

Who we are:

Transportation is so basic that many of us overlook its overwhelming importance in our daily lives. Practically everything used in our homes, offices, or schools across Tennessee – from furniture to food items to clothing – requires a large and complex transportation network. The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides citizens of Tennessee and travelers with one of the best transportation systems in the country. TDOT is a multimodal agency with responsibilities in building and maintaining roads, aviation, public transit, waterways, railroads, cycling and walking. Our involvement ranges from airport improvements to funding transit buses to planning for river ports. The Department of Transportation has approximately 3,500 employees with four statewide region facilities in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Jackson. TDOT Aeronautics is located near the John C. Tune Airport in Nashville, TN.



Drones and Advanced Air Mobility Statewide Technical Specialist

Aeronautics Division – Drones and Advanced Air Mobility

\$99,864 annually

Job Overview

The Drones and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Statewide Technical Specialist ensures advanced aviation projects follow TDOT project development guidelines, relevant design standards, and applicable Tennessee and Federal Codes and serves as a subject matter expert for the Drones and AAM Team. This position is responsible for ensuring statewide consistency in the application of drones and the development of AAM initiatives. The Drones and Advanced Air Mobility Statewide Technical Specialist is responsible for assisting and supporting TDOT's Drones and AAM Team Lead in defining critical goals and intended outcomes for scope, schedule, budget, and quality per the Project Delivery Network (PDN). These projects will range in complexity and risk from simple to highly complex. The Drones and AAM Statewide Technical Specialist role requires collaboration with multiple TDOT Divisions, project team members, consultants, and other external stakeholders.

The Drones and Advanced Air Mobility Statewide Technical Specialist ensures that Department policies, technical guidance, procedures, and systems related to project development are current and accurate for incorporation into the project delivery process. The Drones and Advanced Air Mobility Statewide Technical Specialist monitors and manages the scope, schedule, and budgets of advanced aviation projects and makes required adjustments as necessary to ensure that the work completed is in alignment with the Department's goals.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Support and serve on Project Teams as part of a matrix organization as the drones and AAM subject matter expert: ensure Project Teams are aware of additional requested design or project features, associated local agreements, contracts, and are aware of project stakeholders to maintain project continuity; respond to requests for support and guidance utilizing expertise to provide technical options and recommendations for consideration by the Project Manager and Project Teams to promote efficient project and program delivery.

Assist with the review of potential AAM project investigations, conceptual designs, cost estimates, evaluation, and concept reports. Assist potential project partners with project eligibility requirements, application and evaluation processes and procedures, associated agreements, and project development, permitting, and construction options. Apply FAA compliance knowledge including but not limited to parts 49, 91, 107, 135, 139, and 108, and state aviation laws to assess risks and opportunities across diverse aviation use cases including data collection, cargo/passenger movement, and public infrastructure integration.

Routinely collaborate with airport sponsors, stakeholders, Headquarters, Divisions, and Regions to identify and document knowledge that includes maximizing project successes, acknowledging national best practices, and incorporating effective solutions gleaned from past challenges. Assist with modifications to applicable policies, procedures, design standards, specifications, and special provisions. Support testing operations, pilot programs, and demonstrations to validate new AAM technologies and use cases.

Assist in the development of a Consultant Acquisition Plan (CAP) and serve on selection committees for professional engineering and non-engineering services. Provide support in the development of the Request for Proposal (RFP) by attending project-specific meetings, determining scoring criteria, participating in project information sessions, serving as a scorer as part of the consultant acquisition process, and attending de-briefs with consultants. For complex projects, support Project Managers and Project Teams in the management of external partners, together with the Professional Services Division, including the negotiation of contracts, review of consultant invoicing, development of contract scopes, management of contract tasks, and documentation of consultant performance and qualifications.

Remain current on national best practices, Federal regulations, Tennessee statutes, and project management and delivery practices. Stay current on revisions to design codes, standards, specifications, and guidelines related to transportation projects, including trends and technologies; assist with the development of legislation and regulations; participate in regional/national working groups, research, committees, and training opportunities related to economic project development initiatives that may benefit/improve TDOT's staff and project/program delivery.

Provide exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers, exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, and communicating effectively. Contribute to outreach and education initiatives that promote the public understanding and safe adoption of AAM and drone technology.

Assist in the development and delivery of advanced aviation development and delivery training, policies, and mentoring to TDOT staff and external stakeholders. Provide technical guidance that addresses acquired knowledge, risk management, technical design elements, and emerging technologies. As the subject matter expert, prepare for and make presentations at industry conferences to improve team performance, creating a stronger understanding of the transportation industry, inspiring new ideas, and developing skills as they relate to project delivery.

Assist in ensuring Drones and AAM Team deliverables are consistent, predictable, and repeatable to provide consistently high levels of achievement and an established track record of success.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- 8 years of demonstrated competency in aviation management, aviation planning, transportation management, or a related field.
- FAA Part 107 Certification preferred

OR

- Master's degree
- 7 years of demonstrated competency in aviation management, aviation planning, transportation management, or a related field.
- and/or project management
- FAA Part 107 Certification preferred

Ideal Candidate

The Drones and AAM Statewide Technical Specialist is a highly skilled problem solver with a comprehensive understanding of the Drones and AAM Program requirements. They are well-versed in program management including aligning internal policies with industry best practices. They excel in supporting multidisciplinary Project Teams by providing technical expertise, strategic guidance, and innovative solutions to drive efficient project and program delivery. Skilled in building strong partnerships with cities, counties, and developers, they facilitate effective coordination to align project objectives and stakeholder expectations. The Drones and AAM Statewide Technical Specialist possesses exceptional communication and interpersonal skills to guide and mentor both internal and external stakeholders, cultivating a collaborative team environment. Additionally, they have extensive experience with various software and drones, demonstrating a proven ability to adopt and implement diverse tools necessary to achieve the Division's goals.