

Innovative Programs to Attract & Maintain Employees

North State Transit Symposium
July 13, 2023

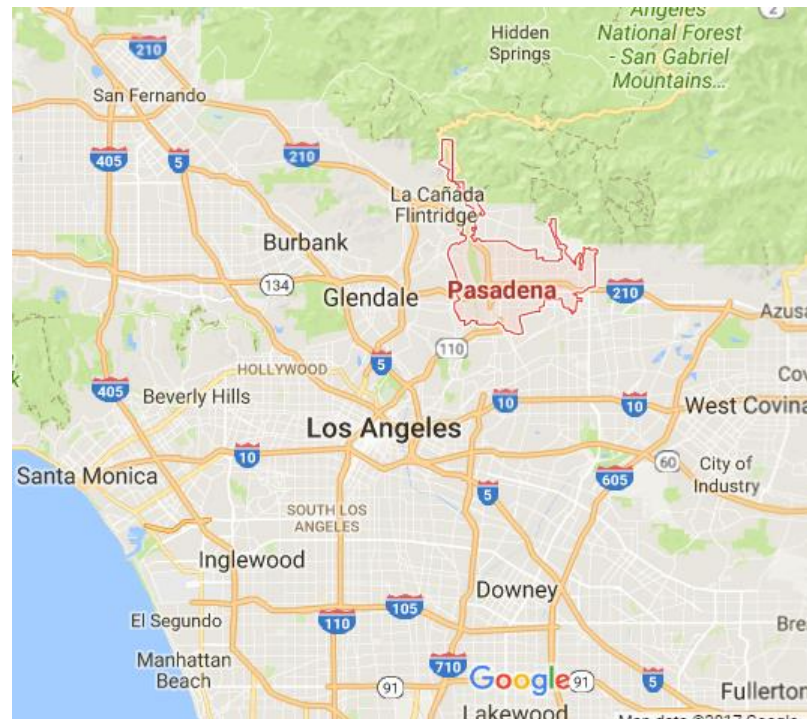




Pasadena's Transit Landscape

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- Locally funded transit agency
 - > Contracted transit operations
- Pasadena Transit
 - > Community fixed route service
- Pasadena Dial-A-Ride
 - > Older adults
 - > Individuals with disabilities
- Interagency Coordination
 - > bus stops, coordinated services, local & regional planning, funding



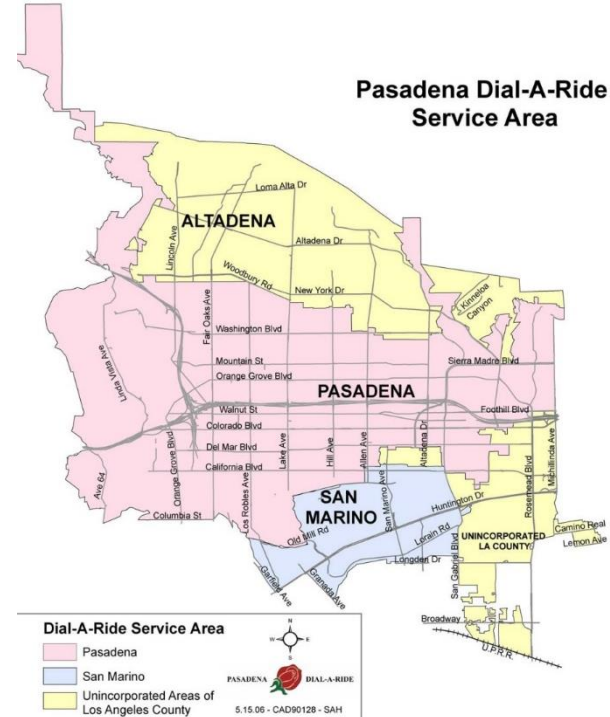
PASADENA



Pasadena Dial-A-Ride

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- ✓ Service for 34 years (1989)
- Service Area
 - > Pasadena
 - > Altadena
 - > San Marino
- Ridership (pre-Covid)
 - > 90k annual passengers
- Vehicles
 - > 12 peak vehicles



PASADENA



Pasadena Transit

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✓ Service for 29 years (1994)

- Routes

- > 6 routes
- > 400 bus stops

- Connections

- > Key local feeder to regional network
- > 6 light rail stations (LA Metro Rail)
- > Numerous regional bus lines

- Ridership (pre-Covid)

- > 1.6 million annual passengers

- Vehicles

- > 20 (+/-) peak vehicles



PASADENA



City Agency Using Transit Contractor

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Two areas of focus related to recruitment & retention:

1. **Service planning & administration**

- Intern program
 - » Mutually beneficial!

2. **Support and coordinate with contractor**

- Hiring outreach
- Contract



This presentation:

- > Planning/Admin Interns
 - City of Pasadena

- > Operator Labor Challenge
 - Transit Contractor



Why Interns?

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- How we started...
- Great Recession impacted staffing levels
 - > Reduced FTEs from 6 to 3
 - > No reduction in workload
- Grant opportunity for funding
- Template developed for future

$$6 - 3 = !$$



Why Transit?

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- Local Transit Agency Intersects With:
 - > DOT
 - > City
 - > County
 - > Regional
 - > California
 - > FTA/USDOT
- Each provides variety of career
- path exposure to interns
- Contractors, consultants, nonprofits...





Types of Intern Project Work

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- Research and analysis
- Ridership analysis, documenting trends
- Auditing
- Field work - investigations, bus stops, data collection
- Customer service, outreach, marketing
- Grant invoicing
- NTD sampling coordination
- Real time AVL data work
- Grant writing / preparation





Recruitment and Managing

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- Develop your plan
- Talk to your Admin and HR
- Interview, selection & hiring process
- Once hired
 - > Establish and communicate goals
 - > Provide review and feedback
 - > Have interns log their work/monthly report
 - > Follow an evaluation process
 - > How did they meet the established goals?
 - > How did you meet your goals?
 - > What would you do differently?





Benefits to the Organization

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- More “hands on deck”
 - > Allows for additional analysis & projects
 - Projects completed as part of interns’ undergrad/grad work
 - Paratransit analysis
 - Fixed route gap analysis
 - Transfer study
 - > Supervisorial experience for staff
 - Provides opportunity for full time staff to manage/supervise





Benefits to the Intern

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- Exposure to the layers of transit
 - > Extremely diverse arena of interests and skill sets
 - From analyzing, organizing, planning, writing, etc.
 - > Intersects with countless disciplines
 - Public, private, nonprofit
 - Local, regional, state, federal
- Real world applications – making and seeing the impact
 - > From customer service, to field work, to planning efforts
- Career path decision
 - > Resume, referrals, and ultimately future jobs/career



Where Are They Today?

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- Principal Planner – City of Pasadena Transit Division
 - > Architect of our intern program was an intern at LA Metro
- Our interns launched into public and private sectors
 - > LA Metro
 - > Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority
 - > City of Costa Mesa
 - > Tesla
 - > Consulting firm project managers
- Current: 2 interns from local universities



Operator Labor Challenge

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- Unprecedented labor market shift
 - > Challenge: retain/recruit qualified personnel
 - > Competing to hire from limited labor pool
 - > Contractor's aggressive recruitment
 - Wage increases within contract rate
 - Signing bonuses
 - Extensive outreach





Their Challenges are Our Challenges

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- Coordination between City & transit contractor
 - > Communication, collaboration & sharing resources
- Shared goal: Retain and hire personnel
 - > City helped promote contractor's job opportunities
 - > Opened up City's vocational training program to transit
 - > Tailored service to contractor staffing levels
- Shared culture: High morale, supportive, reasonable
 - > Mutual trust, important for any relationship
- Meaningful shift with amended contract rate



Wages - Less Innovative but Effective

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- Increased wages
 - > Competitive & ensure continuity of service
- Wage increase across the board
 - > 24% increase in starting hourly rate of bus operators
- 11.93% total 5-year contract increase
 - > 3.8% average annual increase Years 2 to 5 same as original contract



Results!

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- Before contract change: avg 10 applications/month
- After contract change: avg 115 applicants/month
- No-shows for class decreased
 - > Before contract change: As low as 12% showed up
 - > After contract change: 75% showing up
- Able to concentrate on quality vs. quantity
 - > Both fully credentialed drivers and Class C drivers
- Staffed up & restored full service levels



Stellar Service Providers!

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Contact

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