



The Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority invites applications for
Director of Properties

McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS)
Downtown Island Airport (DKX)
Knoxville, TN

EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES PROVIDED BY ADK CONSULTING & EXECUTIVE SEARCH



Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority

In 1937, the City of Knoxville opened a municipal airport to support the growing number of aviation enthusiasts in the region as well as to capitalize on the city's favorable location in the establishment of an air mail route. Being centrally located within one day's drive or a few hours' flight from major cities made Knoxville's position in the air transportation system critical. As the demand for air travel grew, the city transitioned airport operations to a newly created, independent, nonprofit agency that would own and operate the city's aviation system. In 1978, the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority (MCAA) was established. It is governed by a nine-member Board of Commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor of Knoxville and confirmed by Knoxville City Council, and are charged with the financial success, future planning and development, and operation of both McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS) and Downtown Island Airport (DKX).

The MCAA directly employs over 195 staff members to operate TYS and DKX. There are approximately 3,700 additional employees with the various airlines and agencies, and an estimated 15,500 people are employed regionally because of TYS.

The Airports

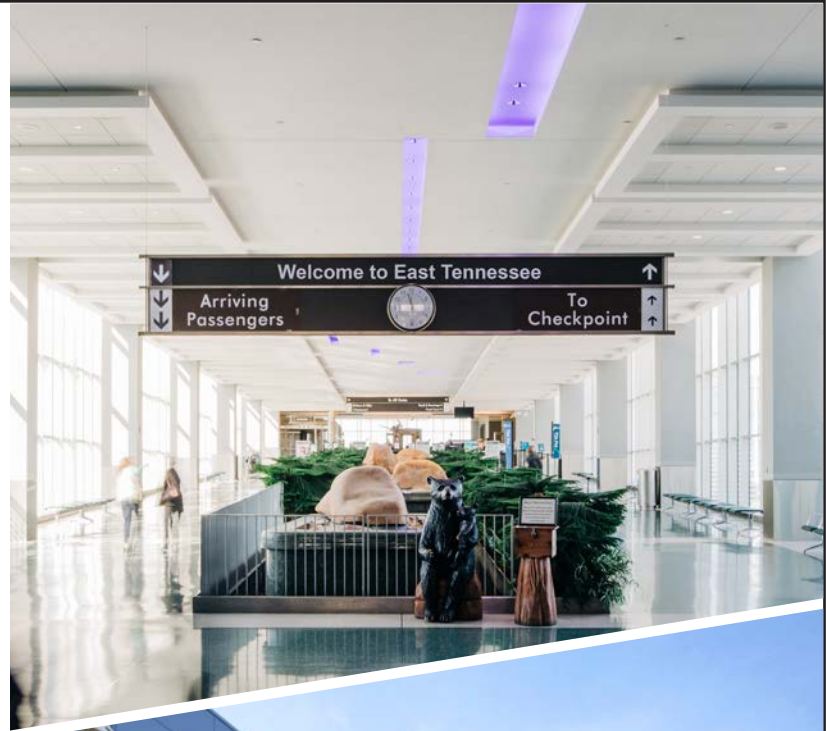
McGhee Tyson Airport

Located 12 miles from the heart of Downtown Knoxville, 20 miles from a world-class technological research hub at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and 30 miles from the majestic landscape of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS) is at the center of East Tennessee's growing region. Out of the top 100 major U.S. airports, TYS is the fastest-growing airport by passenger percentage increase for calendar year 2024, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. This trend in passenger statistics can be attributed to strong relationships and operational leadership among the following air carriers: Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Avelo, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines, and United Airlines. Combined, these airlines operate more than 130 daily nonstop flights to 34 destinations, giving TYS passengers more nonstop options than most other peer airports. Moreover, the market for TYS is found in Knoxville's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of nearly 1.1 million people; however, airport research indicates that TYS attracts passengers from a much larger MSA of nearly 3.2 million people.

In addition to commercial air service, the airport's two parallel runways support significant general aviation, air cargo and military operations. At 9,000' and 10,000' in length, the TYS dual runway system annually handles over 90 million pounds of cargo; over 110,000 operations; and is home to a world-class fixed-base operator, Signature Flight Support. TYS is also the host facility for the Tennessee Air National Guard's 134th Air Refueling Wing and their KC-135 Stratotankers as well as the Tennessee Army National Guard's Aviation Support Facility and its UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

TYS provides visitors with an on-site, full-service Hilton Hotel connected to the airline terminal that completed a significant renovation in 2016. In 2020, the hotel opened an expanded conference meeting space, making it one of the largest meeting spaces available in the area.

Economically, TYS has an economic impact of \$2.6 billion annually, and DKX has an economic impact of \$22 million annually in the local economies of its five surrounding counties through job creation, recruitment of new businesses, the attraction of new air service and the infusion of tourism dollars into each community. For example, based upon the recruitment package developed through relationships in the community and with state and federal organizations, the airport successfully recruited Cirrus Aircraft's Delivery and Training Center for all worldwide Cirrus Aircraft deliveries as well as their large Cirrus Factory Service Center. Joining Cirrus in the airport's 50-acre development park, known as the West Aviation Area, is a regional jet maintenance facility operated by Endeavor.





The Airports (*continued*)

With an annual operating budget of approximately \$46 million (Fiscal Year 2026), TYS is growing its facilities to meet the growing demand for air travel in its community. In 2021, the airport completed construction on the largest project in its 80-year history, the Airfield Modernization Program. This \$130 million, six-year capital improvement project is a comprehensive airfield project that includes installation of a CAT I ILS and airfield lighting improvements on Runway 23L and a complete reconstruction and elevation change of RWY 5L/23R. It required complete demolition of existing airfield pavement, significant grade change and earthwork, concrete pavement, an upgraded LED airfield electrical lighting system, LED airfield signage, LED airfield signage, CAT II ILS, Approach Lighting System, and markings. MKAA recently rolled out “Flight Plan,” a decade-long growth and development plan to elevate McGhee Tyson Airport’s footprint by adding gates and concessions, renovating restrooms and the security checkpoint, and replacing escalators, all in an effort to improve the passenger experience and attract more air service to East Tennessee. As part of Flight Plan in 2024, TYS broke ground on a \$186 million parking expansion, which will add 3,500 parking spaces upon its anticipated completion in 2027. The garage’s six-story design draws inspiration from East Tennessee and will be a prominent feature at the airport.



The Community

Founded in 1791, where the French Broad and Holston Rivers converge to form the Tennessee River, Knoxville has always been known for its great beauty, but this is a city where more than rivers converge. In this vibrant, progressive city, art meets adventure... and culture meets cuisine... and no one meets a stranger.

Art Meets Adventure

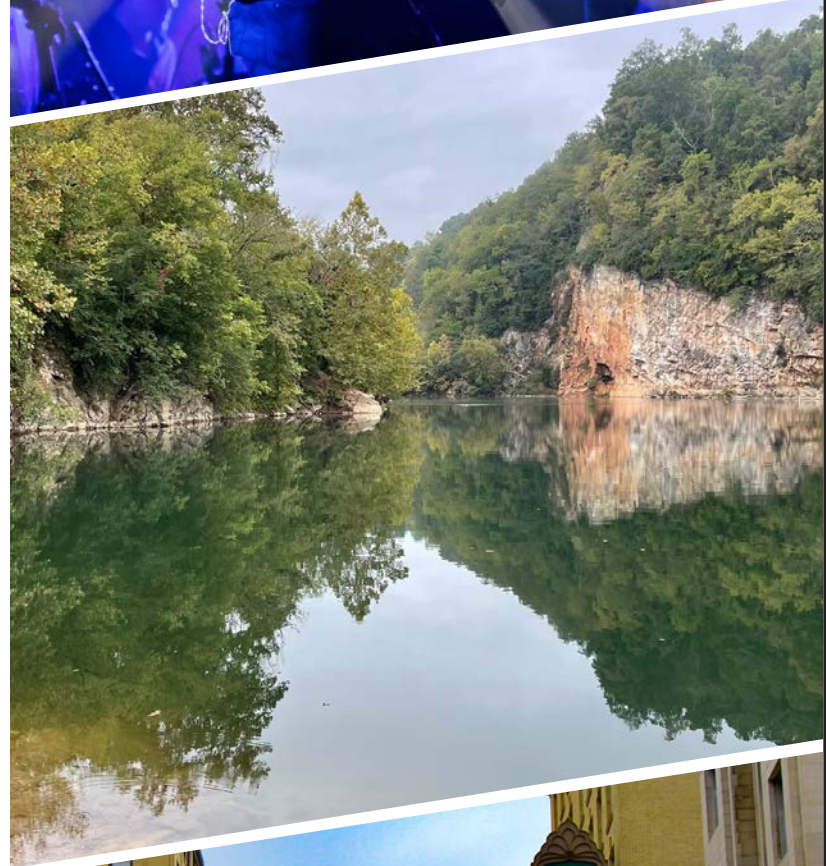
Knoxville is one of America's most vibrant cities for live music. From classical to bluegrass, country to rock, live music is on the Square, on the streets and on the stages of the historic Bijou and Tennessee Theatres, which host concerts, Broadway shows, and performances by the Knoxville Opera Company, the Knoxville Jazz Orchestra and the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra. Year-round, this diverse and welcoming city hosts more than 70 cultural festivals and events. Highlights include the Dogwood Arts Festival, Rhythm N' Blooms Music Festival, Women in Jazz Jam, Knox Asian Fest, the Rossini Festival, Film Fest Knox, and the Big Ears Festival.

The sounds of nature are also part of Knoxville's soundtrack. Located just three miles from downtown, Knoxville's Urban Wilderness is a spectacular 1,000-acre outdoor adventure area where you can hike, bike, climb, paddle or just wander in the woods – within the heart of the city. Over 50 miles of trails and greenways connect a nature center, pristine lakes, historic sites, quarries, adventure playgrounds, city parks and a 500-acre wildlife area. The city also features more than 85 miles of greenways connecting all facets of the city.

Culture Meets Cuisine

Knoxville is home to award-winning museums and attractions that educate, entertain and inspire. The Knoxville Museum of Art celebrates the art and artists of East Tennessee. The KMA presents an engaging schedule of exhibitions and is home to Richard Jolley's Cycle of Life, one of the largest figurative glass-and-steel assemblages in the world. To supplement the arts in our community, TYS has its own art exhibition space that features the artistic talents of the region.

Other popular Knoxville attractions include the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, an international museum dedicated to preserving the history of women's basketball; the East Tennessee History Center, home to exhibits that tell the history of the people, places and events that shaped this region; the McClung Museum, where exhibits showcase the geological, historical, and artistic past of Tennessee and cultures from around the globe; and Zoo Knoxville, one of the premier zoological experiences in the southeast where guests come face to face with the world's most fascinating animals.





The Community (*continued*)

Knoxville has more than its fair share of culinary arts as well. With a heavy focus on locally sourced foods, Knoxville's unique culinary scene is shaped by a group of talented chefs including Tennessee's first James Beard Award winner, Joseph Lenn. Lenn is one of several Blackberry Farm chefs who operate restaurants in Knoxville.

The city is also building a name for itself as one of the best craft beer towns in the Southeast, a place to relax with some of the country's finest beers and people.

The pure walkability of downtown's Market Square, historic Gay Street and the Old City allows people to explore and discover vibrant murals, local music, historic sites, art galleries, shops and more than 80 restaurants (nearly all local), bars and rooftop patios.

Beyond downtown, from east to west, north to south, Knoxville offers a variety of places and activities to explore. West Knoxville features some of the area's finest shopping. East Knoxville is home to the Knoxville Botanical Garden & Arboretum and two of the city's seven historic homes. And North and South offer their fair share of parks, restaurants and gathering spots.

As mentioned, Knoxville is home to the flagship campus of the University of Tennessee, one of the nation's oldest state universities, but it's clearly more than a college town.

The state of Tennessee does not collect income tax. Combined with the area's picturesque beauty and many cultural attractions, it is easy to see how people quickly fall in love with this city.

[Click here](#) to view a short video about living in Knoxville.

With a sophisticated mix of culture and cuisine, served up with genuine hospitality, Knoxville will surprise you.





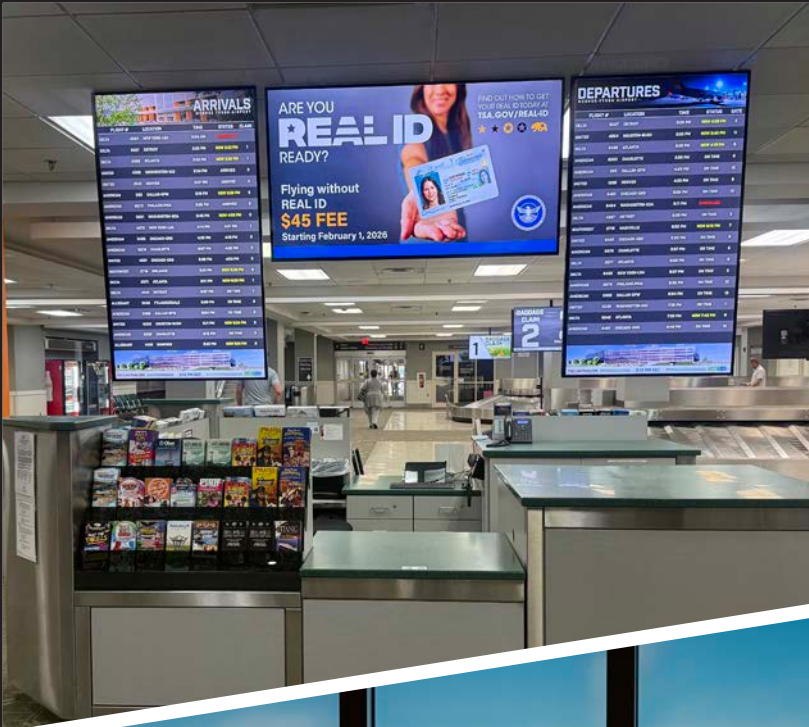
Position Overview

The Director of Properties provides strategic leadership for the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority's property, commercial, and real estate portfolio. The position oversees property and concession management, tenant relationships, lease administration including airline negotiations, real estate development, and risk management. Leading assigned staff and working across the organization, the Director helps maximize the effective use and long-term value of airport facilities, vacant land, and improved properties. This role combines commercial insight, financial stewardship, and relationship management to strengthen revenue opportunities, support responsible development, and advance the Airport Authority's broader business objectives.

About the Role

The Director of Properties operates at the intersection of airport business development, property management, finance, and tenant relations. The role works closely with airport tenants, concessionaires, consultants, legal counsel, and internal teams to negotiate and administer agreements, monitor commercial performance, and identify opportunities for property development and revenue growth. The Director also guides real estate planning and due diligence, supports airline rates and charges, develops revenue projections, and oversees risk management activities. Success requires balancing strategic development opportunities with effective management of existing assets, agreements, tenant relationships, and financial commitments.





Key Responsibilities

- Lead property, concession, lease, real estate, and related commercial management activities.
- Manage tenant relationships, lease compliance, property issues, facility modifications, and concession performance.
- Guide the negotiation and administration of leases, easements, permits, licenses, and operating agreements.
- Oversee risk management strategies, insurance coverage, claims, and tenant insurance requirements.
- Analyze concession revenues, airline activity, rates and charges, and financial trends to support planning and budgeting.
- Develop new business concepts and strategies that strengthen commercial performance and airport revenues.
- Advance real estate development through market research, strategic property planning, due diligence, and consultant coordination.
- Direct and develop assigned staff while fostering accountability, service, collaboration, and strong performance.

Leadership Qualities and Style

The successful Director will be a commercially minded, collaborative leader who combines strategic thinking with strong execution. This individual brings sound judgment, financial acumen, and a service-oriented approach to relationships with tenants, business partners, colleagues, and senior leadership. Strong communication and negotiation skills are essential, along with the ability to interpret complex financial, property, and contractual matters and translate them into practical decisions. The ideal candidate is an analytical problem solver who develops people, manages competing priorities effectively, and approaches opportunities with professionalism, creativity, and a long-term perspective.



METROPOLITAN
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Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in real estate, law, business administration, finance, aviation management, or an equivalent field.
- Three to five years of experience in real estate development, property management, or real estate law.
- Experience developing budgets and projecting revenues and expenses.
- Knowledge of real estate development, leases, insurance, and risk management.
- Demonstrated financial analysis, negotiation, communication, problem-solving, and people leadership capabilities.
- Familiarity with airport operations and FAA regulations is helpful.

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

Salary and Benefits

The starting salary range for this position is \$118,504 - \$154,055. An exceptional candidate may be eligible to receive a starting salary slightly above the range with approval. MKAA offers a competitive benefit package for this position including medical/dental benefits, disability/life insurance, a 401(a)-retirement program and relocation assistance. Final salary offer will be dependent upon experience.

How To Apply

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

Deadline for applications: September 27, 2026

The contacts for this search are:

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The Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority complies with the **Tennessee Lawful Employment Act** and federal law by participating in **E-Verify**. All post-offer new hires are verified electronically to confirm authorization to work in the United States.

The Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority is an equal opportunity employer.

