The Tucson Airport Authority (TAA) is a unique non-profit self-sustaining organization established by state charter in 1948 after city officials determined operating an airport would be a costly expense of taxpayer dollars. The TAA now operates Tucson International Airport (TUS) and Ryan Airfield (RYN), which generate an economic impact of $7.4 billion annually, supporting more than 43,000 jobs.

TAA active membership is comprised of 60 business and community leaders who reside within the service areas of its two airports. Based on the founders original intent, the TAA has no taxing authority and receives no local tax money from government entities. Operations are funded through fees paid by users. Capital improvements are funded through a combination of federal and state grants, federally-authorized passenger facility charges and airport operating revenues.

TUS is the major commercial airport serving a catchment area of more than 1.5 million residents of Southern Arizona northern Sonora, Mexico. More than 3.6 million passengers used the airport in 2018 on an average of 110 flights a day on eight airlines serving 20 nonstop destinations.

At more than 8,300 acres, TUS is one of the largest commercial airports in the United States. The campus includes more nearly 2.5 million square-feet of space under roof. Major airfield tenants include Raytheon Missile Systems, the 162nd Wing of the Arizona Air National Guard, Bombardier, Aerovation, Ascent Aviation, SkyWest Airlines and Rolls-Royce Engines.

RYN, about 14 miles west of Tucson, is a general aviation reliever airport covering about 1,800 acres with about 30 airfield tenants. RYN is the only airport in Southern Arizona staffed under the Federal Aviation Administration’s Contract Tower Program.

TAA MISSION
The mission of the Tucson Airport Authority is to promote aviation and foster economic development by strategically planning, developing and operating the most efficient and safest airport system for Southern Arizona.
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Vice President
Real Estate Administration
University of Arizona

Ellen K. Wheeler, J.D.
Retired

*Served as a TAA Board Chair (or President prior to 1998)