leaders are seeking quality upscale retail development along the FM 2252 corridor to create a destination for residents and visitors alike. They also hope to attract smaller residential developments to allow current residents to downsize without leaving the community they know and love. The median household income in Garden Ridge is about \$156,700, and the average home is priced around \$702,300.

GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

Since voters approved its charter in 2023, Garden Ridge operates as a home-rule community with a council-manager form of government.

The City Council — including five council members and a mayor who votes only to break a tie — enacts policies, adopts ordinances and resolutions, establishes the annual budget, and sets the city tax and utility rates. All City Council positions are elected at large for two-year terms without limits. In addition to the City Manager, these elected officials select the City Attorney and Municipal Court Judge.

The City's current City Manager will be retiring in 2025 after serving the city for 22 years. The City Council wishes to have a new City Manager selected in early 2025 to facilitate a smooth transition. The City Manager the daily operations of 33 full-time, one part-time and one contract employee, and an operating budget of over \$8.1 million, based in part on an ad valorem tax rate of \$0.255156 per \$100 in valuation. Garden Ridge holds an AA bond rating and was recently awarded the Texas Municipal League's Municipal Excellence Award for City Spirit in the under 25,000 population category.

Major projects underway or recently completed include the relocation of water utilities along Hwy. 2252 in preparation for a TxDOT widening project, a remodel of the community center, and several utility projects to improve the community's water system. The City is also working on a transportation plan and implementation strategy to address traffic congestion.



ABOUT THE POSITION

Under the direction of the Mayor and City Council, the Garden Ridge City Manager serves as the organization's chief administrative and executive officer, overseeing all aspects of daily operations for the community.

Tasked with promoting and demonstrating integrity, transparency, service excellence, and servant leadership, this position manages the development and implementation of City goals, objectives, policies, and priorities. They also partner with the governing body and staff to develop the annual operating and capital budgets and monitor progress throughout the year; analyze and make recommendations for cost-effective improvements in City operations; work with department heads to design, evaluate, and administer departmental programs and services; plan and manage capital projects; and provide support and guidance to elected and appointed officials on a wide range of issues.

Additionally, the City Manager executes deeds, easements, releases, contracts, and other legal instruments on the City's behalf, serves as the organization's Zoning Administrator, and represents the City to various stakeholders, from county, state, and federal officials to civic groups, members of the media, and residents.

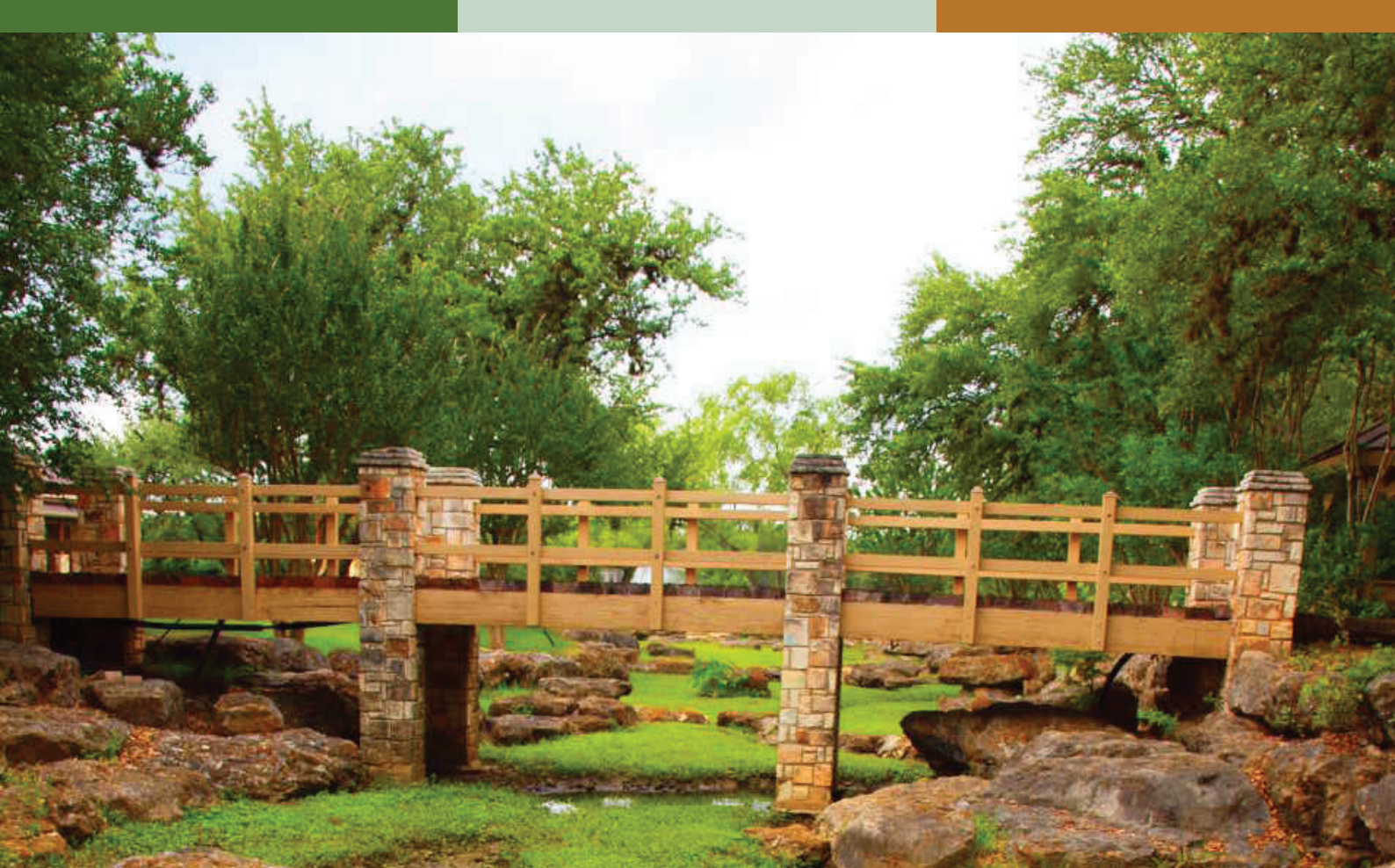
This role's direct reports include the City Secretary, Chief of Police, Finance-HR Director, Public Works Director, Librarian, and Community Center Manager. In addition to the City Council, the selected candidate will work closely with the Planning and Zoning Commission, Water Commission, and Zoning Board of Adjustment.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The next City Manager of Garden Ridge will play a pivotal role in maintaining the organization's exceptional service and the community's small-town charm. While the city is largely built out residentially with minimum lot sizes of 3/4 acre with residential septic systems, careful, strategic planning is essential to ensuring that the last of the community's growth and any redevelopment is handled appropriately. Opportunities and challenges awaiting the selected candidate include:

- **Strategic Growth** — The next decade will require a forward-thinking approach to manage growth while maintaining Garden Ridge's small-town identity. The new City Manager will work with City Council to develop a strategic plan and to strengthen zoning and development processes, including reviewing and updating ordinances and policies as needed.
- **Economic Development** — Creating an economic development plan is essential to targeting commercial development and growing the city's sales tax base. Educating the community on the benefits of having a strong retail sector and the need to strengthen revenue streams will be a vital part of this effort as the City aims to become a destination rather than simply a bedroom community.
- **Partnerships and Community Engagement** — The new manager will work closely with regional partners, especially San Antonio, regarding annexing issues and other area concerns. Additionally, there is an opportunity to establish a productive relationship with the local quarry, one of the largest for aggregate in the world, addressing concerns like traffic, noise, and dust while collaborating with the Texas Legislature regarding mining regulations.
- **Capital Improvements and Infrastructure** — Developing short- and long-term capital improvement plans will be a priority, as well as working with TxDOT on necessary state roadway improvements. Maintaining a continuous street improvement program, expanding the city's backup water supply, and enhancing recreational and entertainment options will also be essential to supporting the community's needs, as will developing a comprehensive facility master plan.
- **Residential Development and Housing** — As Garden Ridge evolves, there is a growing need for more housing options, including senior living communities. The City Manager will be tasked with balancing this demand with maintaining the city's character as a charming, multi-generational community.
- **Operations and Staffing** — Reviewing operating capital, evaluating staffing levels, updating technology, and improving operational efficiency are ongoing needs as the city strives for continuous improvement. Since staff members often perform multiple roles, assessing skills and ensuring competitive compensation benefits will be critical for employee retention and recruitment.
- **Advocacy and Legislative Awareness** — In addition to building relationships with area communities, the successful candidate will stay informed on Texas Legislature initiatives, particularly those impacting property taxes, and advocate for the city's interests.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Garden Ridge is searching for a visionary and strategic City Manager ready to lead a small community through its next growth phase.

The new manager should bring a proactive, collaborative leadership style with a focus on innovation, community engagement, and operational excellence. With a strong background in municipal management or appropriate transferable experience, they will guide the city's day-to-day operations, work closely with the City Council, and address residents' needs.

This role requires a leader with exceptional communication skills who can effectively engage with residents, staff, and external stakeholders. The selected candidate must be accessible, approachable, and actively involved in the community, listening to resident concerns, building consensus, and fostering a sense of trust. A personable and energetic leader, they will inspire and motivate City staff while ensuring their ongoing development and accountability.

Candidates should have experience managing municipal finances, a deep understanding of planning, zoning, and economic development, and proven experience working through growth-related challenges, including water and wastewater systems. Familiarity with implementing Public Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones is particularly valuable, as is an understanding of the Texas Open Meeting and Records Acts.

The ideal candidate is a servant leader with strong public relations and customer service acumen who can keep multiple projects and priorities organized and on track without losing their attention to detail. They understand how to drive innovation, manage change, remain assertive yet friendly, and work closely with elected and appointed officials on crafting and implementing strategic goals. And they will work effectively with regional partners, state and federal organizations, and local boards and commissions to address the needs and desires of Garden Ridge residents as well as broader regional challenges.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

This role requires a bachelor's degree in business, accounting, or public administration, with a master's degree in public administration, political science, or business preferred.

Candidates should also have seven (7) to 10 years of municipal administrative experience, including five (5) in a managerial or executive role. Any combination of education and experience that provides the appropriate knowledge and skills for this position may be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Garden Ridge is offering a salary range of \$160,000 to \$180,000 for this position, alongside a comprehensive benefits package. The organization's benefits include health, dental, vision, life, AD&D, short- and long-term disability insurance, 15 paid holidays, and generous paid leave. This role will also receive a monthly phone allowance.

The City participates in the Texas Municipal Retirement System, including a 5% employee contribution and 2:1 employer match.

APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position, contact:

Jay Singleton, Senior Vice President

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817-223-2654



The City of Garden Ridge, Texas, is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

RESOURCES

City of Garden Ridge

ci.garden-ridge.tx.us

City Manager's Office

ci.garden-ridge.tx.us/128/City-Manager

The Northeast Partnership

satx-northeastpartnership.com

Chamber of Commerce

txtricitychamber.org

