



The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority invites applications for
Vice President of Operations/Chief Operations Officer

San Diego International Airport (SAN)
San Diego, California

EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES PROVIDED BY ADK CONSULTING & EXECUTIVE SEARCH



The Airport

Owned and operated by the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, San Diego International Airport (SAN) is one of the busiest single-runway commercial service airports in the world and the third-busiest airport in California. Located along San Diego Bay near downtown San Diego, the airport serves more than 80 nonstop destinations around the globe and contributes nearly \$12 billion in economic activity to the region. SAN serves more than 25 million passengers a year.

In September 2025, the Airport Authority opened the first phase of the \$3.8 billion New Terminal 1 (New T1), a transformational project in the airport's history. The New T1 project replaces an outdated facility with a larger, more modern and more efficient facility to provide a better experience for our customers. The final phase of construction is due for completion in 2028, just in time for the airport's 100th anniversary.

SAN is built upon the vision that every team member has a stake in the passenger experience. Here at the Airport Authority, we love San Diego as much as we love traveling, and we see our airport as an extension of the always friendly and sunny city we call home. If you're looking for a team that values each other, does great work, and most importantly, has a lot of fun along the way, please apply today.



About San Diego

San Diego's unique blend of outdoor lifestyle, sun-soaked beaches and dynamic city experiences creates an unparalleled balance of relaxation and excitement. Through our laid-back, friendly, refreshingly down-to-earth attitude, this is a destination that more than shines. We inspire optimism and positivity like no place else on Earth and bring out the best in everyone. Which is why we like to say, in San Diego, the outlook is always sunny.

With near perfect weather year-round, 70 miles of spectacular coastline, world-class attractions, and a thriving urban core complete with a sophisticated art, dining and nightlife scene, San Diego has earned the name "California's Beach City."

San Diego is part of a binational region, home to more than three million residents and comprises diverse coastal, urban and inland neighborhoods, each with its own flavor. It is also home to signature Cali Baja cuisine and hundreds of craft beers and wines bottled in the region.

It's hard to find a better destination for families. Whether you love engaging with animals or thrill rides, building sandcastles or beach bonfires, there's plenty to entertain the entire family from sunup to sundown.

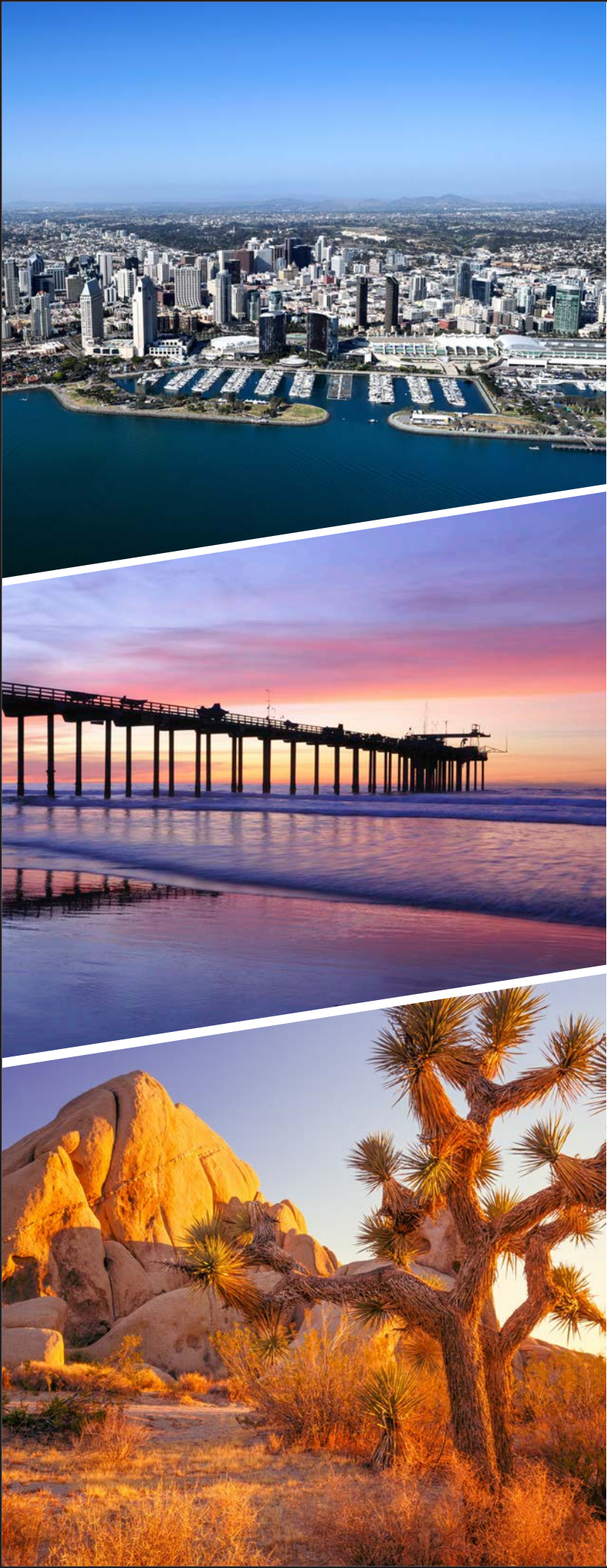
After a day at the beach or other outdoor adventure, head downtown to one of the sizzling nightclubs or rooftop bars. If art and culture are your passion, you'll find an exciting hub of creativity in San Diego. Balboa Park, a 1,200-acre urban cultural park listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as one of the Great Places in America, features 17 museums, numerous galleries and performing arts venues, and the world-famous San Diego Zoo.

Life in San Diego also means easy access to international travel with the Mexican border just 17 miles from downtown. Explore Baja California's culture in the bustling city of Tijuana, the resort community of Rosarito, the port town of Ensenada and the Valle de Guadalupe wine region.

Regional Economy

With breakthrough technology companies and research organizations, the largest military concentration in the world and a strong tourism industry, the San Diego region has one of the most dynamic economies in the country. The following page highlights our diverse economic market.





San Diego Economic Market

Aerospace

Home to some of the world's largest aerospace, aircraft, and research and development companies, San Diego is a North American aerospace hub. Accounting for nearly a fifth of the region's innovation employment, the aerospace industry has evolved rapidly, creating new industry ecosystems, talent demands, and collaborative efforts within the region.

Biotech

The biotechnology industry is a major driver of San Diego's innovation economy. Major pharmaceutical companies including Eli Lilly, Pfizer, Illumina, and Takeda maintain a presence in San Diego to foster collaboration with major research institutes, universities, and small life sciences companies. These unique assets, combined with one of the most talented workforces in the world, make San Diego one of the top three life sciences markets in the world.

Defense

San Diego's defense cluster is critical for the region's innovation and military economies, and ultimately, to the United States' national security priorities. San Diego is home to the largest federal military workforce in the country.

Tourism

San Diego is one of the top visitor and convention destinations in the world. Dubbed by Fodor's as a "vacationer's paradise" and by the U.S. Weather Bureau as "the closest thing to perfect weather in America," San Diego's world-class waterfront and award-winning international airport make it accessible from destinations across the globe.

Telecommunications

A world leader in wireless technologies, San Diego companies are driving local and global innovation that keeps us all connected. Founded in San Diego in 1985, Qualcomm invented technologies at the heart of 3G and 4G wireless and the first smartphone and continues to pioneer new technologies that range from 5G to artificial intelligence, and more.

Software

With more than 3,600 technology companies and 80 research institutions in the region, the technology industry is a major driver of the innovation economy in San Diego. The research institutes – along with UC San Diego, San Diego State University, and other major universities – provides the sector with breakthrough technologies that fuel company growth and product development and ultimately make San Diego one of America's most innovative markets.

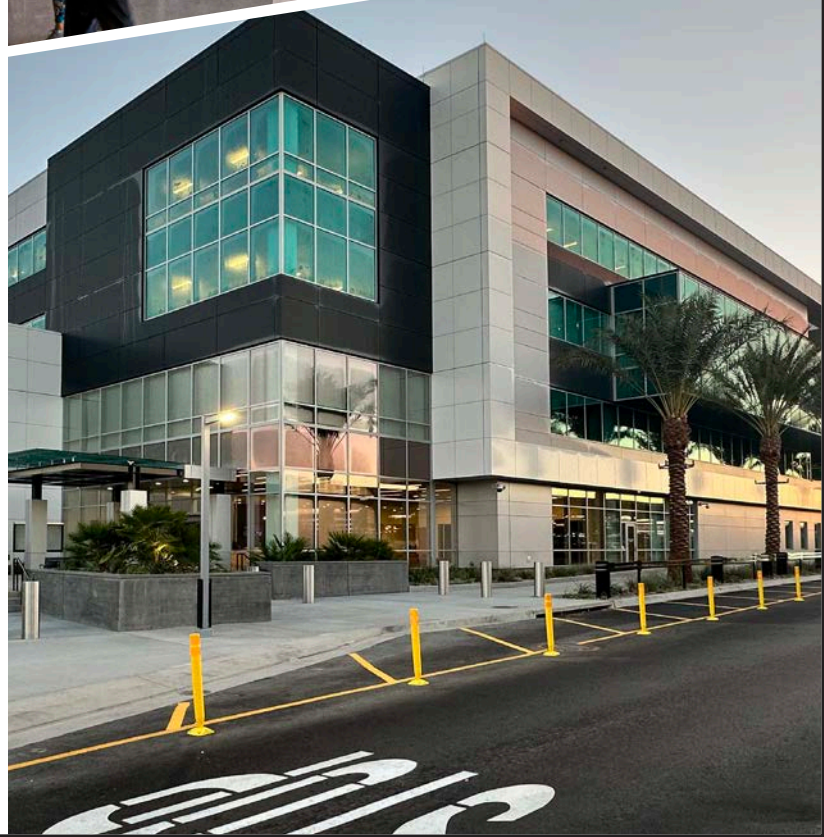
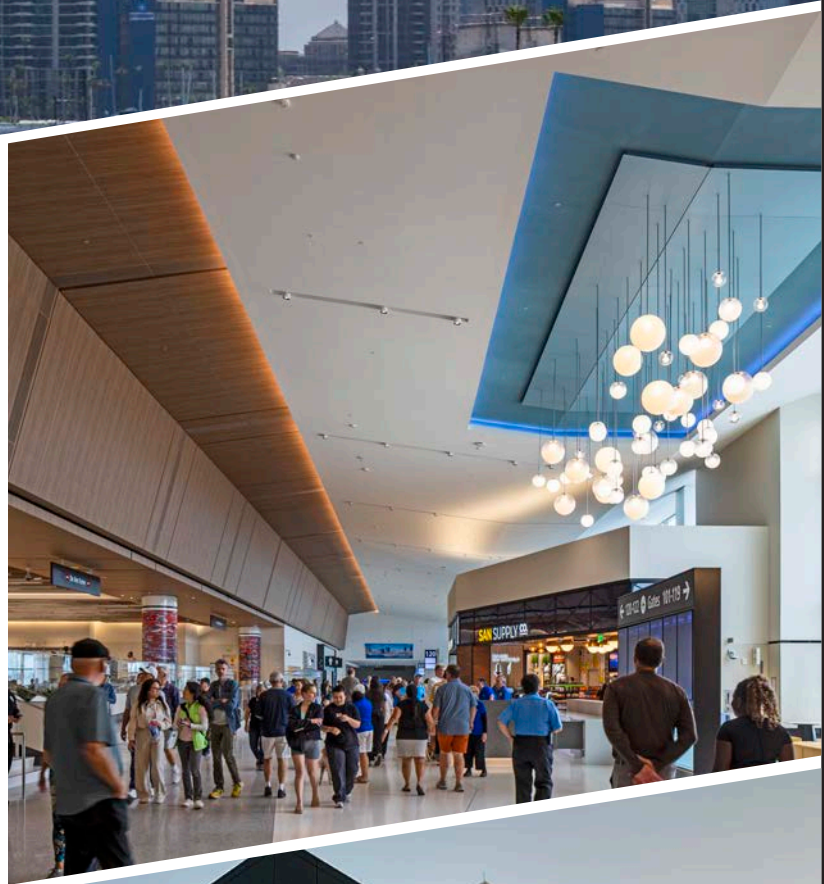


The Position

The Vice President of Operations/Chief Operations Officer (COO) of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA) is a member of the Executive Leadership Team and has a critical role in creating and implementing strategies in support of SDCRAA's vision, mission and goals, including reinforcing the organization's culture and enhancing the customer experience. The COO is responsible for directing the day-to-day operations of the Airport, as well as developing and implementing all airport operations initiatives. The COO's scope of authority includes the Airport's airfield and landside, airport security, public safety, facility management and traffic management. The COO is also responsible for terminal operations, including oversight of large-scale construction and renovation projects. The COO ensures airport activities are aligned with those of airport users including tenants, governmental agencies, and customers. The COO is a liaison to SDCRAA's stakeholders and collaborates with tenants and the stakeholders to achieve the goals and objectives of the Airport.

The COO evaluates the work of assigned departments and ensures work is accomplished in compliance with established policies, directives, codes, regulations and laws. The COO evaluates departmental activities as well as the performance of individual staff members, makes and/or recommends adjustments, improvements or corrective actions, and coaches staff in order to achieve optimal performance levels. The COO also monitors budget activities, looking for methods of maximizing budget allocations. The COO represents the SDCRAA at trade associations and local, state and federal meetings and conferences.

Click [here](#) for a complete job description.





The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for this position will have a college degree and at least 10 years' experience in airport operations, maintenance and planning, with 5 years' experience in a leadership role at a commercial service airport. Experience with international carriers is desired. The individual will have strong strategic thinking skills and have demonstrated the ability to effectively lead diverse teams with the goal of achieving employee engagement and success. The candidate will be skilled in assessing the needs of customers, tenants and employees alike, creating opportunities for input and addressing concerns. The individual will have experience allocating budget and staff resources to projects as well as creating an inclusive work environment where all staff are encouraged to contribute their ideas and time in order to meet organizational goals and objectives.

Salary and Benefits

The salary range is \$187,546 - \$337,582 (with a starting salary of \$262,564). SAN offers short- and long-term incentive opportunities accompanied by a generous benefits package. Relocation assistance will be offered.

How To Apply

To apply online, [click here](#).

Deadline for applications: February 22, 2026

The contacts for this search are:

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Please note: After your application is complete, you will receive an important email from us. Please check your inbox and your junk/spam folder, and if you have not received our email, please notify us at: admin@adkexecutivesearch.com.

San Diego International Airport (SAN) is an equal-opportunity employer.

