

## Serving Travelers

### An Interview with Patrick Klein, Director of Aviation, Kansas City International Airport

**EDITORS' NOTE** Prior to his current position, Patrick Klein served as the Assistant City Manager for the City of Kansas City after having fulfilled a number of roles there during a nearly 15-year tenure. Klein earned an AA degree at Hutchinson Community College, a BS from Kansas State University, and an MPA from the University of Oklahoma.



Patrick Klein

**AIRPORT BRIEF** Kansas City International Airport ([flykci.com](http://flykci.com)) was built by the City of Kansas City, Missouri, and opened in 1972. The KCI complex spans more than 10,000 acres, and its three runways can accommodate up to 139 aircraft operations per hour. Uncongested air and ground space, short taxi time, and a low weather-related closure/cancellation rate are why KCI consistently ranks among the lowest in delays of all U.S. airports. The runways, two of them parallel with 6,575 feet of separation, Category III instrument Landing System and other features, help keep operations smooth in even the worst of weather. New surfaces on the runways, taxiways and terminal aprons, along with ongoing infrastructure improvements, enhance the airport's efficiency and convenience to air carriers. On-airport fixed-base operator Executive Beechcraft offers basic fueling, charter, and ground transportation services.

#### Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?

As Director of Aviation, I oversee all aspects of the department, including management, development, operation, and maintenance of Kansas City International Airport and Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport. I am responsible for 400+ employees and annual revenues of over \$130 million. Additionally, as Project Executive, I oversee all aspects of the \$1.5 billion new terminal and parking garage project at Kansas City International Airport.

#### Will you highlight the new terminal at Kansas City International Airport and what travelers can expect in terms of their travel experience?

At just over a million square feet, the Kansas City International Airport Single Terminal is the largest single infrastructure project in the city's history. It will have a profound and lasting economic impact on the region in the form of new jobs, opportunities for local and small businesses, and a world-class traveler

experience for airport users. Completion is slated for March 2023.

The terminal will feature 39 gates with the ability to expand to 50 in the future, and the project will include a 6,000+-space parking structure along land-side and air-side improvements. The new terminal will support more efficient airline operations and allow airport users to enjoy the convenience of modern air travel in a facility with updated technology and amenities, close parking, spacious gate areas, and tremendous food and beverage options.

#### How critical has it been to integrate new technology into the new terminal offering?

New technology is the backbone of the design and build, and nearly every element of the new terminal itself, as well as the parking garage. Technology is involved in the design, planning, project management, and coordination meetings. Smart technology will drive security measures, airline operations, flight and baggage information, baggage handling systems, passenger boarding bridges, asset management, restrooms, and even smart parking guidance with green and red lights indicating if a space is available.

#### How much of a focus has it been to enhance the restaurant and dining experience at the new terminal?

The new terminal design provides much more space for concessions in strategic areas throughout the facility. There are "nodes" where a variety of concessions can be clustered and there is plenty of room for additional concessions near the gates. Travelers should expect to taste some of the best Kansas City has to offer along with the national brands they expect. This new terminal will certainly establish a great first and last impression of our region.

#### What do you feel will be the impact of the new terminal on the Kansas City business community?

The new terminal at Kansas City International Airport will be opportune for local and out-of-town businesspeople alike. The new terminal will serve to create lasting positive impressions on visiting businesspeople and prospective employees. While it's up to the airlines to increase air service, the new terminal will make it much easier for airlines to connect to passengers. This ease of connectivity could stimulate flight frequency and destination increases over time. Additionally, the amenities, convenience, inclusivity, and smart technology will serve our travelers for years to come. ●



A rendering of the new Kansas City International Airport Single Terminal slated for completion in March 2023