

The City of San José Aviation Department Announces New Director of Aviation at Mineta San José International Airport



John Aitken

SAN JOSE, Calif. - Amid unprecedented expansion spurred by dozens of new flights, San José's downtown airport will now have a new leader at its helm - but it's a familiar face to those in the aviation industry. John Aitken has been named the new aviation director at Mineta San José International Airport.

John Aitken, who stepped up to lead the Mineta San José International Airport after the departure of its former director, will now take over the role.

Mr. Aitken, who has 26 years of aviation experience and began his career at San José's airport in 1993, served as the downtown airport's interim director after Kim Becker left for a job in San Diego in March.

"I'm very honored to have this opportunity," said Mr. Aitken. "The spirit of creativity and innovation here at the airport, at City Hall and in our Silicon Valley community is inspiring."

The appointment comes as Silicon Valley's airport experiences nonstop growth, including Wednesday's announcement that Southwest Airlines is adding new nonstop routes to eight cities.

The momentum has been strong for the last few years. Mineta in 2016 saw a 12.7 percent growth in passengers over the prior year, said city spokeswoman Cheryl Wessling.

Today the airport is home to 15 international carriers and was considered America's fastest-growing major airport in 2016 based on percentage increase in passenger seat capacity. It serves more than 11 million passengers a year, though it trails its neighboring airports in Oakland and San Francisco.

"It's a proud moment when a two-decades-long city veteran, who began his career refueling aircraft at Mineta San José International Airport, rises through the ranks to be Director of Aviation," said Mayor Sam Liccardo.

Mr. Aiken is an instrument rated commercial pilot and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida Institute of Technology in Aviation Management and MBA from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Aviation Management. He is an Accredited Airport Executive (A.A.E.). Mr. Aiken is a Board Member of Joint Venture Silicon Valley.

Source: The Mercury News and ADK Executive Search

This national search was conducted by ADK Executive Search, a retained executive search firm specializing exclusively in searches for the aviation community.