



Recruitment Toolkit for Local Transportation Agencies



MINNESOTA LTAP
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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In today's competitive job market, local agencies need to grow their employee pipeline through various outreach strategies. This toolkit is intended to help broaden the reach and impact of job postings to ensure that local agencies are developing and marketing an exciting and desired career option. This toolkit includes sample job descriptions, tips for marketing through social media, local agency best practices, and a list of community resources and services to make deeper connections with local career seekers.

Topic areas covered in this recruitment toolkit

- Job descriptions and job postings
- Social media, targeted advertising, and other strategies
- Regional competition
- Minnesota employment services

Job Descriptions and Job Postings

A job description provides the specific requirements, tasks, skills, and fine-print details. A job posting, however, is your marketing piece to persuade someone to join *this* team to do *this* job.

Key points for effective job descriptions and postings

- Make the job description detailed, and keep the job posting short and sweet.
- Ensure the job posting grabs a candidate's attention.
- Capture the perks, culture, people, fun of your team in the job posting.
- Be thorough (as well as accurate and up to date) in the job description—it should help define what success will look like in the role and serve as a guiding document for the employee's position.

Sample job description

- Prepare CAD-based construction drawings
- Utilize construction plans and computerized survey equipment to provide construction-zone staking
- Inspect, monitor, and document construction projects
- Sample and test materials used to determine compliance within specifications and maintain related records
- Work a flexible schedule
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships
- Follow state and federal guidelines for the completion of projects

Sample job posting

- Enjoys being active and working outdoors
- Likes to stay busy with a variety of tasks *[Tip: provide an overview of typical week here]*
- Wants to join a team that is innovative and collaborative *[Tip: add an example here]*
- Enjoys being in nature and preserving the environment
- Likes drawing and imagining what the future infrastructure will look like
- Drives by a construction zone and thinks, "That looks like fun."

Source: [UNH Technology Transfer Center](#)
(New Hampshire LTAP)

Search the job title through any career search engine (e.g., [indeed.com](#)) for examples of current postings with title keywords such as "engineering technician."

Be realistic and be honest about the job—but also be sure to include some of the spirit of why you joined your agency and what keeps you in public government. Here are other examples to consider for your job postings:

- Wants to learn and support community efforts *[Tip: add specific community initiative here]*
- Takes pride in personal efforts and feels accomplishment supporting our community
- Enjoys some independent work time and also likes to participate on a fun, driven team
- Realizes the importance of safety and efficiency in a diverse and varied work environment
- Enjoys using new technologies *[Tip: add specific technology here]*
- Wants to make a difference
- Seeks great benefits, retirement, stable and reliable employment

Social Media, Targeted Advertising, and Other Strategies

After you have gone through the hard work of writing a great job description and posting, it is time to spread the word about career opportunities with your agency. Social media, targeted advertising, and other outreach strategies can be especially effective ways to connect with community members and attract interest in your agency.

Social media

Get familiar and comfortable with social media. To build a community following, share agency news and updates, achievements, and opportunities for community involvement and engagement—including job postings. An open position posted on your social media pages has the potential to draw a large number of viewers, perhaps even people who wouldn't typically think to look for a job through their local community.

Regular use of social media can show that your local agency is a good place to work. Build your “brand” using social media posts to engage community members and instill trust, confidence, and understanding in your local agency. Popular social media platforms include Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, TikTok, and LinkedIn. Many of these platforms link together so you only need to post once.

Basic tips

Here are tips for using social media to connect citizens with public works—and establish a new way to attract interest in related career opportunities:

- 1. Share the good**
Show the public the good things you are doing. Share pictures of improvement projects or new initiatives.
- 2. Update on the bad**
Social media is one of the first places people check for information. Provide timely updates of road conditions and closures due to weather and construction.
- 3. Build trust**
If the public feels you care about them, they will be more likely to get on-board with a new initiative. Build trust through consistency by providing updates, warnings, or news about construction projects.
- 4. Provide answers**
Respond to the public directly in the social media platform used.
- 5. Show personality**
Use enthusiasm, humor, and warmth in social media posts to communicate your commitment to the community.



Click infographic to download/print
Source: *Everything Roads blog*.

Want to learn more tips on using social media?

Watch this webinar [Social Media for Public Works](#) presented by UNH Technology Transfer Center (New Hampshire LTAP).

Targeted advertising

Do you have a specific type of audience or candidate in mind? If so, target your advertising so your posting reaches this audience. For example, if you are trying to fill a position that requires construction project management experience, consider sharing the posting with a local association such as the Associated General Contractors of Minnesota.

Does your community speak multiple languages? If so, make descriptions and postings in languages commonly used in your community. Post these in locations these individuals frequently visit.

Recruitment videos

Create recruitment videos that will be a dynamic addition to your website and social media platforms.

- Interview recent hires about their story, especially employees that will appeal to other candidates.
- Talk about workplace culture and employee experience.
- Showcase upcoming projects and/or the team that this person would be a part of.

Source: [*Strategies to Attract and Retain a Capable Transportation Workforce \(NCHRP Report 685\)*](#)

Video tips

- You do not need to hire a professional videographer or spend a lot of money. There are many easy-to-use video-editing tools available through YouTube, Android, and Apple devices.
- Keep videos less than 90 seconds.
- Record with a horizontal orientation.
- Make sure you caption videos to make them more accessible. There are many affordable closed-captioning options. For example, Rev.com charges \$1.25 for each minute of video.
- Consider partnering with surrounding agencies to pool funds and produce a professional video marketing piece. Maybe there is a shared project you want to highlight or relationships between the local agencies.
- Sample [recruitment videos](#)

Workforce ‘agency ambassadors’

Coach your employees on ways to sell your agency to others. Often, employees interact with other skilled workers who would be great additions to your agency. Encourage employees to participate in career fairs, career days, and as tour guides for public visits.

Regional Competition

Get to know and understand your competitors in the region beyond other transportation employers (other local agencies, consulting firms, contractors, and MnDOT). Many skills are transferable between industries. Emphasize shared skills in job descriptions, job postings, recruitment videos, and other marketing materials. By listing shared skills, your postings will be listed higher in search results when a job seeker enters keywords.

For example, manufacturing is one of the top industries (both in financial output and employment number) across Minnesota. There are numerous manufacturing skills (regardless of sector) that can transfer into transportation (e.g., teamwork, machine operation, attention to detail and quality, importance of safety, math aptitude, logistics, supply chain management, asset management, and understanding of materials). Emphasizing these skills and adding how working for a local agency has appeal (e.g., no shift work, flexible schedule, training opportunities—during work, not on your own time—stable employment, and work in different locations) will tap into your region’s existing workforce.

The following chart details Greater Minnesota’s economy (as of 2019). The Twin Cities metro is not represented on this chart, but Greater Minnesota mirrors the Twin Cities. For more information and to view an interactive map, please visit [University of Minnesota Extension: Getting to know Greater Minnesota’s Economy](#).

Greater Minnesota Region	Top industries based on output (\$)	Top industries based on employment numbers	Most competitive business types
Northwest	- Manufacturing - Agriculture, forestry, and fishing - Wholesale trade	- Manufacturing - Health care and social assistance - Wholesale trade	- Wood products - Crop products - Transportation equipment
Headwaters	- Manufacturing - Government - Health and social services	- Health care and social assistance - Retail trade - Accommodation and food services	- Textile product mills - Pipeline transportation - Forestry
Arrowhead	- Manufacturing - Health and social sciences - Government	- Health care and social assistance - Retail trade - Accommodation and food services	- Mining - Forestry - Paper manufacturing
West Central	- Manufacturing - Agriculture, forestry, and fishing - Real estate and rental	- Health care and social assistance - Manufacturing - Retail trade	- Animal production - Crop production - Machinery manufacturing
Region 5 (Central)	- Manufacturing - Government - Real estate and rental	- Health care and social assistance - Retail trade - Accommodation and food services	- Animal production - Forestry - Wood products

Greater Minnesota Region	Top industries based on output (\$)	Top industries based on employment numbers	Most competitive business types
East Central	• Manufacturing • Government • Real estate and rental	• Health care and social assistance • Retail trade • Manufacturing	• Leather and allied • Forestry • Rail transportation
Upper Minnesota Valley	• Agriculture, forestry, and fishing • Manufacturing • Government	• Manufacturing • Health care and social assistance • Retail trade	• Crop production • Textile product mills • Animal production
Mid-Minnesota	• Manufacturing • Agriculture, forestry, and fishing • Health and social services • Real estate and rental	• Manufacturing • Health care and social assistance • Retail trade	• Animal production • Paper production • Food production
Central Non-RDO (Regional Development Organizations)	• Manufacturing • Real estate and rental • Health and social services • Construction	• Health care and social assistance • Manufacturing • Retail trade	• Furniture and related • Nonmetallic mineral products • Animal production
Southwest	• Manufacturing • Agriculture, forestry, and fishing • Government	• Manufacturing • Health care and social assistance • Retail trade	• Animal production • Food manufacturing • Wood products
Region 9 (South Central)	• Manufacturing • Agriculture, forestry, and fishing • Information • Health and social science	• Manufacturing • Health care and social assistance • Retail trade	• Animal production • Printing and related • Electrical equipment, appliance, and component
Southeast Non-RDO (Regional Development Organizations)	• Manufacturing • Health and social services • Real estate and rental	• Health care and social assistance • Manufacturing • Retail trade	• Leather and allied • Animal production • Nonmetallic mineral product

Minnesota Employment Services

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development is home to Minnesota CareerForce, a robust statewide network for job seekers and employers. Minnesota CareerForce provides online tools, resources, and services to guide people toward rewarding careers, to connect individuals to opportunities, and to help employers find good workers. Minnesota CareerForce also can connect you with your regional, community-based organizations.

Minnesota talent search tools

Find more ways to attract more people by posting jobs online.

- [Search for new talent through Minnesota CareerForce](#)
- [MinnesotaWorks.net](#) is a no-fee resource designed to connect potential employees with promising opportunities. Employers can post job positions and search for new candidates at the same time.

Minnesota CareerForce regional workforce and employment resources

Workforce strategy consultants

Workforce strategy consultants develop innovative workforce solutions by aligning resources, facilitating collaboration, and leveraging expertise in targeted industry sectors to drive economic equity and growth.

- [Learn how workforce strategy consultants can help](#)
- [Find your workforce strategy consultant](#)

Disability employment specialists

Disability employment specialists are experts in disability employment and can provide resources and strategic alliances to tap the talent pool of people with disabilities.

- [Discover the advantages of hiring people with disabilities](#)
- [Find your vocational rehabilitation services employment specialist](#)

Veteran employment representatives

Veteran employment representatives help you recruit and hire our nation's veterans, a highly skilled talent pool who will bring values, leadership, and teamwork to the workplace.

- [Get information on hiring veterans](#)
- [Find your veterans employment representative](#)

Expanding the Transportation Workforce Project

This document is part of the “Expanding the Transportation Workforce” project sponsored by the Minnesota Local Road Research Board. The project was guided by a technical advisory panel of experienced transportation professionals from a variety of local agencies and private firms from around the state, as well as workforce leaders and technical school representatives.

The project created a set of products to help local agency transportation departments meet their workforce needs. The other products are:

- [***Community Outreach Guide for Local Transportation Agencies***](#). Tools and tips to help local agencies raise awareness in their communities about transportation careers. An accompanying product is a [***spreadsheet with activities***](#) that agencies can use to spark interest with K-12 students.
- [***Training Roadmap for Civil Engineering Technicians***](#). A collaborative tool to help agencies and employees identify and plan training needed for civil engineering technician positions. An accompanying [***user guide***](#) includes tips for supervisors and employees, case studies, and more.
- [***Local Transportation Agency Careers in Minnesota***](#). Brochure to introduce students to careers within local agency transportation departments.

All the materials, along with links to other resources, are available at: mnltap.umn.edu/workforce

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