



General Manager Position Profile

Organization overview

The San Antonio River Authority is an award-winning agency dedicated to preserving, protecting, and managing the resources and environment of the San Antonio River basin (Bexar, Goliad, Karnes, and Wilson counties.) It is involved in flood control, water quality, parks, wastewater services, and conservation.

In 1937, the Texas legislature created what is now the San Antonio River Authority, which has authority to impose an *ad valorem* tax, proceeds from which can only be used for planning, operations, and maintenance. The current tax rate is set at \$0.01858 per \$100 assessed property valuation; average annual tax on a residential homestead is \$40.20. The River Authority's 2020-2021 budget is \$374 million and it has more than 300 employees. The River Authority is governed by 12 elected directors – six from Bexar County and two each from the other counties.

“Committed to Safe, Clean, Enjoyable Creeks and Rivers” is the mission statement of the River Authority. Examples of actions the River Authority has taken toward the mission statement include:

Safe

- Providing project management and technical expertise on flood mitigation.
- Constructing, operating, and maintaining flood control dams.
- Helping to update and maintain floodplain maps.
- Developing predictive flood technology.
- Creating and maintaining watershed master plans; partnering with other agencies in the regional watershed management program.
- Managing such major projects as the San Antonio River Improvements Project (13 miles of the San Antonio River in urban San Antonio) and the San Pedro Creek Improvements Project (unique urban greenspace in downtown San Antonio).
- Removing debris to maintain flow capacity of waterways.

Clean

- Conducting water quality monitoring and assessment for Texas' Clean Rivers Program.
- Implementing trash, debris, and dumping removal projects and litter prevention programs.
- Working with conservation districts to advance land and water conservation practices.
- Owning, operating, and maintaining wastewater treatment plants in Northeast Bexar County; providing contract operations and services to several other entities and communities.
- Reducing threats to the health of creeks and rivers through sustainable practices and analysis of master plan growth zones and resulting municipal rules and ordinances.
- Promoting sustainable development practices through rebate programs and city partnerships.

Enjoyable

- Providing recreational and/or educational programming for parks and paddling trails.
- Construction of and programming for recently opened Escondido Creek Parkway in Kenedy.
- Supporting efforts to enhance access, use, and appreciation of points of cultural interest.
- Promoting a regional approach to park planning and conservation.

The River Authority works with numerous governmental and community partners to fulfill its mission. The following are among its primary current and former partners (not an inclusive list):

- Bexar County Commissioners Court
- Brackenridge Park Conservancy
- Edwards Aquifer Authority
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Guadalupe Blanco River Authority
- Local groundwater conservation districts
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- National Park Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Nueces River Authority
- San Antonio and 20 suburban cities in the metro area
- San Antonio Bay Partnership
- San Antonio River Foundation (founded by the River Authority)
- San Antonio Water System
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Texas Water Development Board
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Wilson, Karnes, and Goliad counties

For additional information on the San Antonio River Authority, visit: www.sariverauthority.org

Position overview

San Antonio River Authority is seeking a new general manager (GM) to serve as the chief executive of the organization, ensuring success by building upon the River Authority's strengths and facing its challenges. The GM manages the affairs and business of the River Authority and serves as liaison with Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, the Texas Legislature, and the other governmental and community entities in the River Authority's four-county area.

The GM will be a proven business executive or professional who will need a rare combination of attributes and skills to succeed – financial acumen, business smarts, understanding of water and environmental issues, vision, external relations expertise, flexibility, and strong communication skills. The GM needs to be able to work and negotiate successfully with both large and small partners, both private, public, and non-profits, and will serve as the River Authority's primary spokesperson in dealing with those partners.

The board under which the GM will serve is seasoned and well-informed, and the board's charge is to set policy and approve budgets. The GM will work closely with the board to present new and visionary opportunities to sustain and grow the River Authority's revenue, which is currently derived from intergovernmental revenue (nearly 63% of the total), charges for services (7%), and property taxes (11%).

The GM should be adept at navigating many types of potentially sensitive situations, including achieving a balance between the urban and rural areas served by the River Authority, continuing to form and maintain partnerships with public and private entities, and leveraging the River Authority's scientific and technical strengths to initiate new partnerships with the federal government, universities, and businesses.

Sustaining and growing revenue is always a key challenge at the River Authority. Many of its major capital projects have been completed or are coming to an end, and tax revenues are expected to decrease for the River Authority and many of its primary partners in the face of the Covid pandemic and other factors. It is imperative the GM be able to envision and initiate new projects and new sources of revenue to present to the board.

The GM will need flexibility of thought and the ability to assess and adapt quickly to respond to current situations. He or she will also need to be detail-oriented and adept at overseeing the many moving parts in a complex organization that has diverse operations and projects.

The culture of the River Authority is based on trust, results, impact, public service, and strategic thinking. The GM should be able to maintain that culture, while also shoring up the organization through team development, including defining and building succession in the staff.

The GM will be acutely respectful of the cultural and social aspects of the areas served by the River Authority, and will be committed to transparency in all dealings.

Key executive responsibilities

- Planning, formulating, and recommending for board approval policies and programs that will further the objectives of the River Authority and bring about growth.
- Supervising the administration and operations, specific policies, procedures, and programs of the organization.
- Developing the annual budget and managing the functions of the River Authority to operate within the approved budget. Providing strong fiscal management.
- Establishing and maintaining a sound organizational structure for the River Authority, including hiring, development, and succession of team members.

- Serving as the public face of the River Authority. Directing its public information and public relations efforts and serving as the primary liaison to other governmental, civic, business, and media entities.
- Providing professional advice and recommendations to the board of directors on strategic solutions for important policy and political issues.

Executive Skills & Requirements

- Undergraduate (graduate preferred, MS, MBA, MPA, PhD, or JD) degree in law, management, public administration, engineering, geosciences or a related field from an accredited college or university.
- It is preferred that the candidate have at least 15 years of progressively responsible leadership experience and full budgetary responsibility in an organization similar in size to the River Authority. Extensive experience in business strongly preferred.
- Proven business acumen, with ability to maintain and grow revenue.
- Successful track record of working with legislative and regulatory bodies at all levels of government.
- Broad understanding of water and environmental issues required; expertise in one or more of flood control, water quality, wastewater services, and conservation preferred. Knowledge of laws and regulations pertaining to water, water quality, public safety, and environmental matters desired.
- Skilled negotiator. Equally adept at negotiating policy and business deals.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills; able to communicate effectively with widely varying audiences, including officials, constituents, media, business leaders, and technical/scientific advisors.
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and to deliver quality products on time.
- Experience successfully working for a board of directors preferred.
- Understanding of the impact of social media; good technology skills.

Desired Personal Traits

- Visionary leader with passion and energy for the River Authority’s mission and values.
- Able to instill confidence in everyone from business partners to employees to elected officials.
- Entrepreneurial, motivated mind-set.
- Leading by personal involvement and example, but using delegation wisely. Strong work ethic, and a passion for serving in a collaborative environment.
- Emotional intelligence – level-headed, flexible, and dependable. Able to recognize different personality styles to communicate effectively with all.
- Bridge-building personality. Able to work with groups that have different agendas or desired outcomes.
- Integrity beyond reproach. High moral standards appropriate for leading an organization dedicated to the good of the public. Champion of the organizational culture.

Compensation

Competitive compensation with excellent benefits and relocation.

Send resume in confidence to:

Jan Lehman

Lehman Associates

apply@lehmanassociates.com

Office (512) 478-1131

Fax (512) 478-1985

Do NOT contact River Authority staff or board members directly.