

POP. 15,570

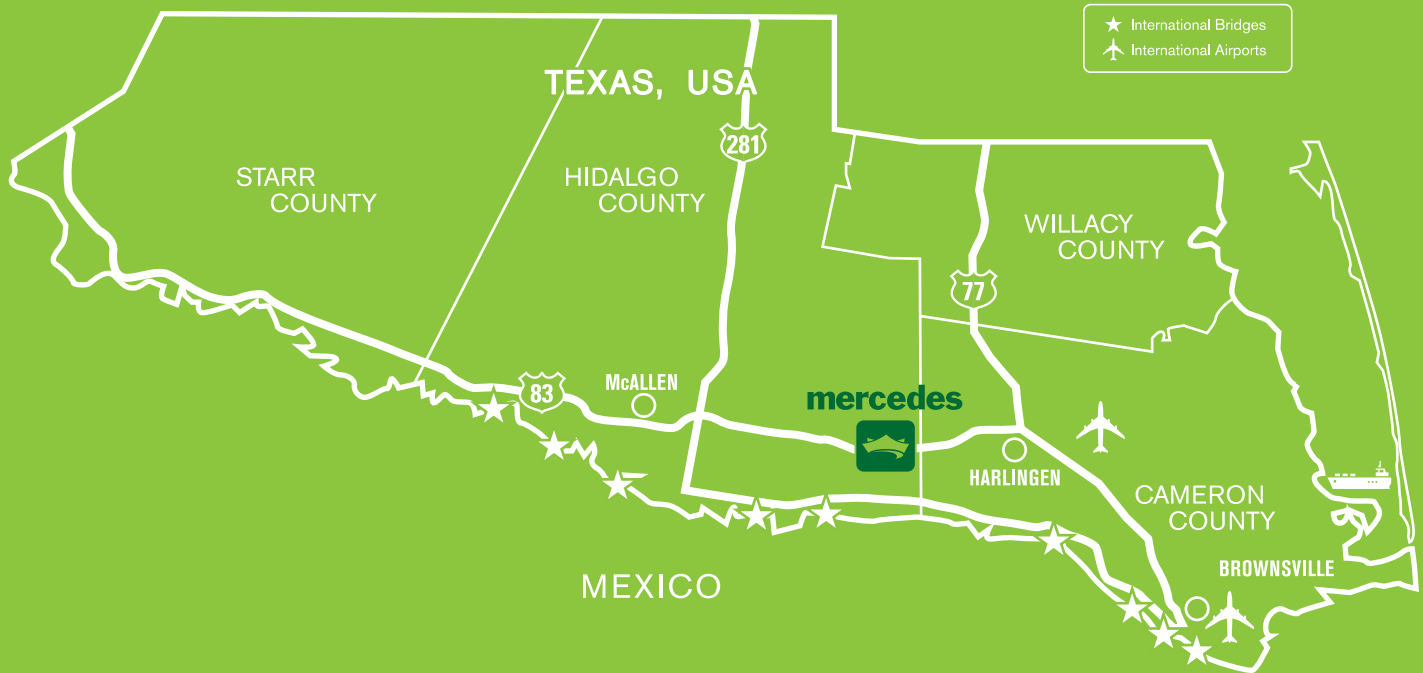
TOTAL AREA: 8.6 SQ. MILES

# WHAT IS THE SECRET TO THIS COMMUNITY'S RETAIL ANOMALY?



economic development

**mercedes**



**26° 8' 57" N / 97° 54' 47" W**

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# 7 million visitors annually

Catering to a consumer base of 10 million within a 200 mile radius, **Mercedes** receives over 7 million visitors annually.

## business

The Development Corporation of Mercedes recognizes that selecting the perfect location is critical for a business to thrive. With this understanding in mind, the Development Corporation has compiled all relevant data to assist businesses in selecting their ideal location. It has integrated workforce development, labor force, area demographics, proximity to international trade, and financial incentive information into one document to facilitate a business decision to ...

**InvestInMercedes.com**

Mercedes is the premier retail hub of South Texas, as it is located at the center of international trade and commerce. Catering to a consumer base of 10 million within a 200 mile radius, Mercedes receives over 7 million visitors annually. Mercedes has formalized a South Texas friendly attitude into a competitive business-friendly environment creating opportunities for growth and long term expansion. Due to an abundance of commercial and industrial space and a wide variety of environmental characteristics, the community can accommodate nearly any operation, large or small. Behind the boom in retail is a large influx of visitors, specifically Mexican visitors and Winter Texans. Serviced by 9 international bridges and 3 airports, Mercedes welcomes tourists from Northern Mexico and Midwestern States year round. As part of the fastest growing MSA in Texas, the area provides a strong

consumer base of 2.3 million within a 50 mile radius supported by a young population. In addition, collaboration among government, social groups, and businesses on issues dealing with quality of life and international trade have enabled Mercedes to retain its major industries and attract businesses. This unique partnership has led to its MSA being ranked the fastest growing in Texas and solidifies Mercedes as the prime location for business.



As part of the **fastest growing MSA in Texas**, the area provides a strong consumer base of 2.3 million within a 50 mile radius supported by a young population.

## about the dcm

The Development Corporation of Mercedes is a publicly funded non-profit corporation, which was established to create jobs in the City of Mercedes by attracting new industry and business as well as assisting existing companies expand.

The Development Corporation of Mercedes utilizes a number of incentive programs designed to make resources available for businesses looking to create new jobs in the community. All incentive plans are designed to provide the most effective assistance in a timely manner. The Development Corporation of Mercedes is committed to providing the services and products your company requires to make an informed decision about investing in Mercedes. The Development Corporation of Mercedes facilitates new business and expansions by providing:

- A database of properties and buildings
- Assistance with the site selection process
- Comprehensive data about the community
- Business start up resources
- Business planning services
- Business development seminars
- Incentives for creating jobs
- Assistance for job training
- Assistance with state and local programs

The Development Corporation of Mercedes is managed by a seven member volunteer board, which works closely with the City of Mercedes administration. This coordinated collaboration and function provides the necessary elements of a positive business environment in order to ensure the success of your business and our community. The Development Corporation of Mercedes is committed to supporting, encouraging and assisting sustainable economic growth in the City of Mercedes.





**Mercedes** is an ideal location for business which provides the benefit of a well trained population of over 153,000 within a 15 mile radius and over 500,000 residents within a 30 mile radius.

## labor

Texas has the second largest civilian workforce in the nation with 10.8 million workers and continues to grow. In the past 10 years, Texas has added 2.2 million new jobs. Mercedes has been a part of this positive trend. Mercedes is an ideal location for business which provides the benefit of a well trained population of over 153,000 within a 15 mile radius and over 500,000 residents within a 30 mile radius.

Employment in the MSA is forecasted to grow at an annual rate of approximately 3 percent over the next two years, a higher rate than the state average. The largest projected increases in jobs are expected to occur in the education and health services sector as a result of the area's high population growth. Education and health services employment

is expected to grow at approximately 8 percent, these are the two most significant indicators of employment growth since nearly 70 percent of employers in the South Texas border region are either schools or hospitals. In addition, leisure and hospitality services employment are expected to grow at a rate of approximately 3 percent, as well as construction employment. Total employment growth rates in the MSA are expected to be supported by the positive spillovers from a well performing Mexican economy and population growth in the area.

### Mercedes Major Employers

City of Mercedes
Cintas
Mercedes ISD
HEB Grocery
South Texas ISD
Magic Valley Electric Co-Op
Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets
L&G Concrete
Pro Build

### MSA Major Employers

Apex Primary Care
Convergys Customer Care
Doctor's Hospital at Renaissance
Health Care Unlimited Inc.
HEB Grocery
IPH Primary Home Care Inc.
McAllen Hospitals LP
Texas Visiting Nurse Services Ltd
T-Mobile USA, Inc.
Wal-Mart Associates Inc.

### Industry Composition

Agriculture 4.1%
Construction 9.4%
Manufacturing 7.4%
Wholesale & Retail Trade 18.4%
Transportation & Warehousing 5.0%
Information 1.7%
Finance 3.7%
Health & Education 26.3%
Arts & Entertainment 7.5%
Professional 6.1%
Public Administration 4.6%
Other 5.7%



**Mercedes** engages in an ongoing partnership with local colleges, workforce training centers, and the Texas Workforce Commission to assist businesses in identifying and enrolling in appropriate training programs

# workforce development

## McAllen/Mission/Edinburg MSA

**1ST** in job growth in the United States

**FASTEST** growing MSA in Texas

**2ND** lowest cost area to live in the United States

**4TH** in job creation and retention in the United States

**8TH** fastest growing MSA in the United States

Mercedes' vibrant workforce is skilled in a wide variety of trades and is complemented by exceptional job training resources available in the area. Mercedes engages in an ongoing partnership with local colleges, workforce training centers, and the Texas Workforce Commission to assist businesses in identifying and enrolling in appropriate training programs.

## South Texas College/Partnership For Community, Business And Industry Training

South Texas College (STC) provides training programs geared to meet local employment needs. Training Managers and Project Training Specialists are able to assess workforce requirements for a specific firm and design a program to fit the needs of that company. It also offers mandatory continuing education units to meet licensing requirements for certified professionals. In addition, Certificates of Completion are available for vocations, such as bookkeeping, automotive mechanics, electronic servicing, general office clerk, industrial maintenance mechanics, medical records clerk and nursing assistant.

## Workforce Solutions

WorkFORCE Solutions collaborates with businesses to locate and train the most qualified employees available. It has locations throughout the MSA that assist businesses in recruiting, screening potential employees and performing skills tests. WorkFORCE

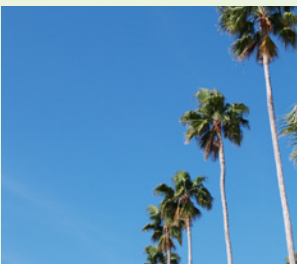
solutions staff can answer questions related to tax incentives for hiring certain target groups, such as welfare recipients. It also offers on the job training, customized training, tax and labor law information.

## Skills Development Fund Program

The Texas Workforce Commission's Skills Development Fund Program assists businesses by financing the design and implementation of customized job training projects/courses. In partnership with a public community college, technical college or a higher education extension agency, the Skills Development Fund will assist in financing customized job training programs to fit the needs of Texas businesses. Courses are customized to fit the company's needs.

## Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center (TMAC)

TMAC is a manufacturing assistance center that specializes in providing expert assistance on appropriate usage of technologies and techniques. TMAC is part of a national network of manufacturing extension partnerships supported by the national institute of standards and technology. This interchangeable network puts a wealth of tools and technology at your disposal. TMAC's field staff specializes in manufacturing and industrial engineering. TMAC has provided services to a wide range of industries such as metalworking, food processing, electronics, plastics, apparel and more.









85% of Mexican visitors cite **shopping** as the number one reason for their visit.

## manufacturing

### Aloe King

John W. Sigrist is the Aloe King. With over 30 years experience in growing, harvesting, and distributing aloe vera, he and the company he formed have set the industry standard for quality and integrity. With an expertise in row crop farming, livestock breeding, and operations and business management, Mr. Sigrist founded Southern Fields Aloe, Inc., in 1984.



Soon after he purchased Lady Love Farms and added an aloe vera processing company, manufacturing plant, and marketing company to the Southern Fields Aloe group. Located in the tropical Rio Grande Valley of Southern Texas, Aloe King provides farm fresh aloe leaves, plants, natural and flavored juices, beverages and jelly, along with topical gels and lotions.

In addition, Aloe King produces both pharmaceutical and cosmetic grade aloe products. A full time chemist certifies the purity and quality of all products before shipping. Aloe King is certified by the US

Department of Agriculture and the Texas Department of Health and the International Aloe Science Council.

### “The Handmade Boot Capital”

Mercedes is often called the handmade boot capital of the Rio Grande Valley as it features three of the finest handmade boot makers in the state, if not the country. Mercedes boot makers have over 200 years of handmade boot making experience and have provided custom boots for the working man, heads of state and celebrities alike.

Rios of Mercedes Handmade Boots dates back to 1853 when the Rios family moved to Texas. Rios family boots are renowned for their excellent fit, appearance and durability. Although no longer operated by the Rios family, its current owners Trainor Evans and J.P. Moody still continue to produce boots using the Rios family tradition.

Cavazos Boot Factory, operated by Vicente Cavazos, has made boots for President Bill Clinton, US Secretary Rod Paige, and actor Tommy Lee Jones. Excelling in artistic stitching, inlays and overlays, Cavazos specializes in imaginative top designs and stylish ostrich wing tips.

Camargo’s Handmade Boots are made by the hands of Henry Camargo who considers himself an artist and lets his imagination fly, producing an assortment of unconventional designs on exotic skins with free-form stitching. Camargo has been commissioned by Willie Nelson and actor Patrick Duffy and is notable for his classic car designs and Texas icons such as the Dallas Cowboys and Lone Star beer logos.



# shopping is number one

Mexican visitors expend **\$1.4 billion annually** in the McAllen - Edinburg - Mercedes MSA.



# shopping begins here

Mercedes is quickly becoming the shopping capital of the Rio Grande Valley!

## shopper's paradise

The Rio Grande Valley is known as a shopper's paradise, with top selling malls, retail outlets, and specialty shops—and that's just on our side of the border. All kinds of Mexican handmade goods and souvenirs are waiting a short drive away from Mercedes, in Mexico. You can even park and walk across the Rio Grande River into fine Mexican shopping.

Rio Grande Premium Outlets® offers a comprehensive mix of designer sportswear, fashions, shoes, housewares and furnishings, children's clothiers, and other gifts and specialty items. All the top brands in fashion and home furnishings are available, including Saks, Adidas, Aeropostale, Bebe, Brooks Brothers, Burberry, Coach, GAP, Geoffrey Beene, Gymboree, Carter's, Kenneth Cole, Kirkland's, Kitchen Collection, Nike, Perry Ellis, Puma, Sony, Van Heusen, and plenty more.

With over 140 retailers and weather that allows enjoyable shopping year around, you should come see why people all over the State and deep into Mexico are coming to Mercedes to shop.



### Rio Grande Premium Outlets®

With a shopping center unlike anything found in South Texas, Mercedes is at the top of the region's shopping destinations, with one of the largest outside malls in the State of Texas.







# 140 designer stores

**All the top brands**, in fashion and home furnishings are available here in Mercedes

A'Gaci , Adidas, Aeropostale, Ann Taylor, Anne Klein, Banana Republic, Charlotte Russe, Converse, Dickies, DKNY, Dockers, Ecco, Ecko Unltd, Kenneth Cole, Lacoste, Lane Bryant, Levi's, Liz Claiborne New York, Official Dallas Cowboys Pro Shop, Old Navy, PacSun, Papaya, Rue21, Saks Fifth Avenue Off 5th, Tommy Hilfiger, Torrid, Tommy Leather, Zoo York, Zumiez, A'Gaci , Adidas, Aeropostale, Ann Taylor, Brothers, Burberry, Calvin Klein, Charlotte Russe, Converse, Guess, Hanes, Hugo Boss, Hurley, Kenneth Cole, Lacoste, Lane Bryant, New York New York, Nike, Oakley Vault, Official Dallas Cowboys Pro Shop, Polo Ralph Lauren, Puma, Quiksilver, Reebok, Rue21, Saks Fifth Avenue, Tommy Hilfiger, Van Heusen, Wet Seal, Wilsons Leather, Zoo York, Zumiez, A'Gaci , Republic, Bass, Bebe, Brooks Brothers, Burberry, Calvin Klein, Converse, Unltd, Eddie Bauer, Gap, Guess, Hanes, Hugo Boss, Hurley, Kenneth Cole, New York, Loft, Nautica, New York New York, Nike, Oakley Vault, Papaya, Perry Ellis, Polo Ralph Lauren, Puma, Quiksilver, Reebok





Excellent thoroughfares combined with **Mercedes'** proximity to various international ports of entry are undoubtedly the reasons that **Mercedes** is considered the ultimate location for business.

## industrial zones

### Industrial Zones

#### **Mercedes Industrial Park**

Expressway 83 & Mile 1 East

#### **Vogel Business Park**

Expressway 83 & Mile 1/2 East

#### **Lonestar Shredding**

##### **Industrial Zone**

Expressway 83 & Mile 2 West

#### **Mid Valley Industrial Zone**

Expressway 83 & Mile 2 1/2 West

One of the key components of Mercedes' strategy for future growth is to continue to respond to the changing demands of the manufacturing and retail sector. Excellent thoroughfares combined with Mercedes' proximity to various international ports of entry are undoubtedly the reasons that Mercedes is considered the ultimate location for business. With the current \$80 million Texas DOT expansion and renovation of US highway 83, truck shipments will certainly see improved travel times and facilitate businesses' ability to stay close to their products and production line.

Tenants range in services from manufacturing to distribution.

### Permitted Uses

Permitted uses in Mercedes industrial zones include manufacturing centers, distribution, warehousing, research activities, service industries, professional offices, and other uses permitted under Mercedes Light Industrial Zoning ordinances.

### Development Standards

Construction at each industrial zone is governed by Mercedes' Planning and Zoning Department (P&Z). Mercedes P&Z enforces the construction of safe, durable, and high quality structures within the City of Mercedes by ensuring that each building meets architectural, landscaping, and signage guidelines.

### Infrastructure

Industrial zones feature 60' asphalt and concrete streets designed for heavy traffic. Mercedes Public Works Department provides underground water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer lines. All facilities are designed to sustain industrial use. Natural gas, electrical, and telecommunication lines are available and provided by private contractors.

### Lot Sizes

Lot sizes in Mercedes' 4 industrial zones vary and are designed to accommodate a wide variety of tenants. Lots are owned by the City of Mercedes and by private owners. Lots vary in size from .5 acre to 5 acre tracts and vary in prices starting at \$2.00 a square foot. Lot prices vary depending on lot size, location, type of investment, and size of workforce.



Mercedes features 4 industrial zones totaling 58.74 acres of fully developed land. The city's industrial zones are provided with city water and sewer services to every lot, along with the streets and lighting needed to accommodate a diverse group of businesses. Mercedes' industrial zones cater to specific businesses that will complement each others services.



# 2nd lowest state tax

**Texas** offers favorable tax rates as it was ranked second in the nation to have the lowest per capita state tax.

## tax structure & utilities

### Tax Structure

Texas offers favorable tax rates as it was ranked second in the nation to have the lowest per capita state tax. Texas does not levy corporate income taxes and is one of the few states in the United States that follows this practice.

This pro-business philosophy is shared by the City of Mercedes and the Development Corporation of Mercedes who are ready to assist businesses wishing to locate in the area.

### Tax Structure

#### Property Tax Rate Per \$100 Valuation

City of Mercedes	0.8700
Hidalgo County	0.5900
Mercedes ISD	1.6000
South Texas ISD	0.0392
Drainage District #1	0.0435
South Texas College	0.1589

### State Taxes

State Franchise	4.25%
State Corporate Income	0.00%
Personal Income	0.00%
Corporate Income	0.00%
Ad Valorem	0.00%

### Utilities

Service	Description	Contact
<b>Water</b>	Source: Rio Grande River & Reserve Well Maximum daily capacity 3.5 MGD Maximum daily use 2.8 MGD Size of mains 10 - 12 inch mains Pressure of mains 55 - 60 psig	City of Mercedes Public Works 956-565-6147
<b>Sewer</b>	Type of treatment plant: Oxidation Ditch Maximum capacity: 2.3 MGD Present load: 1.1 MGD Size of mains: 10 - 24 inch mains	City of Mercedes Public Works 956-565-6147
<b>Electrical</b>	Single and 3 Phase from 120/240 to 138,000 volts	Central Power & Light 956-585-1643
<b>Telecommunications</b>	Local Dial Service ISDN & High Speed Internet (DSL) Direct Long Distance Dialing Digital Service Availability Fiber Optics	Southwestern Bell 956-686-8266
<b>Natural Gas</b>	Transmission Line Service Area 12 in. @ 500psi Average BTU per cubic foot 1,000 BTU/CF Distribution in pressure 45psi	Southern Union Gas 800-700-2089
<b>Solid Waste Disposal</b>	Provided by private contractor once a week	Waste Management 956-383-0519

# transportation

Mercedes is located in the center of the Rio Grande Valley and is 4 miles from the Progreso International Bridge. This proximity to an international port of entry in conjunction with air, rail, and freight services places Mercedes in a strategic crossroads of international trade and commerce. This unique location enhances Mercedes' appeal to manufacturing industries, suppliers, tourists, retail centers, and many more industries.

## Highways

Mercedes is positioned along US Expressway 83 and is between US Highway 281 and US Highway 77. US Expressway 83 provides access to the entire Rio Grande Valley and 9 nearby international bridges for international trade, while US Highway 281 and 77 provide an easily accessible route linking the rest of the United States. In addition to these highways there is a proposed Interstate 69 that will create an additional route from Mexico to Canada and significantly improve national and international trade.

## Bus Lines

The greater Mercedes area has bus lines serving local, national, and international bus travel needs. Greyhound bus lines and Valley Transit Company have daily destinations throughout the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, United States, and International destinations in Mexico. Autobuses Adame provides daily bus service throughout central Texas, eastern United States, and Mexico. Tornado bus line provides daily bus services to central Texas, the eastern United States, and Mexico. Rio Metro bus lines provide daily local transportation for intercity and Rio Grande Valley areas. International bus service is provided via McAllen Central Station.

## Sea Ports

The nearest seaport to Mercedes is the Port of Brownsville, which is 38 miles away providing a 42 foot deep channel. At the Port of Brownsville, the land transportation of Mexico is linked with the Inland Waterway System of the United States thereby providing an efficient form of transportation to facilitate the international movement of goods between Mexico and the United States.

## Airports

There are 3 international airports geared towards passenger and cargo aviation serving the greater Mercedes area and service a combined 845,000 passengers annually. These airports provide access to most major airports in the United States via American, Delta, Continental, and Southwest airlines.

## International Ports of Entry

Mercedes is in a distinctive location that offers direct access to 9 international bridges. The proximity to these bridges is extremely beneficial to businesses involved with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These international bridges range in distance from 4 to 39 miles and are the Progreso, Veterans, B&M, Gateway, Anzalduas, Los Indios, Pharr/Reynosa, McAllen/Hidalgo, and Donna International Bridges. Of these the Pharr/Reynosa and Los Indios International Bridges were built with the intent of allowing more free flowing commercial traffic.



## Rail services

Railroad services are provided by Rio Valley Switching Company. Rio Valley Switching Company services the entire Rio Grande Valley and is partnered with Union Pacific Railroad to maintain daily freight services. It provides freight services necessary to transport equipment and merchandise throughout the United States.

# community

Mercedes is more than just a great place to do business; it is also a great place to call home. It is a traditional working community where seventy-four percent (74%) of families own their own home. The community offers a hometown atmosphere and an excellent place to raise a family. It provides its residents with fine medical facilities, good schools and a diverse array of sports and recreation activities.

Mercedes offers a variety of housing options whether looking to buy or build a home.

In recent years, Mercedes has seen outstanding residential growth. From country club living on a historic 18 hole golf course to suburban neighborhoods, planned communities or more private country homes, Mercedes is the ideal place to make a house a home.





**Mercedes** is in the fastest growing MSA in Texas and one of the fastest growing MSAs in the U.S., with a current population of 774,769.

## area demographics

### Ethnic Composition (2010)

	Mercedes	MSA
Hispanic	90%	88.3%
White	9.7%	10.4%
Other	0.3%	1.3%
TOTAL	100%	100%

### Age & Gender Distribution

	Mercedes	MSA
Under 18	33%	35%
18-24	12%	12%
25-44	23%	28%
45-64	18%	16%
65 & Older	14%	10%
Male	47%	49%
Female	53%	51%
Median Age	29.4	27.2

### Educational Attainment

	Mercedes	MSA
High School Grad	1,922	87,489
Some College	1,152	55,040
Associate's Degree	188	10,847
Bachelor's Degree	514	38,868
Graduate's Degree	244	15,881

### Household Characteristics

	Mercedes	MSA
Households	4,762	215,214
Median		
Home Value	\$40,100	\$52,400
Median Household		
Income	\$23,064	\$24,863
Household Income Distribution		
\$25k - \$35k	675	22,720
\$35k - \$50k	665	22,102
\$50k - \$75k	392	18,505
\$75k - Above	206	14,660
Average People		
per Household	3.27	3.6

### Population

Mercedes is the fastest growing MSA in Texas and one of the fastest growing MSAs in the U.S., with a current population of 774,769. To date, the MSA has grown by more than 391,224 people since 1990, an 102% growth rate, or 5.1% annually.

Mercedes has grown by 15.6% since 2000, adding more than 2,100 people for a total population of 15,570. In addition, Hispanics are currently the largest and fastest growing minority group with 50.3 million as of January 1, 2010, 16.3 percent of the U.S. population.

With 88.3% of the MSA population being Hispanic, the MSA has the 15th largest Hispanic population in the U.S. and the Rio Grande Valley is the 6th largest Hispanic market in the U.S. Furthermore, the median age of Hispanics is 27.4 compared with the population as a whole at 36.4.

	Mercedes	MSA	Texas	USA
1990	11,581	383,545	16,986,510	248,709,873
2000	12,694	569,463	20,851,820	281,421,906
2010	15,570	774,769	25,145,561	308,745,538
Growth	34.4%	102%	48%	24.8%

### Household Characteristics

The Mercedes Household Characteristics chart illustrates that 50% of the households in Mercedes are valued over \$40,100. The distribution of Mercedes household income depicts 16% of residents earn between \$25,000 and \$35,000, 16% of residents earn between \$35,001 and \$50,000, 9%

of residents earn between \$50,001 and \$75,000, and 5% of Mercedes residents earn over \$75,001 a year.

### Educational Attainment

Mercedes Educational Attainment chart for residents over 25 years of age portrays the importance of



education in the Mercedes community. In Mercedes, 53% of the residents have a high school diploma and 15% have or are attending college. 2.5% of its residents possess an associate's degree, 6.8% have a bachelor's degree, and 3.2 % of Mercedes residents have acquired a graduate degree.

### Ethnic Composition

The Ethnic Composition chart illustrates the Mercedes population is 90% Hispanic. This ethnic distribution is quite common in the Rio Grande Valley region and in cities along the Texas-Mexico border.

# education & healthcare

## Education

Mercedes' education system is composed of: South Texas Independent School District and Mercedes Independent School District. South Texas Independent School District is a specialized school district that focuses its 4 magnet high schools on Business, Education, Medicine, and Science Technology education.

It provides students with an excellent scholastic program and hands-on training in various professional careers giving students a head start on college education and careers in the fields of medicine and science. The District's student body is comprised of students from throughout the Rio Grande Valley area. South Texas ISD has received many national awards, been ranked by Newsweek magazine as the 21st best high school in the nation and 95% of its graduates continue their education at major universities and colleges.

Mercedes Independent School District's mission is to work together with the students, parents, teachers, and administrators to develop excellence in education. Mercedes ISD recognizes that education is the key to a successful future and is dedicated to developing strong moral leaders for the 21st century.

By setting high standards, the school district plays a crucial role in preparing students to meet the challenges and demands of future high-tech, multi-cultural work places. Students have the opportunity to enroll in challenging and rigorous courses through the Advanced Placement (AP) program. The district offers Pre-AP and AP courses in every core subject and qualifying seniors are able to earn college credit through concurrent enrollment courses with local universities.

Mercedes ISD also has an early childhood development center that focuses on giving children a head start on education.

University of Texas-Pan American offers 56 undergraduate degree programs ranging from engineering to health sciences. It offers 46 masters degrees in areas of communication and public administration. UTPA also offers 2 doctoral programs in education and international business.

University of Texas at Brownsville offers 79 undergraduate degree and certificate programs ranging from business administration to English. It also offers 21 masters degree programs in areas of nursing, education, and engineering.

South Texas College offers training programs designed to meet local employment needs. Certificates of Completion offered include bookkeeping, automotive mechanics, industrial maintenance mechanics, and nursing assistant.

STC offers 90 degree and certificate programs and has a unique industrial start up program designed to reduce training costs of new or expanding industries. Texas State Technical College offers technical training programs geared to meet the demands of local industry and retail needs. Certificates offered include clerical specialist, dental hygienist, and nursing assistant.

## Healthcare

A wide variety of excellent healthcare services are available within the Mercedes area ranging from family practice clinics to full service hospitals.

Knapp Medical Center (KMC) offers Mercedes a local specialized full service hospital and is considered one of the valley's most distinguished medical centers. KMC is committed to combining compassion and competence to patients, as well as implementing health education programs that focus on health maintenance and illness prevention.

Knapp Medical Center is a 233 bed non-profit hospital that serves city and rural residents. KMC staff is composed of over 200 independent professional practitioner physicians, 1,000 general medical staff and provides volunteer opportunities to over 250 people. KMC provides a wide spectrum of first-rate services. Additionally, 10 other excellent health facilities are located within an 18 mile radius of Mercedes.

These area hospitals and centers have received Distinguished Hospital Awards for Excellence in Patient Safety and Clinical Excellence, have been ranked in the top 5% of clinical performance in the nation, and have received 5 star rankings in OB/GYN programs.



# 140 designer stores

**Mercedes** has recently added the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets® for the avid shopper to enjoy, which features 140 designer outlet stores.

## leisure

Mercedes provides many sports and recreation activities throughout the year. It is renowned for its annual livestock show and carnival, which provides live concerts and rodeo competitions.

Mercedes also provides recreational activities through public golf courses, tennis courts, professional arena football games and minor league baseball and hockey games.

Mercedes has recently added the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets® for the avid shopper to enjoy, which features 140 designer outlet stores. The passionate shopper and tourist seeking more of an international flavor in their shopping and dining experience can take a quick afternoon trip to Progreso, Mexico and enjoy the many attractions that make Progreso, MX an exciting tourist destination.

### Recreation

The Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo is

a highly recognized event that draws over 220,000 people a year. Crowds from all over the Rio Grande Valley, the state of Texas, and Mexico come to the 10th largest livestock show and rodeo in Texas to enjoy its many attractions and exhibits. The RGV Livestock Show & Rodeo was originally developed and its core service continues to be livestock education for area youth.

The RGV Livestock Show & Rodeo provides over \$50,000 annually in scholarships to deserving 4-H and FFA students. However, it has expanded its activities and events since its inception in 1940 to include the Midway Carnival and its vast assortment of rides, petting zoo, car shows, and live concerts. Among the many attractions it offers are barrel racing, bull riding, calf roping, steer wrestling and team roping. The RGV Livestock Show & Rodeo fair grounds are also used for other exciting events, such as monster truck shows, the annual RGV boat and RV shows, and thrilling live concerts.

### Golfing

The historic Llano Grande Country Club is one of the oldest golf courses in the Rio Grande Valley. Built in 1925, the Llano Grande's many amenities include a historic club house, dining room, driving range, pro shop, club rentals, snack bar and a pro on staff. This par 72 golf course country club offers plenty of history as well as a challenging course to golfers of any level. This 18 hole golf course is landscaped with lush tropical foliage, bunkers, water hazards and stunning Bermuda fairways.





With a collection of more than 140 outlet stores, it is the only mall of its kind south of San Marcos. This makes it ideal not only for local shoppers but for shoppers as far away as Southern Mexico.

The Palms at Mid Valley Golf Course is an 18 hole links style Championship course. It provides challenging fairways lined with over 900 palm trees and native grasses that give golfers a course which plays to a par of 72 from four levels of difficulty. It also features a clubhouse, lounge and pro shop where golfers can relax and enjoy Mercedes' exceptional climate.

### Sports

For the sports fan in all of us, Mercedes offers plenty of sports events to enjoy. For starters, United League Baseball has two franchises located in the area, the Edinburg Roadrunners and the Rio Grande Valley White Wings, with stadiums in Edinburg and Harlingen. In 2006, the Edinburg Roadrunners won the regular season championship game and advanced to the United League Baseball championship series. The area also features a minor league hockey team, the Rio Grande Valley Killer Bees which are frequently play-off contenders and have managed to spark a heated rivalry with the Laredo Bucks. Sports fans can also enjoy the Rio Grande Valley Dorados as they play professional arena football at the State Farm Arena. You can also enjoy Rio Grande Valley NBA D-League Basketball team, the Rio Grande Valley Vipers. In 2010 the Vipers battled the Tulsa 66-ers to win the NBA D-League Championship.

### Shopping: Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets

In November 2006, the Valley witnessed the grand opening of the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets®.



With a collection of more than 140 outlet stores, it is the only mall of its kind south of San Marcos. This makes it ideal not only for local shoppers but for shoppers as far away as Monterrey. Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets® feature some of the world's finest designers and name brand clothing such as Burberry, Ann Taylor, Betsy Johnson, Brooks Brothers, Coach, Nike and Calvin Klein just to name a few.

#### State/MSA/City Retail Sales Comparison

	Texas	MSA	Mercedes
<b>Per Capita</b>	12,438	17,105	20,414
<b>Per Household</b>	63,650	51,755	66,759
<b>Growth Rate</b>	11%	38%	25%

Attractively located between the two major population centers of McAllen/Reynosa and Brownsville/Matamoros on the Valley's life line US Highway 83, the mall offers shoppers on both ends

# leisure

of the Valley bargain opportunities they just can't let pass by. Aside from the assortment of stores catering to designer fashion, sportswear, shoes, children, luggage, house wares, jewelry and accessories, and specialty items, the outlets have an ample food court and plenty of special events throughout the year.

Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlets® is just another sign of the renewed interest in Mercedes as a commercial center. Its establishment is in step with the revitalization Mercedes has been undergoing in recent years from downtown redevelopment to renovations of the Rio Grande Livestock Show fairgrounds. These improvements have helped to bring in businesses and commercial development to the area such as a Chili's restaurant, La Quinta hotel and a home appliance center. It has also caused the existing commercial and industrial establishment to invest in its infrastructure resulting in increased jobs

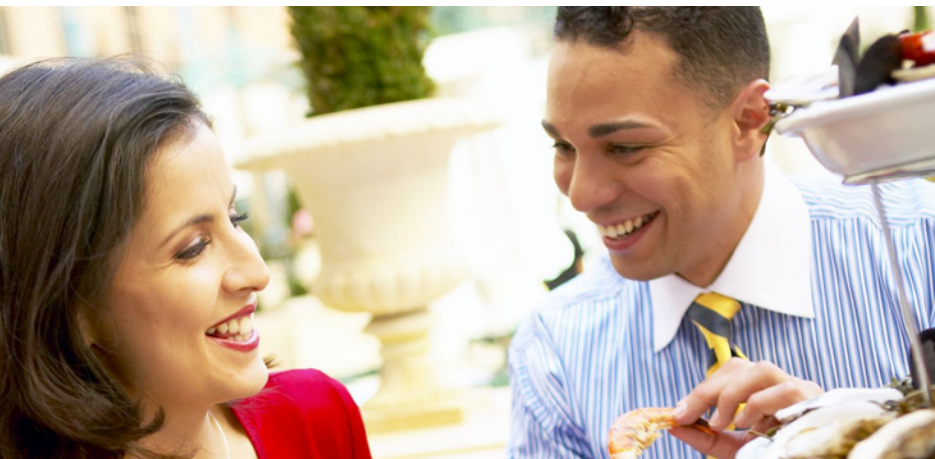
as HEB Grocery,

State Farm Insurance, First National Bank, Texas National Bank, Subway, Coach's Pharmacy, Bealls and Enterprise Rent-A-Car, as well as local specialty stores provide patrons with South Texas charisma as well as goods and services. In addition, the district hosts many of the community's events such as the Festival of Lights and Texas Street Festival.

## International Flavor

Within a matter of minutes from Mercedes and across the Progreso International Bridge, lies the Villa of Nuevo Progreso. This Mexican border town offers tourists a unique Mexican experience in shopping and dining. Its downtown area features an assortment of restaurants, grill and bars and artisan shops that make this small town an ideal place for tourists who might be weary of the larger border cities like Reynosa and Matamoros.

This small town holds an annual tourist day celebration as a farewell to visiting Winter Texans and is proud to be a part of the Beach N' Biker Fest "Mexico Run" event. In this annual event bikers from across the U.S. ride from South Padre Island to Nuevo Progreso where the town greets them with free live music and a street fair atmosphere.



in the retail sector both locally and Valley wide.

## Downtown district

Recognizing the commercial and social heart of any community is its downtown, where residents can live, work and entertain, the City of Mercedes strives to promote an environment that is vigorous and welcoming to businesses, visitors and residents. The Mercedes Downtown District offers more than 65 diverse businesses in one central location to accommodate the demands of everyday life. The Downtown District businesses cater to all aspects of an individual's lifestyle providing access to banking, insurance, automotive repair, home décor, medical services, shopping and restaurants. Businesses such



## Additional Resources

### Government

City of Mercedes [www.thecityofmercedes.com](http://www.thecityofmercedes.com)  
 County of Hidalgo [www.co.hidalgo.tx.us](http://www.co.hidalgo.tx.us)  
 State of Texas [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us)

### Education

Mercedes ISD <http://misdtx.schoolwires.com/misdtx>  
 South Texas ISD [www.stisd.net](http://www.stisd.net)  
 South Texas College [www.southtexascollege.edu](http://www.southtexascollege.edu)  
 University of Texas-Pan American [www.utpa.edu](http://www.utpa.edu)

### Workforce Development

Texas Workforce Solutions [www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org)

### Business

Small Business Development Center  
<http://ea.panam.edu/sbdc>  
 Small Business Administration [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)  
 Accion Texas [www.acciontexas.org](http://www.acciontexas.org)  
 Rio South Texas Economic Council  
[www.riosouthtexas.com](http://www.riosouthtexas.com)  
 Mercedes Chamber of Commerce  
[www.mercedeschamber.com](http://www.mercedeschamber.com)

### Manufacturing

South Texas Manufacturers Association  
[www.stma-tx.org](http://www.stma-tx.org)  
 RAMAC [www.ramac.org.mx](http://www.ramac.org.mx)  
 Maquila Portal [www.maquilaportal.com](http://www.maquilaportal.com)

### News

McAllen Monitor [www.themonitor.com](http://www.themonitor.com)





economic development

**mercedes**

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