



2440 Deming Way
Middleton, Wisconsin 53562
608-273-6380
meadhunt.com

April 17, 2026

Mike Parks
Airport Manager
Columbia Regional Airport
11300 S Airport Drive
Columbia, MO 65201

Dear Mike:

I am providing the below in response to your recent request for information on our experience of airport management structures.

The City of Columbia, Missouri, which operates the Columbia Regional Airport (COU), manages the airport as a division of the City Manager's office of Columbia, with oversight of airport operations provided by the Airport Manager. It is my understanding that the City of Columbia will be enacting a change, where COU will become a department of the City of Columbia instead of a division, which accurately reflects the scope for airports with operations similar in size to COU, making them consistent with industry standard.

At airports and airport authorities of similar size to COU, it is most common for the individual who manages aviation operations to have a title such as Executive Director, Executive Director of Aviation, Director of Aviation, Aviation Director, Executive Director of Aviation, or similar. Generally, the typical organization structure under this person includes oversight of multiple functions under aviation, such as finance, operations, maintenance, and airport strategic development, including air service development. Some example airports of similar operational size to COU, that are Mead & Hunt clients with Directors and Executive Directors in charge of aviation are Grand Forks, ND (GFK); Durango, CO (DRO); Gary, IN (GYG), Pullman, WA (PUW), Lynchburg, VA (LYH), Evansville, IN (EVV), and San Bernardino, CA (SBD), just to name a few. Organizational structures at these airports are similar to what is being proposed at COU. The Mead & Hunt Air Service Development team currently has over forty client airports, the large majority of which are managed by directors.

The large majority of these client airports are also either airport authorities, meaning they are independent entities with the responsibility of oversight and operation of an airport, or departments of aviation, meaning they are separate departments owned and operated by a local government authority or municipality.

The above information is based off of my experience in aviation and air service consulting. I do not have a background in human resources or organizational management. I do not have any financial incentive to provide these statements or information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Richardson'.

Jay Richardson
Managing Director, Air Service Development