

Career Opportunity Prospectus



Vice President of Operations
Central Ohio Transit Authority
Columbus, OH



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your willingness to review the enclosed opportunity profile. The following pages describe an excellent opportunity for an experienced transit industry professional to join a well-run, financially stable transit authority of good repute that is poised for improved operational initiatives.

By documenting our findings in the enclosed profile, we hope to elicit positive responses from successful candidates or referrals to qualified individuals. We trust the following pages will achieve this goal and would welcome the opportunity to talk with someone you know who meets most or all of the requirements described in this profile. As to how they can expect to be treated:

1. **They can be assured of complete confidentiality on our part.** Any information shared with us will only be shared with our client and will not be forwarded to other organizations without expressed permission.
2. **They will be treated in the manner we would want to be treated if our positions were reversed.** This practically translates into doing what we say we are going to do in a timely manner, promptly returning phone calls, and providing frequent and honest feedback to both candidates and clients.
3. **They can be assured that they are dealing with informed executive researchers.** We understand our client's assignment, the job responsibilities, and the overall objectives of the position. Additionally, we have direct contact with the HR leadership who are recruiting for this hire, thereby enabling candidates to have quick feedback.

As to our veracity in adhering to the above-mentioned points, we invite all interested parties to "check us out" by contacting anyone with whom we have previously done business. You'll find we are unique in that our mission is also our calling: to perform the highest quality executive research work that results in exceptional long-term value for the retained search firms we serve.

Jeffrey R. Ketchum
President & Senior Research Manager
Lordstone Executive Research

THE OPPORTUNITY



As one of the top transit systems in the country, the Central Ohio Transit Authority is a well-run, financially stable organization with a good reputation in both the public transit industry and the community that it serves. COTA is committed to excellence with strong parts in place and a firm foundation from which to work. The new VP of Operations will have the opportunity to tweak and refine the operations side of the organization rather than rebuild from scratch. This opportunity would be well suited

for an experienced operations leader who would relish the chance to fine tune an already well-run machine to the highest possible degree of efficiency.

COTA is respected ethically and is known for having innovative facilities, a young fleet, and a positive organization at all levels from operators up to senior management. The organization provides employees with very competitive pay, an excellent benefits package, and opportunities for upward mobility. The Columbus area has a diverse economic base that was not hit by the recession as hard as other areas in Ohio. This means that money is flowing through Columbus, it is a growing community and, as such, COTA is growing as well. The VP of Operations will be a key decision maker and will have great impact on the trajectory of growth for the organization.



The successful candidate will have the opportunity to make a significant difference and will be an active participant in the strategic planning for the transit authority's future. Columbus ranks as one of the 25 largest cities in the nation and is currently the only one of those cities without rail transit service. As a growing transit unit, COTA is assessing the need for the implementation of a rail system. The VP of Operations will play an integral role in this decision making process.

COTA's current President and CEO, Curtis Stitt, has been in the position for 2 years, and as succession plans are developed the ideal VP of Operations candidate may have the potential to be a candidate for the CEO's role in the next five to ten years. With COTA looking toward the future, the VP of Operations will contribute to developing the organization's vision and striving toward it. Someone with the ability and desire to think in terms of long-term goals would be ideal for this position. The opportunity will give someone the chance to think strategically about the future rather than merely "firefighting" day-to-day problems.

- In a forward-thinking organization that is building top-notch, innovative facilities and is dedicated to pursuing new environmental initiatives, the VP of Operations will be able to stay on the cutting edge of industry developments.
- The successful candidate will have the benefit of working in a well-known and respected organization with a reputation for being ethical and for treating and compensating employees well.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Central Ohio Transit Authority provides fixed bus route service as well as mobility services for the elderly and disabled to a population of 1.2 million people. COTA's territory covers 562 square miles encompassing all of Franklin County and portions of Delaware, Fairfield, Licking, and Union Counties.



What began in 1863 as Columbus Street Railroad Co., now has well over 800 employees and provided 18.4 million passenger trips in 2012. In 2011, COTA achieved the highest level of ridership growth among large and medium sized bus transit agencies in the country at 10.2%.

With commitments to state-of-the-art facilities and excellence in serving their stakeholders – customers, employees, and taxpayers – COTA maintains an excellent reputation amongst the Central Ohio community and the U.S. transit industry. COTA is dedicated to fair and respectful treatment of its employees and strives to provide an environment in which people are proud and devoted to work.

COTA's vision for the future includes continued increases in ridership and increased annual service hours from 925,000 to 1.13 million by 2017. The organization's commitment to the environment is demonstrated by an initiative to convert its fleet from diesel to CNG fueled coaches. This initiative began in 2013, and according to plan, all buses will be CNG fueled by the year 2020.

The Central Ohio Transit Authority places equal importance on the following values:

- **Appropriate Behaviors** – integrity, respect, civility, teamwork, trust, directness, accountability, receptiveness to other viewpoints, and commitment to the success of others
- **Communication** – clarity about the organization, individual goals, and performance expectations
- **Customers** – working to meet and exceed expectations
- **Diversity** – appreciation of differences in opinions, styles, and personal characteristics

- **Ethical Practices** – adherence to codes of ethics, conduct, and behavior that will not be compromised
- **Recognition of Employee Contributions** – Recognition of those who create, innovate, support, and contribute to success
- **Safety** – Refusal to compromise the safety of employees, customers, or the general public

THE POSITION



Reporting to the President/CEO, the Vice President of Operations will be responsible for achieving COTA operation goals through management of bus operation, vehicle maintenance, security services, mobility services, and quality assurance systems. In leading the Operations Division, the person in this role will develop optimum efficiency with great focus on safety of transit operations.

With six direct reports, including five Directors and an Administrative Assistant, the VP of Operations will be responsible for overseeing 725 employees. A key focus of the role is to meet business unit objectives while ensuring adherence to the budget. The VP will emphasize safe, reliable, quality, and on-time customer-focused service. This person will also be responsible for promoting sound and effective labor relations.

From the beginning of their tenure, the VP of Operations will promote an atmosphere of teamwork, build relationships and respect with people in all levels of the organization, and will not simply lead from behind a desk. The right candidate will be enthusiastic, be willing to take part in the bus operator training program, and be available at all hours to make garage visits.

The successful candidate will be an effective leader, team-builder and coach. This person will have a positive attitude and will be approachable. He or she will be collaborative in building relationships between management and front line employees and will foster strong morale at all levels.

The primary concerns of the Vice President of Operations will include:

- **Safety**
- **Budgetary Concerns**
- **Constant Improvement of Customer Service and Satisfaction**
- **Efficiency of Operations**
- **Reduction of Mechanical Issues**



QUALIFICATIONS

Qualified candidates will have successfully led both vehicle operations, maintenance and paratransit functions within a public transit authority with preferably at least 500 employees. Within these current or prior positions they will have developed a track record of bringing order, discipline and process to the functions they have led, resulting in a high degree of efficiency and increased performance.



Through their collaborative leadership skills they have built consensus around key issues of needed change and moved their organizations forward with shared vision, accountability and responsibility.

Within prior positions, they have placed great emphasis on establishing relationships with individuals at all levels of the workforce. This has fostered open lines of communication and developed a culture of teamwork between the executive, managerial, and labor functions within their agencies.

They have played an active role in the development and negotiation of union contracts. By their relationship building and communication abilities, they have demonstrated the ability to be a key partner in finding common ground and agreement.

Within prior positions, they have demonstrated their financial acumen by preparing, forecasting and successfully managing budgets in excess of \$70M per year. They rely heavily not only on financial data, but data of all types when formulating their strategic plans, monitoring key performance indicators and analyzing results to drive quality and operational improvements.

Additional required qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Transportation, or related field.
- Demonstrated problem solving ability and experience developing and implementing effective business strategies.
- Strong research and analytical skills and experience.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Knowledge of federal and local transportation laws, regulation, guidelines, and practices.
- Demonstrated ability to inspire, motivate, and lead others to a shared vision and goals.
- Excellent managerial, human relations, and supervisory skills and experiences, preferably in a union environment.
- 10 years of experience in a senior level position managing fixed route bus operations, vehicle maintenance, and mobility services.

LOCATION



Central Ohio has been named one of the top local economies in the U.S. and the third fastest growing major metropolitan area in the Midwest. Columbus is a thriving city and is a hub of culture, the arts, and recreation in the Midwest. The region is ranked nationally and internationally as a strong and diverse economy. Columbus is home to 14 Fortune 1000 companies, four nationally recognized healthcare systems, 20 colleges and universities including the Ohio State University, and an

atmosphere that nurtures innovative and entrepreneurial small business.

Recognition for Columbus from major news sources include:

- #1 Up & Coming High-Tech City (*Forbes Magazine*)
- #7 Best City in the Country for Business (*Market Watch*)
- Top Ten Most Livable City (*CNN/Money Magazine*)
- America's Best Place to Raise Kids (*Business Week*)
- 4th Best City in the Nation for Jobs and Housing (*Yahoo Finance*)
- 7th Most Affordable City in which to Live (*Forbes.com*)
- #13 in Nation for Most Capital Investment Projects (*Site Selection Magazine*)

CANDIDATING PROCEDURE

Lordstone Executive Research provides support to global retained search firms. If you know someone who meets most or all of the requirements described in this brochure, please feel free to suggest that person for consideration.

We fully respect the need for confidentiality of information supplied by interested parties and assure them that we will not disclose any private data with anyone outside of our client.

For further information or consideration for this position, please contact:

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