



The Sacramento County Department of Airports invites applications for

**Assistant Director**

Sacramento International Airport (SMF)  
Mather Airport (MHR)  
Executive Airport (SAC)  
Franklin Field (F72)

Sacramento, California

*Executive Search Services Provided By*





## The Opportunity

The County of Sacramento invites accomplished airport leaders to apply for the position of Assistant Airport Director with the Department of Airports, an enterprise organization responsible for operating and developing four airports, including Sacramento International Airport (SMF). This executive role provides the opportunity to guide operations, development, and strategic initiatives across a dynamic and growing airport system. The Assistant Airport Director will play a critical leadership role in shaping the organization's future as part of a long-term succession plan, ensuring continuity, innovation, and excellence throughout the Department.

## The Department

The Sacramento County Department of Airports (SCDA) is responsible for planning, developing, operating and maintaining the County's four airports serving a seven-county region with a population of over 3 million. Operated as an Enterprise Fund, the Department is financially self-supporting, with expenses paid by revenue generated from businesses and individuals who use the airports. No local tax dollars flow to SCDA. SCDA's operating budget for the fiscal year through June 30, 2026 (FY 2026) is \$329.9 million, which includes \$48.1 million allocated for debt service. The FY 2026 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) totals \$1.83 billion with \$1.4 billion dedicated to the SMForward initiative and \$434 million earmarked for additional capital projects at Sacramento International (SMF) and the County's three other airports.

SCDA's mission is to put people at the center of every trip, every experience, every day, and their vision is to be the most loved airport. SCDA's core values are to:

- ▶ **Start With The Customer:** Our passengers are our top priority and everything we do should help us in delivering an experience that makes them feel at home.
- ▶ **Make Something Better Today:** We refuse to settle for the way things are and see every day as an opportunity to improve.
- ▶ **Collaborate:** We are stronger together. We're able to accomplish more for our customers and each other through shared goals and mutual support.
- ▶ **Be Transparent:** We communicate internally and externally with unwavering candor, honesty and respect.
- ▶ **Own It:** We are a team of doers. We take pride in what we do, and we take responsibility for the opportunities placed before us.

By putting these values to work every day, SCDA has succeeded time and time again in leading the airport industry in new ways to be faster, more effective and more sustainable in serving our passengers and the wider community. For example, in the last three years, SCDA has received myriad awards for various initiatives and has been first in the nation to accomplish safety management system milestones, first in the County to use alternative project delivery methods, and was the first in the country to get a low-interest TIFIA loan from the federal government. SCDA leaders also contributed to elements of the 2024 FAA Reauthorization legislation and were instrumental in changing legislation in California that ensures rental car customer facility charges do not sunset. Individual SCDA leaders have also been recognized for industry leadership in 2023 and 2024, including the Director of Airports and each of the Deputy Directors for Finance & Administration, Commercial Development and Planning & Development. In addition, the Airline Pilots Association International named SMF Airport of the Year, recognizing the work of the Airport's operations staff.

SCDA staff at various levels also play leadership roles in airport industry associations, including Airports Council International (ACI), the southwest chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives (SWAAAE), the California Airports Council, and the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA). In September 2025, the Director of Airports was elected to serve as Chair of ACI-North America in 2026 and 2027.



## Sacramento International Airport (SMF) -

This airport opened in 1967, occupies approximately 6,000 acres of land in unincorporated Sacramento County 10 miles north of downtown Sacramento, and is the only commercial service airport in the County. Passenger traffic recovery post- pandemic has been strong for this medium-hub airport, serving over 13.8 million passengers in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 (FY 2025), surpassing 2019 numbers for the fourth year in a row. SMF is currently served by Aeromexico, Air Canada, Alaska/Hawaiian, American, Delta, Frontier, JetBlue, Southwest, Spirit, United and Volaris airlines, with a total of 187 daily departures to 52 nonstop destinations. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, SMF experienced seven consecutive years of passenger growth that had escalated to double digits. With passenger levels once again breaking records and the region thriving, SCDA has been in a unique position to holistically re-envision land use and the facilities needed to meet the demands of today and tomorrow. The Airport is currently transitioning from the planning stages to implementation of a \$1.4B capital program, SMForward. The program is adding needed gates and other facilities in the terminal area including an elevated pedestrian walkway, second garage, ground transportation center, consolidated rental car facility, and roadway improvements.



## Mather Airport (MHR) -

This 100-year-old airport is located about 12 miles east of the City of Sacramento in unincorporated Sacramento County and was inherited from the Air Force in the 1990s. Mather serves air cargo (UPS and DHL), corporate aviation and general aviation and hosts the annual California Capital Airshow each year. The 2,253-acre airport is a major asset, with significant developable acreage and one of the longest runways in California at 11,300 feet. SCDA is currently rehabilitating the asphalt and concrete sections of the runway and will install a Category III Instrument Landing System (ILS) as part of the project. SCDA has launched a strategic real estate development plan that will include additional facilities for air cargo, maintenance and repair, general aviation, flight schools and supporting infrastructure. Modern Aviation and Mather Jet Center provide fixed base operator (FBO) services at Mather.

## Executive Airport (SAC) -

This busy general aviation airport occupies 520 acres within the limits of the City of Sacramento, about 3 miles south of downtown. Unlike the other airports that are owned and operated by SCDA, Executive Airport is owned by the City of Sacramento and leased to the County under a 25-year evergreen lease. Modern Aviation provides FBO services and facilities at the airport and operates the fuel tanks on behalf of SCDA. Given the current operating and capital costs of this airport (expected to total \$24.2 million in the next few years), there is a need to create a more financially sustainable operating model.

## Franklin Field (F72) -

This airport is located 20 miles south of Sacramento in unincorporated Sacramento County. The 496-acre uncontrolled general aviation facility is used primarily for training operations and crop dusting. Development opportunities are very limited because the airport's elevation is below the 100-year flood plain, which means it routinely floods.

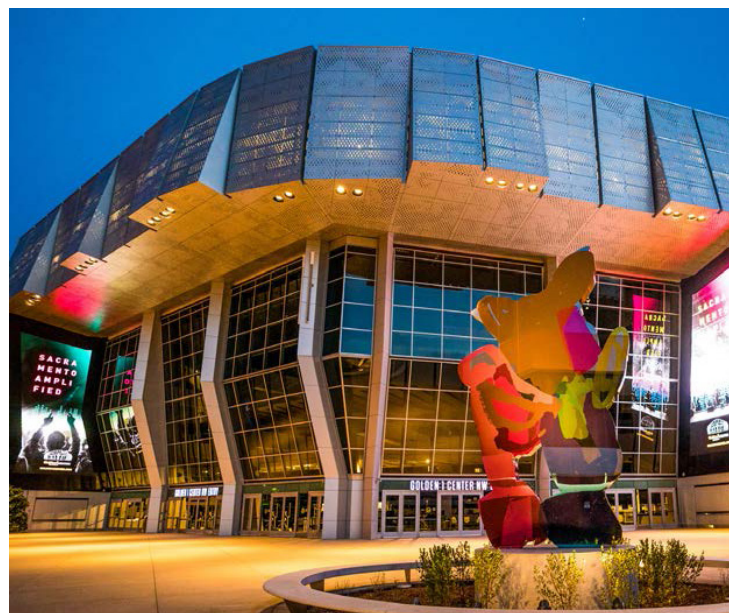


## The Community

Sacramento County covers 984 square miles and is home to the California state capital, 1.6 million residents and seven incorporated cities: Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento. The population of Sacramento County's unincorporated area is approximately 600,000.

Residents in Sacramento County have a variety of recreational, dining and entertainment options to choose from. The County is home to more than 15,000 acres of parks, plus the 23-mile American River Parkway, where more than five million visitors enjoy the unique wildlife and recreation area annually. Fishing, boating and rafting opportunities are available to water enthusiasts, and picnic sites, golfing, guided natural and historic tours are steps away from the multi-use trail. With its close vicinity to local agriculture, County residents also have an extraordinary selection of local food, wines and beers.

Sacramento County is one of the most affordable home-buying metropolitan areas in the state, and has a skilled workforce, high graduation rates and college-educated residents. The County is a leader in the 21st century economy with growing advanced manufacturing, agriculture and food, clean energy technology, information and communications technology and life sciences.





## County Government

The County of Sacramento was incorporated in 1850 in response to the needs of a growing population and was one of the original 27 counties of California. In 1933, the Sacramento County Charter was established, along with the County Executive position.

The County is governed by five members of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, elected on a non-partisan basis to serve staggered four-year terms, each representing one of the five districts. The County Executive is responsible to the Board for planning, organizing and directing County activities. Other elected officials include the Assessor, District Attorney and the Sheriff.

In 1972, an amendment to the County Charter was implemented to organize the County on an agency basis for more effective administration of functions for which the County Executive is responsible to the Board of Supervisors. Approved by the electorate, the amendment established agency heads to groups of County Departments. The four agencies within the County, which report to the County Executive, are Administrative Services, Community Services, Public Safety & Justice, and Social Services. The Director of Airports reports to the Deputy County Executive for Community Services. Sacramento County has more than 30 departments and offices that provide services to County residents.

The County is responsible, pursuant to the County Charter or ordinances, or by state or federal mandate, to provide health and welfare, criminal justice and municipal services (including law enforcement), as well as other services to County residents. Major services include the Airport System, Animal Care Services, Clerk Recorder, Criminal Justice, Health and Welfare, Property Tax System, Regional Parks, Transportation, Waste Management and Recycling, Voter Registration and Water Resources.

The County's Adopted Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 – 26 budget is approximately \$8.9 billion, and there are more than 12,800 budgeted full-time employees.

# The Position

The growth in activity at the County's four airports, large number of airport staff and increasing complexity of technology, development opportunities, regulations and environmental initiatives all prompted the addition of the Assistant Director position. Reporting to the Director of Airports, this position has broad authority over major airport functions and directly manages SCDA's five Deputy Directors of (1) Operations, (2) Maintenance & Development, (3) Planning & Special Projects, (4) Finance & Administration, and (5) Commercial Development. The Assistant Director is responsible for ensuring processes and systems are in place and working well for each of the five divisions and the Department as a whole and ensures all airport operating procedures are documented and current. The Assistant Director is also the first point of contact in actively troubleshooting issues that arise unexpectedly across the four airports and in the five divisions. They are called on to address problematic interrelationships between and among tenants as well as cross-departmental challenges to working collaboratively.

The Assistant Director plays a key leadership role in the day-to-day management and operation of the County's four airports and works closely with the Director of Airports in developing the strategic direction of SCDA, freeing the Director of Airports to prioritize time-consuming matters that entail coordinating with the Board on high-profile initiatives, resolving contentious issues, working with industry associations and legislators on needed state and federal legislation, and focusing on key strategic priorities and work with local, State and national stakeholders to help the Department of Airports achieve its goals. This position implements major initiatives once they are approved by the Board, legislatures, and/or federal agencies by establishing staff roles and responsibilities, defining major milestones, providing needed resources, and monitoring progress against those milestones.





## The Position

Examples of high-visibility County initiatives on which the Director of Airports will focus and which the Assistant Director will support and execute include:

- ▶ Advancing major capital investments including the \$1.4 billion SMForward program
- ▶ Supporting new alternative project delivery methods and carrying out competitive selection processes with significant political implications (including RFPs for SMForward projects, art, concessions, and development opportunities at SMF, Mather and Executive airports)
- ▶ Executing projects within the context of the County's first Community Workforce Training Agreement for SMForward projects (a type of Project Labor Agreement)
- ▶ Enhancing sustainability initiatives
- ▶ Making land use decisions that affect off-airport developers
- ▶ Working with the FAA Air Traffic Organization (ATO) to continue progressing the new tower at SMF, and to convince ATO to adequately staff the contract towers at Mather and Executive airports
- ▶ Complying with and implementing federal legislation and policies as well as fully funding projects and initiatives that were in the 2024 FAA Reauthorization, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- ▶ Supporting favorable state legislation such as the recent increase in the rental car customer facility charge (CFC) daily cap from \$9 to \$12, opposing unfavorable legislation, and complying with state legislation once promulgated such as environmental laws

# Key Responsibilities

- ▶ Develops the direction of SCDA's five divisions by establishing goals, objectives, policies, procedures, priorities, and strategic plans.
- ▶ Creates annual work plans for SCDA's services and activities, assigns responsibilities, establishes milestones and metrics, monitors progress and meets with staff to identify and resolve problems.
- ▶ Facilitates short- and long-term planning to meet forecast aviation activity demand and customer service and formulates recommendations for capital improvements.
- ▶ Develops and manages SCDA's budget and capital improvement plan to meet resource needs.
- ▶ Invests in SCDA's people through robust hiring and retention programs, motivates and coaches staff, fosters an engaging and supportive workplace culture, ensures consistent employee evaluations and accountability, corrects deficiencies and takes disciplinary action as needed.
- ▶ Identifies opportunities to improve service delivery and implements improvements.
- ▶ Maintains close liaison with federal, state and local government agencies, participates in professional groups and works closely with other County departments, outside agencies, citizens' groups, and the public.
- ▶ Keeps abreast of industry trends and innovations.

Supervising a diverse team, the Assistant Director ensures continual compliance with state and federal regulations, fosters advantageous relationships with airlines and other stakeholders, stays alert to emerging opportunities and challenges, and represents the Director of Airports in their absence.



# The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for Assistant Director will be adept at anticipating the needs of the travelling public, the greater Sacramento community, tenants and other stakeholders to ensure the County's four airports perform optimally. They will have an enterprise-wide perspective bolstered by strong communication skills, the ability to work seamlessly with other stakeholders and the skills to lead a complex set of airports and functions. Specifically, the ideal Assistant Director will possess the following capabilities:

**Strategic Mindset**—The Assistant Director will be adept at continually assessing SCDA's strengths and weaknesses relative to evolving opportunities and challenges and will readily pivot to meet changing circumstances. They will proactively develop and execute strategic plans that advance the goals of the Department. They will position SCDA as a leader in innovation and sustainability within the airport industry, drawing from analytical data, community engagement and industry experience elsewhere. Several watershed opportunities to reshape the future of the airports are currently underway or will arise in the next few years, including the SMF airport master plan, Mather strategic real estate development plan, expiration of the current airline agreement, and changes in California energy and environmental regulations.

**Multi-Disciplinary Expertise**—The ideal Assistant Director will have the expertise to lead staff in many different disciplines. They will contribute meaningfully to planning activities and environmental initiatives, progress multimillion-dollar capital projects in a timely and cost-effective manner, ensure operational effectiveness 24/7, foster a customer-service orientation among airport partners, develop a life-cycle approach to asset management and develop risk-weighted approaches to enhancing revenues and controlling costs.

**Operational Excellence**—The Assistant Director will establish a robust framework for operational excellence by leveraging real-time data and metrics, streamlining policies, assessing mission-critical systems, enhancing documentation protocols and ensuring consistent standards of practice department-wide. For example, they will identify thoughtful ways to integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning into the airport context to enhance operational effectiveness while mitigating potential risks.

**People Skills**—The ideal Assistant Director will create a sense of mission and esprit de corps within the Department and will take steps at a practical level to ensure the five divisions operate effectively. They must be able to communicate effectively to ensure management of the airports continually moves in the desired direction. The ideal candidate must be organized and well disciplined, and able to evaluate the performance of staff, provide regular feedback regarding the quality and quantity of work performed, provide employees with the guidance and direction needed to correct deficiencies, and work with employees to help improve individual and operational productivity. They will also identify ways to improve our diverse community's access to airport jobs to foster a variety of perspectives and build a talent pipeline into the future.

**Enterprise-Wide Leadership**—The Assistant Director will help lead cultural change in a way that enhances communication, both across SCDA's different divisions. They will also have the leadership ability to articulate a vision for the future and a sense of shared purpose that motivates staff and gives them the tools for managing their own work and relationships with tenants and customers.

**Partnerships**—The Assistant Director will cultivate and enhance strategic partnerships that drive SCDA's goals forward. This includes actively engaging with counterparts in other County departments, continued engagement with the Regional Air Alliance of the greater Sacramento business community, expanding community partnerships, working with neighboring jurisdictions such as the cities of Sacramento and Rancho Cordova, and cooperative arrangements with Travis and Beale Air Force Bases.

## Minimum Qualifications

- ▶ Five (5) years of full-time paid airport management experience at a commercial service airport involving airport operations, planning and development, finance and administration, or marketing and/or air service development.
- ▶ Experience must have been at the managerial or supervisory level within a commercial service airport and must have included policy planning, program development, budget preparation and administration and/or contract administration.

For a full job description, [click here](#).

# Compensation

The County of Sacramento offers an excellent compensation and benefits program. The salary range for this position is \$224,021 - \$246,968 annually plus an additional 3.35% management incentive for a combined total of \$231,526 - \$255,242. A starting salary above \$224,021 is achievable for the exceptional candidate. Relocation assistance reimbursement may be available.

## **The Attractive Benefits Program Includes:**

**Retirement** – The County's Retirement plan is provided by the County Retirement Act of 1937 and is managed by the Sacramento County Employees' Retirement System (SCERS) Board of Retirement.

**Medical Insurance** – Choice of HMO and High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP), to include Kaiser, Sutter, and Western Health Advantage.

**Deferred Compensation** – A deferred compensation program is available through the County 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan. Effective October 2025, for each 1% contribution made by the employee to the 457(b) Deferred Compensation, up to a total of 5%, the County will provide a corresponding percentage match into a 401(a) plan for the pay period.

**Life Insurance** – \$50,000 in life insurance coverage for the employee and \$2,000 for all eligible dependents. Employees have the option to purchase up to \$1,000,000 in additional life insurance coverage.

**Holidays** – 14.5 paid holidays per year.

**Vacation** – Two to five weeks (based upon the length of service) of paid vacation.

**Management Leave** – Up to 80 hours of non-cashable management leave annually. Unused hours expire at the end of the calendar year.

**Sick Leave** – 15 days per year.

**Flexible Spending Accounts** – Employees may set aside funds on a pre-tax basis to pay for eligible medical and/or dependent care expenses.

**Other Benefits** – The County contributes \$30.00 per pay period into a Retiree Health Savings Plan. After 10 years of County service, employees are eligible for 4% longevity pay.





## How to Apply

To be considered for this incredible opportunity, **applicants must complete and submit an online County of Sacramento employment application and supplemental questionnaire via the County's job site, at [www.saccountyjobs.net](http://www.saccountyjobs.net).**

For immediate consideration for this excellent opportunity, **please submit your application to the County by Friday, February 6, 2026;** the final cut-off is at 5:00 p.m. Please refer to the job announcement for additional filing dates.

Following the establishment of the eligible list, the most qualified candidates will be invited to participate in the interview and selection process.

If you have questions and for additional information about this position, please contact Alliance Resource Consulting:

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*Sacramento County is about enriching communities to thrive. We strive to create inclusive workplaces that reflect the communities we serve. We value and celebrate the unique perspectives, backgrounds, abilities, and diverse dimensions of our employees and residents. Through transparency, courage, innovation, and trust we are committed to advance equity and transformational change. We are a proud equal opportunity employer. If you need assistance or an accommodation due to a disability for any phase of the hiring process, please contact our Disability Compliance Office at [dco@saccounty.gov](mailto:dco@saccounty.gov) or 916-874- 7642, CA Relay 711.*