



The City of Albuquerque invites applications for
Aviation Director

Albuquerque International Sunport - ABQ
Albuquerque, NM

The Organization



The City of Albuquerque offers a rare opportunity to lead aviation in one of the nation's most dynamic and strategically positioned cities. As New Mexico's largest municipality and the 31st largest city in the United States, Albuquerque serves as the state's governmental, economic, and transportation hub. Home to more than 550,000 city residents and nearly one million people across the metropolitan service area, the City plays a pivotal role in driving regional economic growth, infrastructure investment, public safety, and quality of life. Governed under a Mayor–Council system, Albuquerque blends strong executive leadership with legislative oversight, transparency, and public accountability—creating an environment where visionary leaders can shape policy, deliver results, and leave a lasting legacy on a critical public asset serving the entire state.



As a full-service municipality, the City of Albuquerque delivers a comprehensive range of programs and services to residents, businesses, and visitors. These services encompass public safety, transportation and infrastructure, environmental health, housing and community development, parks and recreation, cultural services, and economic development. Through its departments and enterprise operations, the City manages complex systems and assets essential to the daily functioning and long-term success of the largest metropolitan community in the state.

The City is guided by strategic priorities that emphasize operational excellence, equity, resilience, and long-term sustainability. Leadership is focused on modernizing infrastructure, strengthening public safety, addressing housing affordability, advancing environmental stewardship, and supporting inclusive economic growth. A commitment to data-informed decision-making, performance measurement, and continuous improvement underpins the City's approach to effective governance and service delivery.



**CITY of
ALBUQUERQUE**

The Organization (*continued*)

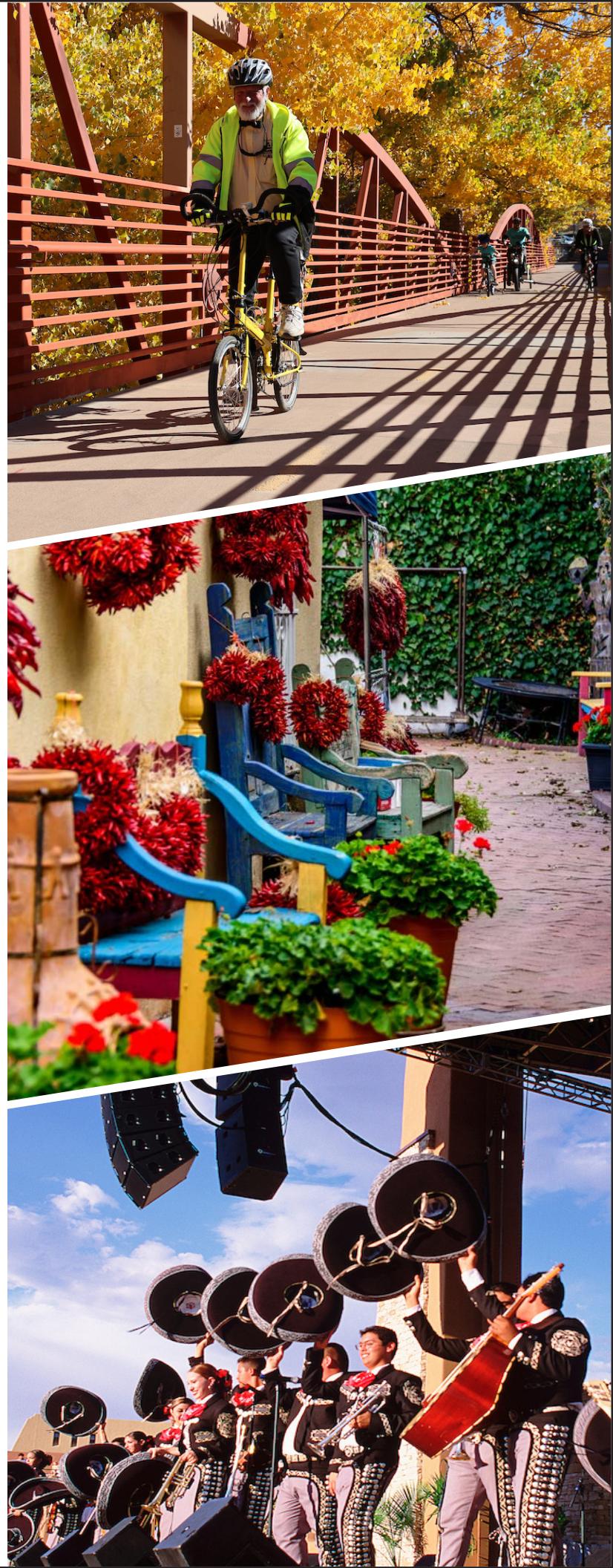
Economic development and regional connectivity are central to Albuquerque's mission. The City actively supports business attraction and retention, workforce development, tourism, and innovation through coordinated initiatives and strategic investment. Major municipal assets—including transportation networks, cultural facilities, and aviation infrastructure—contribute significantly to the regional economy and position Albuquerque as a competitive and connected metropolitan center within the Southwest.

The City of Albuquerque places a strong emphasis on organizational culture and workforce excellence. Employing a diverse and highly skilled workforce, the City is committed to fostering an inclusive, professional environment that values collaboration, accountability, and leadership development. Executives are expected to support talent development, encourage innovation, and model the highest standards of public service and ethical leadership.

Community engagement is a foundational element of the City's operating philosophy. Albuquerque values transparent communication and meaningful collaboration with residents, neighborhood associations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, tribal governments, and private-sector partners. City leadership is expected to be accessible, responsive, and relationship-oriented, building trust while advancing shared community goals.

From a fiscal and operational perspective, the City of Albuquerque manages a substantial municipal budget, significant capital programs, and a complex regulatory framework. Sound financial stewardship, strategic investment, and effective risk management are essential to maintaining long-term stability while addressing evolving community needs and priorities.

Overall, the City of Albuquerque offers a dynamic and impactful public-sector environment for executive leadership. The organization seeks experienced, mission-driven leaders who bring strategic vision, operational discipline, and a commitment to public service. With its scale, complexity, and community focus, the City provides a meaningful opportunity for executives to lead, innovate, and contribute to the continued success of a vibrant and evolving metropolitan community.





The Community

Albuquerque, NM is the state's largest metropolitan area and serves as its primary economic, cultural, and innovation center. Located along the Rio Grande and framed by the Sandia Mountains, the city offers a distinctive blend of natural beauty, rich heritage, and forward-looking opportunity. Albuquerque's deep Native American, Hispanic, and Anglo roots shape a culturally vibrant community known for collaboration, resilience, and authenticity.

The region's economy is diverse and steadily expanding, supported by strong public and private-sector leadership. Key industries include aerospace and defense, advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, healthcare, bioscience, logistics, and technology. Albuquerque is home to major institutions such as Sandia National Laboratories, Kirtland Air Force Base, and the University of New Mexico, all of which contribute to a robust research environment and a highly skilled workforce. A growing entrepreneurial ecosystem further enhances the city's reputation as a place where innovation and applied research thrive. Companies like Netflix, NBCUniversal, LSI, RiskSense, Carenet, and many others have selected Albuquerque because it is a great place to do business and provides a healthy and affordable quality of life.

Albuquerque offers a compelling value proposition for executives considering relocation. The cost of living remains significantly lower than in many comparable metropolitan areas, allowing leaders to enjoy a high quality of life without the pressures of larger, more congested markets. Housing options range from historic neighborhoods and urban developments to suburban and rural communities, providing flexibility to match a wide range of lifestyles and family needs.

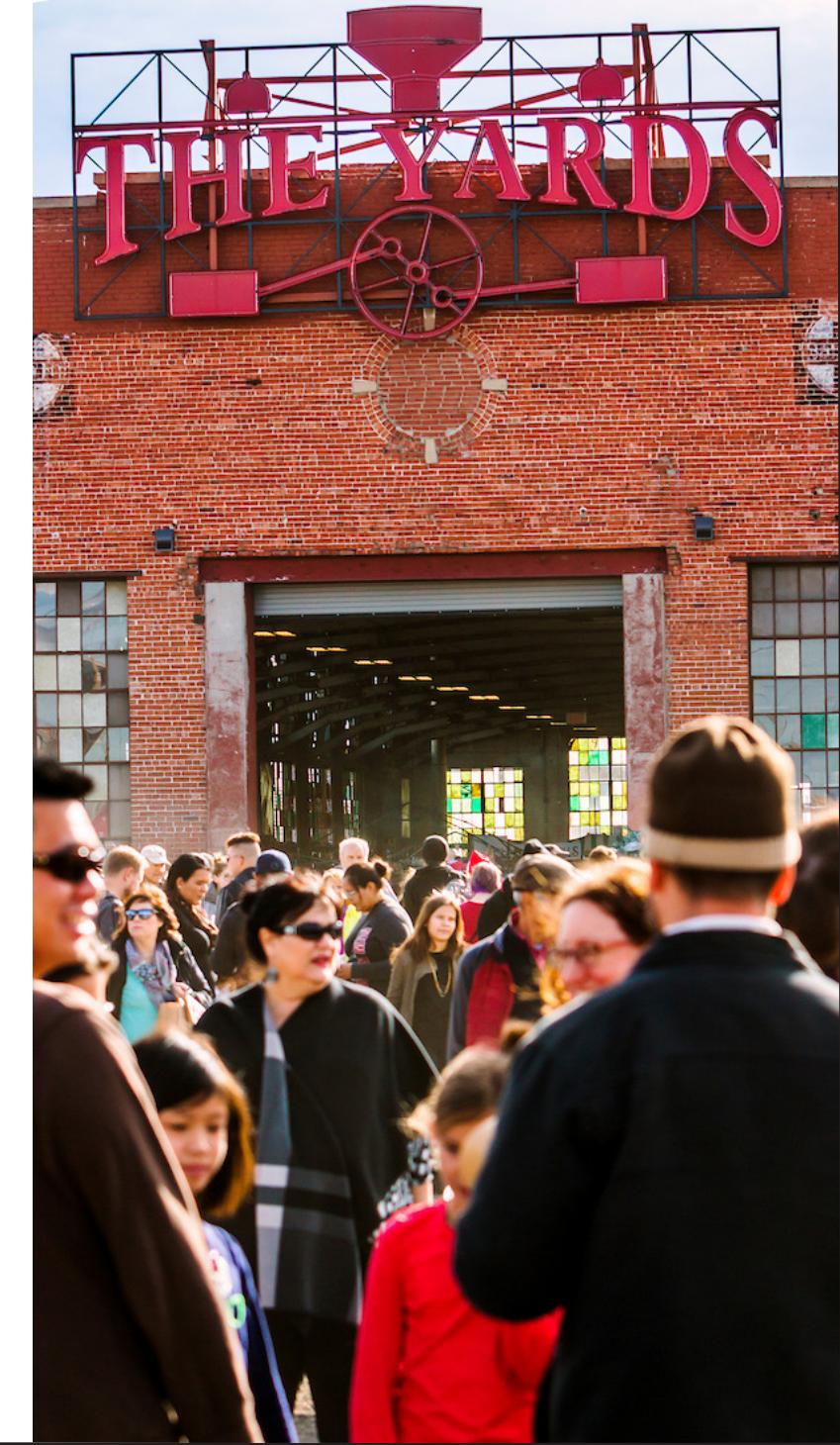


The Community (*continued*)

Quality of life is a defining advantage of the region. With more than 300 days of sunshine annually, Albuquerque supports an active, outdoor-oriented lifestyle year-round. Residents enjoy convenient access to hiking, biking, skiing, golf, and river activities, with nearby mountains, open spaces, and national parks offering abundant opportunities for recreation and wellness. These natural amenities contribute to a healthy work-life balance that is increasingly valued by today's executive leaders.

The city's arts and cultural scene is both vibrant and deeply rooted in tradition. Albuquerque supports a thriving community of artists, designers, musicians, and filmmakers, complemented by museums, galleries, historic districts, and performance venues. The city is internationally recognized for the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, one of the world's most iconic annual events, which draws visitors and global attention each year. Albuquerque's culinary landscape is equally distinctive, anchored by its celebrated New Mexican cuisine and complemented by a growing array of contemporary dining experiences.

From an infrastructure and accessibility standpoint, Albuquerque is strategically positioned within the Southwest. The Albuquerque International Sunport provides convenient national connectivity, while interstate highways and rail access support efficient regional travel and logistics. The city's central location makes it an attractive base for organizations with regional or national reach, offering accessibility without the congestion of larger metropolitan centers. Education





The Community (*continued*)

and workforce development are key strengths of the community. The University of New Mexico, along with Central New Mexico Community College and other training institutions, supports a steady pipeline of talent and leadership development. Collaboration between academic institutions, government, and industry fosters innovation and ensures alignment between workforce skills and employer needs.

Civic engagement and community leadership are highly valued in Albuquerque. The city offers meaningful opportunities for executives to become involved in civic, nonprofit, and economic development initiatives, allowing leaders to make a visible and lasting impact. Albuquerque's business environment is characterized by approachability, collaboration, and a shared commitment to long-term success.

Above all, Albuquerque is known for its welcoming spirit and strong sense of community. Professionals relocating to the area often find a city that values authenticity, balance, and purpose. With its combination of economic opportunity, cultural richness, natural beauty, and affordability, Albuquerque presents a compelling destination for executive leaders seeking both professional fulfillment and an exceptional quality of life.

Albuquerque is the urban center of New Mexico and one of America's best mid-sized cities. The 32nd largest city in the country, Albuquerque's economy is emerging with strength in space technology, directed energy, smart community technologies, and film and digital media.

Position Overview

The Aviation Director serves as the chief executive responsible for the leadership, management, and long-term development of the City of Albuquerque's Aviation Department. Reporting to the Chief Operations Officer, this at-will executive role provides strategic direction across airport operations, planning, finance, and stakeholder relations to ensure a safe, efficient, and economically sound airport system that supports regional and statewide growth.

The department operates two municipal airports: Albuquerque International Sunport, a medium-hub commercial service airport and the largest multimodal facility in New Mexico, and Double Eagle II Airport, a key general aviation facility serving the Albuquerque region.

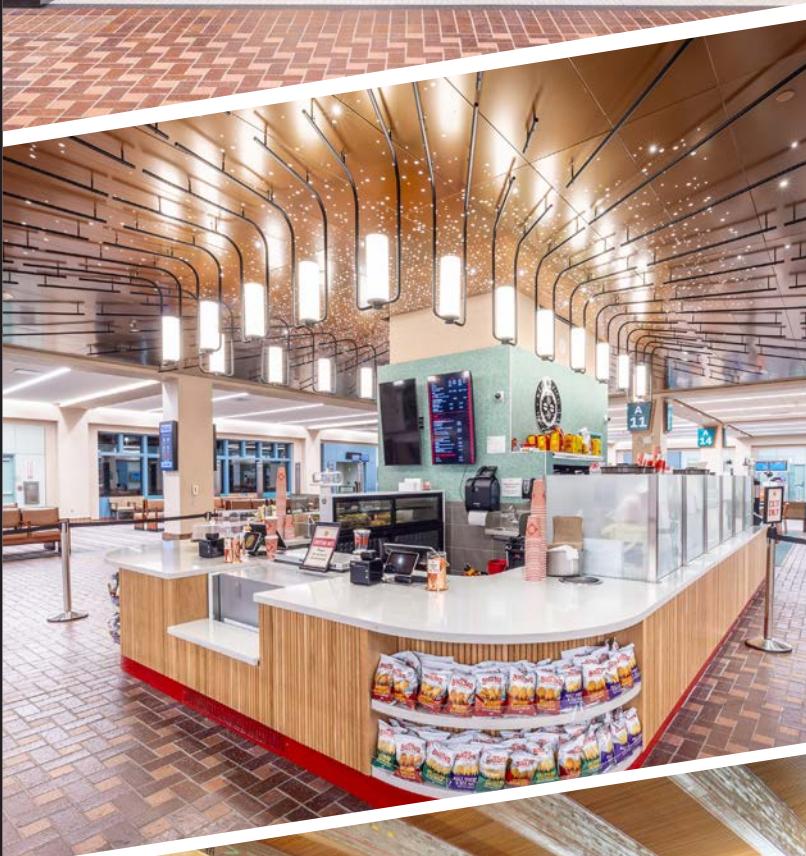
About the Role

The Aviation Director leads an organization with approximately 293 full-time employees and an annual operating budget of \$68 million. The role balances day-to-day operational oversight with long-range planning, capital development, and regulatory compliance. As the public face of the airport system, the Director represents the City in local, regional, and national forums while maintaining strong partnerships with airlines, tenants, federal agencies, military partners, and the community.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead safe, secure, and efficient airport operations across airfield, terminal, and landside functions
- Set strategic direction through master planning, capital programming, and long-term development initiatives
- Direct operating and capital budgets while overseeing financial stewardship and fiscal accountability
- Ensure compliance with FAA, TSA, and applicable federal, state, and local regulations
- Oversee leases, contracts, and relationships with airlines, tenants, and business partners
- Guide capital projects to deliver scope, schedule, and budget objectives
- Advance sustainability, environmental stewardship, and noise compatibility programs
- Serve as primary liaison with government agencies, media, and key stakeholders
- Lead emergency preparedness, response, and crisis communication efforts
- Foster a high-quality, customer-focused airport experience across all passenger services





Leadership Qualities and Style

The ideal candidate is a collaborative and principled leader with strong operational judgment and strategic vision. They value transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making, leading with a style that builds trust across diverse stakeholders. Clear communication, sound judgment, and the ability to lead effectively in complex environments are essential.

Required Qualifications

Candidates should possess extensive executive-level aviation leadership experience and hold Accredited Airport Executive (A.A.E.) certification, or the ability to obtain equivalent accreditation. A valid New Mexico Driver's License and the ability to secure a City Operator's Permit within six months of hire are required.

Salary and Benefits

The starting salary range for this position is negotiable and is accompanied by a generous benefits package.

How To Apply

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

Deadline for applications: March 15, 2026

The contacts for this search are:

Kenneth Gwyn, A.A.E.

kenneth@adkexecutivesearch.com

Dan Sprinkle, A.A.E.

dan@adkexecutivesearch.com

The City of Albuquerque is an equal-opportunity employer. We support diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for employees.

