

Research Report: Catalyst Grant Green Transportation Employer Research Findings



High Road Clean Transportation Career Pathways Project

Lead Organization:

West Oakland Job Resource Center



Project Partners:

City of Oakland, City of San Rafael, Teamsters Union/NCTAT, Good Green Work, Machinists Institute, LIME Foundation, Canal Alliance

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Executive Summary

The [High Road Clean Transportation Career Pathways](#) program is a Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative Catalyst Project to research, design, and pilot a model to create equitable access to quality transportation careers that address the climate crisis, starting in Oakland and San Rafael. The project is a partnership of the West Oakland Job Resource Center, City of Oakland, City of San Rafael, Teamsters Union/NCTAT, Workforce Alliance of the North Bay, Good Green Work, Machinists Institute, LIME Foundation, and Canal Alliance.

The goal of the employer research shared here is to learn and share about regional green transportation occupation opportunities, working in collaboration with local employers to explore the job quality, labor market demand, green skills, recruitment, and training needs for key transportation sector occupations.

Employer Research Findings Summary

Automotive Occupations

Labor Market Demand

Across the automotive sector, employers consistently report that they are hiring at all levels, with the greatest demand for service technicians, particularly experienced and master-level technicians. Entry-level demand is strongest in support roles, like porters, car washers, and document processors, that serve as on-ramps into higher-paying careers like mechanic roles. Employers are also always hiring for car sales. EV-related skills, especially in sales and technician roles, are in-demand due to increasing market penetration in the Bay region.

Wages

Automotive wages vary widely by employer, role, and experience. Entry-level roles often start in the low \$20s per hour. More experienced technicians commonly earn \$80,000–\$120,000 annually. Master technicians and efficient top performers can exceed \$250,000 annually. Earnings appear to be higher in dealerships than in automotive repair shops. Highly effective dealership sales representatives can earn more than \$350,000 per year.

Benefits & Career Advancement

Employers typically offer healthcare, dental, vision, and paid time off. Internal promotion is common, with many workers advancing from entry-level roles into technician, sales, or management positions within two to five years.

Hiring Criteria

Employers prioritize professionalism, reliability, and willingness to learn. While formal credentials are not required for acceptance into most entry-level positions, for technicians some prior work experience, such as a tire or oil change shop, plus some automotive career technical education is nearly always required for acceptance into an entry-level mechanic position. ASE certification and manufacturer training are critical for advancement in mechanic roles.

Challenges and Barriers

Key barriers include the employer on-the-job cost of training entry-level technicians, which can make it hard to get hired in these roles without some prior experience; employee tool acquisition costs, which can total tens of thousands of dollars over the course of a technician's career; and driving record requirements. A clean driving record is required for porter, car washer, and technician positions. A DUI within the past 5-7 years is a notable barrier to entry.

Heavy Duty Vehicles & Public Transit Occupations

Labor Market Demand

Transit employers report lower than the typically steady demand for drivers/bus operators, mechanics, and entry-level customer service roles currently. Budget challenges are common across Bay Area transit agencies currently, leading to hiring freezes or limited, essential hiring. Despite lower than average demand, there are still good jobs available in the transit sector. Mechanic apprenticeships, however, will likely continue to be highly competitive and limited in availability for some time to come.

Wages

Transit wages are strong and stable, with drivers generally earning \$28–\$32 per hour initially and mechanics earning \$42–\$56 per hour.

Benefits & Career Advancement

Benefits are robust, often including pensions and lifetime medical coverage. Promotion from within is common.

Hiring Criteria

Requirements include a clean driving record, English proficiency, and the ability to pass physical and drug screenings. Many employers provide in-house commercial license training, needed for mechanics and operators/drivers.

Challenges and Barriers

Funding constraints for hiring and the staff time to offer on-the-job training; technician training equipment costs and instructional space; English language requirements; limited opportunities for inexperienced mechanics; and technician tool costs are major challenges.

Summary

Transportation occupations are generally in demand in the Bay Area. California policy and incentives continue to drive a shift in vehicle technology toward transportation decarbonization, requiring green jobs skills and training. The transportation sector offers a variety of entry-level occupations that are accessible with limited work experience and educational credentials. Internal advancement into high-wage, benefited positions is the industry standard for those with drive, competency, and professionalism. However, securing entry-level positions can be a challenge that is best overcome through employer + training program + social service partnerships to create established pathways for traditionally excluded candidates into High Road transportation careers.

Visit the [Recommendations](#) section in the Conclusion for additional detail on *Actionable Next Steps for Workforce Education and Training Organizations, Regional Leaders, and Funders*.

Research Report: Green Transportation Employer Research Findings

Project Description

The “High Road Clean Transportation Career Pathways” project is a Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative [Catalyst Project](#) to research, design, and pilot a model to create equitable access to quality transportation careers that address the climate crisis.

Transportation accounts for more than 60% of emissions in San Rafael and Oakland¹, the initial targeted communities. California [policy](#) is driving changes in transportation to address harmful emissions. With this comes the need for new skills, and new job and entrepreneurship opportunities.

In the pilot communities, Oakland’s [Zero Emission Vehicle Action Plan](#) provides a roadmap for transitioning to a zero emission transportation system by 2045. The City of San Rafael has developed an [Equitable Low Carbon Economy Plan](#) with input from local workers, job seekers, organizations, and employers. The Plan identifies transportation careers as a priority because initial research with employers in disinvested target communities indicated that these jobs are high-quality, in-demand, equitably accessible, and address the climate crisis.

The purpose of this research report is to inform the design of transportation career pathway programs to be piloted in the San Rafael and Oakland areas, and then documented for replication throughout the Bay Area.

Project Partners

[West Oakland Job Resource Center](#) (WOJRC) is committed to transforming the lives of underserved residents of Oakland and the greater Bay Area by building a thriving, inclusive community that provides economic opportunities, and by catalyzing industry and policy change. WOJRC offers employment training, job development services, and financial coaching to assist Bay Area residents to secure employment and advancement in the Construction and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) Industries. The WOJRC is both the project lead and the Oakland training pilot

¹ Oakland [Equitable Climate Action Plan](#) and San Rafael [Climate Change Action Plan](#)

facilitator, leading recruitment, case management, wrap-around services, job placement, and training in the East Bay.

[The City of San Rafael](#) is the economic and cultural heart of Marin County with a population of 60,000. Climate action is an overarching goal for the City, with equal consideration of environment, economy, and equity, driven by data and a [human-centered design](#) approach. The City of San Rafael engages local transportation employers and leads human-centered design to engage pilot participants in program design and iteration.

[Good Green Work](#) provides support to organizations and communities to develop pathways into in-demand, quality green jobs which simultaneously address both the climate crisis and economic inequity. Good Green Work leads employer research, and supports project implementation, partnership recruitment and facilitation, collaborative design, and pilot documentation for replication.

[City of Oakland Workforce Development Board](#) oversees employment and workforce training programs and services in Oakland. These programs and services help job seekers gain employment and connect businesses with a qualified workforce. The City of Oakland supports employer engagement in the research and pilot design process in the East Bay. The Oakland Workforce Development Board and Workforce Alliance of the North Bay advise on labor market demand and employer research, support recruitment, and co-enroll participants in WIOA services where possible.

[Workforce Alliance of the North Bay](#) (WANB) is a regional collaborative serving Marin, Napa, Lake, and Mendocino counties. WANB connects job seekers to training and employment opportunities while supporting businesses with workforce solutions. Through partnerships with government, education, and community-based organizations, WANB works to strengthen local economies and create pathways to quality jobs.

[Canal Alliance](#) has been the leading service provider and community advocate for Marin's low-income immigrant community for 43 years. Their mission is to break the generational cycle of poverty for Latino immigrants and their families by lifting barriers to their success. Since 2018, their workforce programs have provided training for careers in construction, transportation, healthcare, and banking, serving 385 very low-income individuals, most of whom are English Language Learners with Spanish as their primary language. Canal Alliance provides San Rafael employer engagement, and pilot recruitment, case management, and wrap-around services.

[The LIME Foundation](#) has empowered at-risk youth through its NextGen Trades Academy since 2017, creating access to hundreds of job opportunities in the construction trades across Sonoma, Marin, and Napa counties. Now, in partnership with this High Road Clean Transportation Collaborative, LIME is expanding its mission with the NextGen Auto Academy—opening doors to careers in the automotive industry. LIME Foundation provides North Bay employer engagement, pilot training, and job placement services.

[The Machinists Institute](#) (MI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, created by the International Association of Machinists (IAM) in 2018 to fill a vital role for union members, employers, community partners, and other critical stakeholders in the aerospace, manufacturing, and automotive/transportation machinist industries. MI develops, implements, and operates Pre-Apprenticeship Programs, Registered Apprenticeship Programs, Incumbent Worker Trainings, and other forms of High Road professional development. The [Machinists Institute](#) is partnering with the WOJRC to blend their pre-apprenticeship programs to meet the employer demand described in this report for automotive, transit, manufacturing, and machinist workers.

The [Northern California Teamsters Apprentice Training and Education Trust](#) (NCTAT) provides technical training for electric forklift operation and Class A commercial driver's licenses for pilot participants.

Additionally, many employers and representative organizations serve as labor market and curriculum advisors, and job placement partners. Local K–College education organizations provide recruitment and ongoing education pathway support.

Employer Research Overview

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research phase of our grant is to learn more about green transportation occupation opportunities in each project sub-region: Oakland and San Rafael, including job quality, labor market demand, green skills, recruitment, and training needs.

Clean Transportation Occupation Criteria

This research initiative seeks to identify and prepare job seekers in the disadvantaged communities of Oakland and the Canal neighborhood of San Rafael for transportation occupations at the intersection of the following priority green jobs criteria:

1. **Good Jobs:** High quality jobs for workers with pathways to career advancement
2. **Accessibility:** Jobs that are available to workers with limited education or work experience, and/or barriers to employment
3. **Demand:** Evidence of a current labor shortage and/or growing demand, and
4. **Climate Impact:** The potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Occupation Areas of Interest

This research initiative seeks to learn more about a broad array of transportation occupation areas, including:

- Automotive and Heavy Duty Service Technicians
- Electric Vehicle (EV) Technicians
- Automotive Sales
- All Occupations in Public Transportation, with an Emphasis On:
 - Bus & Heavy duty Vehicle Mechanic
 - Bus servicers
 - Charging Depot Installation and Operations
 - Bus Operators

Ongoing research will seek to gather employer data on additional transportation occupation areas, including:

- Fleet Maintenance
- Long Haul and Short Haul Trucking, with an Emphasis on Electric Drayage
- EV Charger Installation, Operations and Maintenance
- Micromobility, including Bike, e-Scooter, and e-Bike Mechanics
- Advanced Manufacturing: Battery, Component, and Vehicle Manufacturing

Research Methods

1. Employer Interviews
2. Virtual and In-Person Surveys
3. Labor Market Data & Literature Review

See [Appendix A](#) for a list of employers engaged in this research.

Transportation Employment Research Findings

This employer research was conducted to better understand current and emerging workforce needs across the automotive and public transit sectors. What emerged from conversations with local employers, especially in the automotive sector, was a consistent message: demand for skilled workers is strong, persistent, and expected to grow, particularly as vehicle technology rapidly evolves and the region transitions toward zero-emission transportation.

Employers across both sectors emphasized that workforce shortages are not hypothetical or long-term concerns—they are actively shaping day-to-day operations, limiting capacity, and increasing competition for talent today. At the same time, these industries offer accessible entry points, strong wages, comprehensive benefits, and clear advancement pathways, making them well-positioned for targeted workforce investment.

Automotive Occupations

In-Demand Positions

In the automotive sector, employers report hiring across nearly every occupational category, including service technicians of all experience levels, service writers, commercial account managers, car sales, car buyers, call center reps, parts department staff, porters, car washers, detailers, and DMV, warranty, and loan document processors. The primary entry-points are: entry-level technicians (ideally with prior oil change or tire shop experience), porters, car washers, and sales. Employers are always hiring for sales people. The work schedule for sales representatives can pose a challenge though, especially for working parents, due to the need to work on weekends and holidays.

Service technicians represent the most critical need, especially experienced and master-level technicians who can work independently, diagnose complex issues, and mentor newer staff. Employers consistently described this shortage as both a local and national challenge, driven by retirements, increased vehicle complexity, and an insufficient pipeline of trained workers.

While experienced technicians are the most difficult roles to fill, employers also rely heavily on entry-level positions such as porters, washers, detailers, document processors, call center staff, and retail sales associates. These roles are not viewed as dead-end jobs. Instead, employers repeatedly described them as intentional entry points into the industry—positions where individuals can demonstrate reliability, learn the business, and progress into higher-wage technical or management roles over time.

Electric and hybrid vehicles are reshaping automotive workforce needs. Employers emphasized that EV adoption is no longer a future consideration—it is already changing the skills needed on the job. Technicians with EV and hybrid experience are increasingly sought after, while sales and service staff are expected to understand EV technology, incentives, charging infrastructure, and customer needs. As California moves toward zero-emission goals, employers anticipate that demand for EV-specific skills will continue to grow rapidly.

Marin County Automotive Labor Market Demand Data

Description	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2030 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	2024 - 2030 Openings
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	639	(1%)	55	322
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	354	2%	44	219
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	473	1%	66	389
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	151	2%	16	77
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	12	(1%)	1	<10

Lightcast. (2025). *Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Marin County, CA* (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Alameda County Automotive Labor Market Demand Data

Description	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2030 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	2024 - 2030 Openings
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	3,481	2%	320	1,858
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	3,197	2%	397	1,986
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	2,232	4%	318	1,911
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	1,774	2%	199	904
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	118	(1%)	15	58
Electronic Equipment Installers and Repairers, Motor Vehicles	64	(14%)	7	30

Lightcast. (2025). *Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Alameda County, CA* (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Wages and Benefits

Automotive wages reflect both the sector’s accessibility and its earning potential. Entry-level roles generally begin in the low \$20s per hour, but from there, earnings can

increase significantly with skill development and certification attainment. Technicians are required to be paid at least twice the minimum wage (currently \$33.80 per hour at a minimum, and higher in some local jurisdictions) if their employer requires them to provide their own tools.²

Internal advancement is common in the industry. Often entry-level porters, for example, progress into technician or service writer roles. Local employers report that service writers (who write repair orders) make more than \$120,000 annually. Employers report that technicians with a couple years of experience commonly earn between \$80,000 and \$120,000 annually, while master technicians with advanced certifications and strong productivity can earn over \$250,000 per year. This compensation level is due to productivity bonuses, a model that is common in the industry in which technicians are paid an hourly rate plus a bonus per repair, resulting in high earnings if technicians are efficient and competent.

Sales positions are generally compensated at minimum wage plus commission. Local employers report that it is not difficult to earn \$60,000-\$70,000 annually. Highly successful sales people can earn up to \$370,000 annually. However, because the base pay is low and earnings are primarily driven by commission, earnings can be quite variable and dependent on the health of the economy.

Marin County Automotive Wage Data

Description	Median Hourly Earnings	Median Annual Earnings	Pct. 10 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 90 Hourly Earnings
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$33	\$68,510	\$20	\$47
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	\$34	\$69,814	\$23	\$53
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	\$20	\$42,433	\$18	\$27
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$58	\$120,536	\$34	\$103
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	\$52	\$107,528	\$39	\$52

Lightcast. (2025). *Occupation table: 37 occupations in Marin County, CA (Automotive) 2020-2030*. Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

² California Department of Industrial Relations:
https://www.dir.ca.gov/letf/Automotive_Employer_Brochure.pdf

Alameda County Automotive Wage Data

Description	Median Hourly Earnings	Median Annual Earnings	Pct. 10 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 90 Hourly Earnings
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$35	\$71,850	\$21	\$51
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	\$33	\$68,135	\$22	\$52
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	\$21	\$42,970	\$18	\$28
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$58	\$121,492	\$34	\$104
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	\$55	\$115,334	\$43	\$56
Electronic Equipment Installers and Repairers, Motor Vehicles	\$22	\$44,755	\$17	\$43

Lightcast. (2025). *Occupation table: 37 occupations in Alameda County, CA (Automotive) 2020-2030*. Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Most employers offer benefits including healthcare, dental, vision, and paid time off.

Employers emphasized that compensation is closely tied to output, certifications, and commitment rather than tenure alone. This makes structured training, credential pathways, and incumbent worker upskilling especially powerful tools for improving both retention and earnings over time.

Career Advancement

Career advancement opportunities are a major strength of the automotive sector. Once workers move past an initial onboarding period—typically the first six months—turnover drops significantly. Employers commonly report supporting employees to gain additional certifications that lead to pay raises. This field is dynamic and requires technicians in particular to receive constant training in new skills tied to new technology.

Employers report a willingness to hire straight out of high school, though often hiring young professionals in their early 20s with a high school diploma and often some college experience but without a college certificate or degree. Employers strongly favor promoting from within and shared numerous examples of workers who started in entry-level roles and advanced into master technician, sales management, finance, or dealership leadership positions within five years. Once a mechanic reaches the master technician level, they are very marketable, providing opportunities for employment anywhere they would like to live, and providing a high degree of job security. The field offers accessible entrepreneurship opportunities as well, such as mobile detailing.

Hiring Criteria

Employers report that entry-level automotive hires in every role are evaluated primarily on professionalism, attitude, and work ethic. Successful candidates are expected to be motivated self-starters who demonstrate strong communication skills, coachability, curiosity, punctuality, reliability, and common sense. They must be able to work independently, look for ways to stay productive, and be proactive in helping wherever needed. Employers emphasize kindness, collaboration, and being a pleasure to work with, along with a willingness to put in the time and effort required in a fast-paced environment.

An interest in cars is important, and a high school diploma or GED is often required, though not always. No employer reported requiring higher education credentials. Certain roles, including sales and document processors, require working weekends, holidays, and mandatory overtime to complete deals, as well as obtaining a DMV sales license during a 4–6 week training period. Sales roles additionally require strong customer service and hospitality skills, emotional resilience in handling disappointment, attention to detail, and comfort with technology, contracts, and financing.

For technicians, hiring expectations vary, but most employers agree that hands-on experience is critical. Many successful technician candidates work in oil change or tire shops first, and then progress into independent repair shops and finally dealerships. Dealership hiring managers often reported that it is rare to find dealership technicians who have not previously “wrenched on cars.”

Mechanical aptitude is essential. While formal education credentials are not often required for entry-level technician roles, it is common for new hires to have some technical training at a trade school or community college. Employers report that more than half of their new hire technicians have some technical training, and Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification is strongly preferred and considered the most valuable credential for advancement. To be eligible for efficiency bonuses, technicians often must obtain ASE and manufacturer certifications, which are commonly supported by their employers.

Technician physical requirements include lifting up to 50 pounds and standing on their feet for eight hours per day. Technicians must also possess basic digital skills, as modern automotive work relies heavily on technology; this includes basic computer competency such as typing repair reports, using a mouse and keyboard, and operating tablets and diagnostic equipment. Additional digital skills, like the use of specific diagnostic equipment, is developed through on-the-job training.

For sales and administrative roles workers also need to be computer literate, including using email, typing, Excel, Word, converting a Word Doc to PDF, using a tablet, and Internet and computer navigation. For sales and document processors, the more efficient you are, the more money you'll make. Employers also value math and analytical skills for sales, service advisors, and management, including percentages, statistics, supply-and-demand concepts, and emerging tools such as AI.

Across all roles, some English fluency is required. For English language learners, starting in the industry as a porter, car washer, or detailer is a good entry-point while engaging in English language training that includes occupationally-specific vocabulary and skills. For technicians, English skills are needed to read and write repair orders, narrate video inspections, and understand technical vocabulary. Being bilingual in English and Spanish is widely viewed as a significant asset, particularly in sales.

Green skills are increasingly critical, especially expertise in electric and hybrid vehicles. Employers rate EV skills as extremely important due to California's growing EV market, with safety training for high-voltage systems identified as the most essential competency. Collision shops value EV technician training. I-CAR is considered an industry flagship certification, offering both in-person and digital EV-related instruction. For sales roles, knowledge of EV technologies, rebates, and customer needs assessments is vital, with this training often provided on the job.

Marin County Automotive Education & Experience Requirement Data

Description	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Short-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Marin County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Alameda County Automotive Education & Experience Requirement Data

Description	Work Experience Required	Typical Entry Level Education	Typical On-The-Job Training
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	None	Postsecondary nondegree award	Short-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	Less than 5 years	High school diploma or equivalent	None
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	None	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	5 years or more	High school diploma or equivalent	None
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	None	Postsecondary nondegree award	Long-term on-the-job training
Electronic Equipment Installers and Repairers, Motor Vehicles	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Alameda County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Challenges and Barriers

Despite these opportunities, employers identified several barriers that limit their ability to hire and develop new talent. Training entry-level technicians is costly and time-intensive, as experienced staff must slow production to mentor new hires. Tool acquisition presents another major challenge, with technicians often required to invest thousands of dollars in tools as they advance. A starter toolkit costs between \$1,500-\$5,000. It is not uncommon for a technician to own \$60,000-\$80,000 worth of tools because the more quality tools you have, the more productive you are, and therefore the more money you can make in a flat rate/production bonus pay structure.

This demand for tools exposes our participants to the risk of taking on excessive debt in order to finance tool acquisition. Financial literacy training, including understanding compound interest, the factors that contribute to credit scores, and the impact a low credit score can have are all essential for trainees that may be tempted to quickly finance thousands of dollars of tools to further their career.

Employers also cited driving record requirements, English language skills, digital literacy, background checks, and drug tests as barriers that can prevent otherwise strong candidates from entering or advancing in the field.

Entrepreneurship Opportunities

The automotive sector also offers potential entrepreneurial opportunities, which may be of particular value in serving immigrant communities. Automotive entrepreneurship opportunities include mobile detailing and car washing. There are many existing [sources of support](#) for launching entrepreneurial ventures, such as local Small Business Development Centers, available throughout the Bay Area. The [Marin SBDC](#), for example, offers one-on-one expert advising and training on topics such as marketing, financial forecast modeling, business planning, legal business formation, and business financing.

For those interested in launching a transportation enterprise that addresses a social problem or meets a community need, California offers [Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development](#) (SEED) funding. SEED supports the entrepreneurship of immigrants and limited English proficient (LEP) individuals who face significant employment barriers, providing micro-grants, entrepreneurial training, and technical assistance.

Worker-owned cooperatives have strong potential in these occupations. Two organizations that provide resources, legal support, and training to form and manage worker-owned cooperatives are the [Democracy at Work Institute](#) (DAWI) and the [Sustainable Economies Law Center](#) (SELC).

Summary: Automotive Workforce Development Recommendations

Recruit candidates with a variety of aptitudes who share an interest in cars. Provide short-term training (4-12 weeks) focused on: an overview of the identified entry-level automotive occupations; common next steps from each entry-level position; in-demand environmental skills for automotive careers; and engagement with local employers through guest lectures and field trips. Develop relationships with local automotive employers to gain their early input on: the current labor market, key training content, and student recruitment criteria. Build on this foundation to request employer staff time to engage in the work-based learning continuum as a part of the training experience, from guest lectures and field trips to job shadowing and paid internships. Engage employers in hiring during the final weeks of training, culminating in a combined hiring fair and graduation ceremony at the training conclusion, to facilitate a seamless transition directly from training to employment.

Integrate financial literacy training, mental health support, tool identification and hands-on technical skills training for EVs and internal combustion vehicles, sales and

customer service skills, computer literacy, and occupational English, including technical verbal, reading, and writing skills for the automotive sector.

In this process help candidates identify the best entry-level fit for their skills, interests, and barriers. Provide personalized case management and wrap-around services, such as connections to food and housing services, transportation subsidies, legal aid, criminal record expungement, and ESL education, to identify and then address barriers to employment and make a personalized career pathway and ongoing education plan.

For example, if a San Rafael candidate is interested in becoming an entry-level automotive mechanic and they have no prior experience and limited English and computer proficiency, this personalized plan might include supporting the candidate to secure work in a local tire or oil change shop while actively participating in a facilitated short-term automotive training program. Concurrently, provide contextualized English and computer literacy training, and help them to enroll in the College of Marin Automotive program at the end of the short-term training. While undertaking these next steps that demonstrate commitment and drive to employers, apply after the short-term training and while working a tire or oil change shop to higher paying dealerships and locally owned automotive repair shops with the hope of moving quickly from tire and oil change shop to dealership and then from entry-level to master technician within 5-7 years.

Transit Occupations

In-Demand Positions

Similar themes emerged in the heavy-duty and public transit sector. Employers report current budget constraints that are slowing current hiring, but expect steady demand to return in the next 2-3 years for drivers, maintenance mechanics, bus servicers, and entry-level customer service and admin roles, driven by retirements, service expansion, and the mandated transition to zero-emission fleets. As fleets electrify, employers increasingly need workers with high-voltage safety awareness and electrical systems knowledge, adding urgency to the need for targeted training solutions.

Operator/driver positions account for the largest number of openings, while maintenance mechanic roles—though fewer—are among the hardest to fill due to high skill requirements and limited apprenticeship capacity.

Marin County Transit Labor Market Demand

Description	2024 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2024 - 2030 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	2024 - 2030 Openings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	731	775	6%	95	514
Light Truck Drivers	508	512	1%	55	318
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	354	362	2%	44	219
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	473	479	1%	66	389
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	271	276	2%	39	198
Bus Drivers, School	34	36	6%	7	33
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	151	154	2%	16	77
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	86	84	(2%)	10	42
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	90	91	1%	9	48
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	12	12	0%	1	<10

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Marin County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Alameda County Transit Labor Market Demand

Description	2024 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2024 - 2030 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	2020 - 2030 Openings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	9,343	9,355	0%	1,092	5,809
Light Truck Drivers	7,035	7,721	10%	896	5,208
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	3,197	3,274	2%	397	1,984
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	2,232	2,323	4%	318	1,910
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	1,817	1,902	5%	262	1,414
Bus Drivers, School	207	214	3%	48	201
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	1,774	1,815	2%	199	904
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	1,287	1,342	4%	148	699
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	836	864	3%	79	446
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	118	116	(2%)	15	60
Transportation Inspectors	79	82	4%	9	48

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Automotive service technicians and mechanics in Alameda County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Wages and Benefits

Transit wages are generally strong and stable, particularly in unionized occupations. Entry-level drivers typically earn between \$28 and \$32 per hour, with clearly defined

wage progression that can exceed \$40 per hour within a few years. Maintenance mechanics earn some of the highest wages in the sector, often surpassing \$50 per hour. Benefits are a defining feature of transit careers and frequently include healthcare, pensions, and, in some cases, lifetime medical coverage.

Marin Transit Wages

Description	Median Hourly Earnings	Median Annual Earnings	Pct. 10 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 90 Hourly Earnings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$29	\$61,303	\$20	\$44
Light Truck Drivers	\$21	\$44,332	\$17	\$39
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	\$34	\$69,814	\$23	\$53
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	\$20	\$42,433	\$18	\$27
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$34	\$71,464	\$23	\$40
Bus Drivers, School	\$32	\$66,757	\$26	\$41
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$58	\$120,536	\$34	\$103
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	\$40	\$82,350	\$25	\$65
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$35	\$73,773	\$20	\$49
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	\$52	\$107,528	\$39	\$52

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Transit Occupations in Marin County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Alameda County Transit Wages

Description	Median Hourly Earnings	Median Annual Earnings	Pct. 10 Hourly Earnings	Pct. 90 Hourly Earnings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$30	\$61,872	\$20	\$45
Light Truck Drivers	\$21	\$44,350	\$17	\$39
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	\$33	\$68,135	\$22	\$52
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	\$21	\$42,970	\$18	\$28
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$37	\$77,017	\$25	\$43
Bus Drivers, School	\$29	\$60,584	\$24	\$37
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$58	\$121,492	\$34	\$104
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	\$44	\$90,498	\$28	\$71
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$37	\$76,974	\$21	\$51
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	\$55	\$115,334	\$43	\$56
Transportation Inspectors	\$36	\$75,280	\$21	\$86

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Transit Occupations in Alameda County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Career Advancement

Career pathways in public transit are well defined and intentionally structured. Agencies prioritize internal promotion and long-term workforce development, with proven pathways from entry-level roles in bus servicing, the parts department, customer service and admin, into mechanic apprenticeships and supervisory positions. For many workers, school bus and transit operator positions also serve as stepping stones into other high-wage commercial driving roles, such as for local waste haulers, further strengthening the sector's role as an anchor for economic mobility.

Hiring Criteria

Employers report that mechanic roles in public transportation typically require at least two years of prior automotive or heavy-duty experience. These jobs typically go to candidates who already have mechanical training and hands-on experience, and when external hiring is difficult, employers often promote from within. This barrier to entry might be overcome through established pathway partnerships and/or participant enrollment in a heavy-duty mechanic training program.

A stable employment history is strongly preferred, along with completion of a recognized diesel training program, such as a six-month to 2-year course of study through institutions like [Universal Technical Institute](#) (UTI) or College of Alameda's [diesel technician program](#). In addition to technical background, employers emphasize motivation, reliability, and a demonstrated willingness to learn. Mechanics must hold a regular Class C driver's license with a clean driving record. A Class B commercial drivers license is preferred, though some employers provide in-house training to prepare for the commercial license exam and coordinate DMV testing to help candidates obtain it. Bus operators must be at least 18, but effectively the minimum age is often higher because employers require 3-6 years with a clean driving record.

Basic digital skills are required, though they are minimal compared to other sectors and are primarily limited to using laptops for diagnostic tools and administrative tasks, depending on the role. English proficiency is essential for safety, effective team communication, and tasks such as ordering parts. Employers note that candidates with limited English skills often struggle to pass the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) exam, which includes a live testing component. While companies are willing to train candidates to obtain a commercial license, language barriers remain a challenge. Employers suggest that targeted English instruction—including mock CDL exams focused on occupation-specific vocabulary—could help improve pass rates.

Physical requirements for mechanics are also strict: candidates must pass both a pre-employment physical and a Department of Transportation (DOT) physical. Background checks are mandatory, with DUIs cited as a particular barrier, along with compliance with federal drug testing requirements, which can include marijuana restrictions.

Green Skills are a growing requirement in the public transit sector, though they can commonly be acquired on the job. By 2040 all bus fleets in California are directed to be zero emission. Current fleets are a mix of technologies, including diesel, hybrid, hydrogen, and all-electric buses. Key skills for servicing electric buses include high voltage safety, energy storage systems, computerized controls, electric drive units, and regenerative braking.

Marin County Transit Ed & Exp Requirements

Description	Typical Entry Level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Light Truck Drivers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Bus Drivers, School	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Transit Occupations in Marin County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Alameda County Transit Ed & Exp Requirements

Description	Work Experience Required	Typical Entry Level Education	Typical On-The-Job Training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	None	Postsecondary nondegree award	Short-term on-the-job training
Light Truck Drivers	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	Less than 5 years	High school diploma or equivalent	None
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	None	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Bus Drivers, School	None	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	5 years or more	High school diploma or equivalent	None
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term on-the-job training
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term on-the-job training
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	None	Postsecondary nondegree award	Long-term on-the-job training
Transportation Inspectors	None	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Lightcast. (2025). Occupation snapshot report: Transit Occupations in Alameda County, CA (Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set). Workforce Alliance of the North Bay.

Challenges and Barriers

Employers in the transit sector also identified clear barriers to workforce growth. Funding limitations restrict the number of current job openings, including apprenticeships agencies can support, even when internal labor need is high. As a result, many transit mechanic apprenticeships are not actually entry-level; they are highly competitive and require significant prior experience or education to qualify for very limited spots. Agencies face a "negative feedback loop" due to funding constraints: budget deficits prevent hiring enough experienced mechanics, which exacerbates an on-the-job mentorship time shortage, making it challenging to meet required apprentice-to-journeyman ratios and free up the needed time to onboard and support new apprentices and other entry-level mechanics because of a worsening skilled labor shortage on staff. As a result, transit agencies worry that experienced

mechanics will retire or move before new entrants are trained with the essential skills and institutional knowledge they have to share.

Technical training is also limited. The College of Alameda is the primary Bay Area college teaching heavy-duty mechanics. It is the only Bay Area college with a full heavy-duty diesel program, including the commercial chassis and air brake training required for in-depth instruction. Equipment costs and limited training space make it hard to expand access to this technical training.

Another major challenge for mechanic candidates, as with automotive technicians, is the cost of tools, which can be prohibitively expensive at entry level. Potential solutions might include: partnerships with tool manufacturers, such as Snap-on, which offers discounts of up to 52 percent off list price for students enrolled in partner community colleges, as well as employer, public, or nonprofit tool funding support models. For example, employers in Tennessee provided starter toolkits to students of Chattanooga State's Tennessee College of Applied Technology [Automotive Technology program](#) valued at approximately \$5,000. Local workforce boards may be able to contribute approximately \$3,000 in tools through existing WIOA funding.

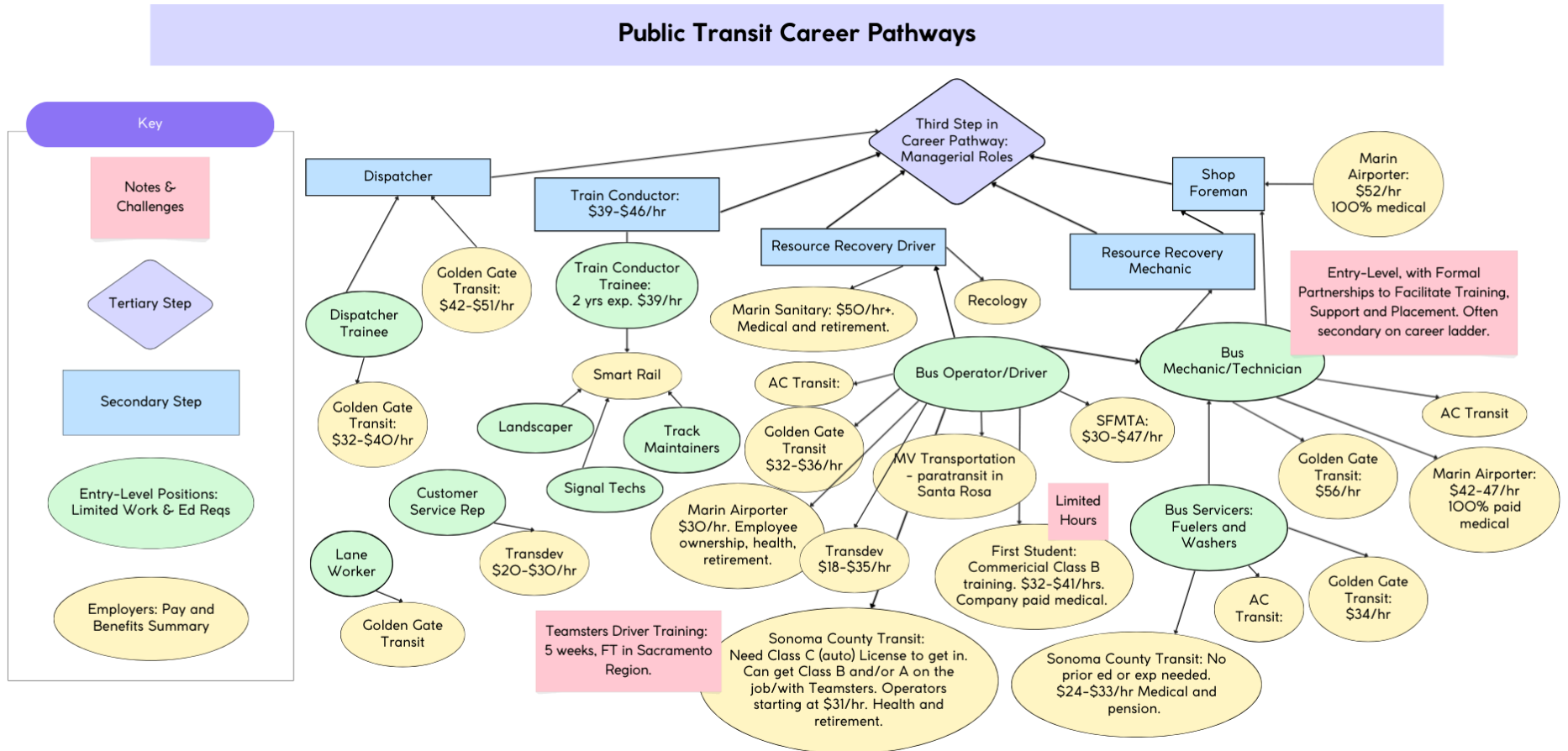
Additional hiring barriers include the significant number of years of driving history, language barriers for commercial licensing exams, and clean driving record requirements that further constrain hiring. Employers also note external workforce pressures, including often long commutes driven by the high regional cost of living. On the driver side, recent increases in pay—now exceeding comparable employers such as Amazon—have made hiring easier, highlighting compensation as a key factor that has historically impacted recruitment and retention.

Summary: Transit Workforce Development Recommendations

Develop strong recruitment and training partnerships with local transit employers. Offer short-term training programs, and, where possible, registered pre-apprenticeships. For those employers and roles that have registered apprenticeships, create a linkage agreement from pre-apprenticeship to apprentice to formally register the pre-apprenticeship with the California Department of Apprenticeship Standards.

In these training programs, introduce participants to the range of entry-level transit positions, such as bus servicers, bus operators, janitors, customer service, and admin roles. Engage employers in work-based learning during the pre-apprenticeship, such as: guest speakers who started in an entry-level position and have advanced within a transit agency; field trips to a maintenance shop; ride-alongs with transit operators; and job shadowing with bus servicers and administrative employees. Help students to

identify and inventory their skills and interests, and where those best intersect with available transit career opportunities. Inform participants of common career advancement pathways. Share publicly available data on comparative wages and benefits across local employers and positions. Example of Bay Area public transit career pathways map:



Help make the invisible visible to participants so they can make informed decisions about their target transit career advancement pathway based on key information on positions, employers, wages, benefits, and common advancement pathways.

During the training, support participants to apply directly for positions such as bus servicer, or for bus operator or mechanic apprenticeships, as aligned with their personal target transit career advancement pathway. For most transit employers, if candidates do not have 2+ years of prior mechanic experience or technical training, the path to a mechanic apprenticeship will first include an entry-level role as a bus servicer, janitor, or bus operator. Support candidates interested in a mechanic pathway to apply for these entry-level, foot-in-the-door positions, while also applying to participate in technical training, such as the diesel program at [College of Alameda](#) or automotive program at [College of Marin](#).

AC Transit offers a supported career advancement pathway model - their mechanic helper program, which is designed specifically for the internal advancement of bus servicers and janitors into their bus mechanic apprenticeship program. Explore replicating this career pathway model in partnership with your local transit employer partners. In addition, discuss the formation of new bus operator or mechanic apprenticeships, if you have a local employer partner that does not already have these in place.

As with mechanic positions in the automotive sector, support tool acquisition for heavy duty mechanics, along with teaching financial literacy to mitigate the potential for negative impacts of debt from tool acquisition. In training emphasize the importance of showing career advancement motivation, reliability, and a willingness to learn. For bus servicer, operator, and mechanic positions, provide support as needed to secure a regular Class C License, prepare for the Class B commercial drivers license, (especially for English-language learners), and address Clean Driving record issues that can be mitigated. DUIs are a particular barrier. Participants with driving record barriers should be directed to start their transit career in positions that do not require driving, such as customer service, janitors, dispatchers, administrative positions, marketing, or planning. Since English proficiency is required for most positions, and physical fitness for mechanic positions, offer ESL and fitness training as needed, depending on participant needs and career pathway goals. Integrate green skills into bus operator and mechanic education to prepare for driving and servicing diesel, hydrogen, all-electric or hybrid vehicles, including high voltage safety, energy storage systems, electric drive units, and regenerative braking.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Taken together, these findings point to a clear opportunity for workforce investment. Supportive programs that combine accessible entry points, hands-on technical training, credential attainment, and barrier reduction strategies can directly address employer needs while supporting equitable access to family-sustaining green transportation careers.

The most valuable occupations to focus on in Bay Area transportation training programs are: automotive and heavy duty technicians, automotive sales, bus servicers, bus operators, administrative, and customer service roles. This determination is derived from utilizing employer guidance and labor market data to assess occupations in the local transportation industry based on our priority job criteria:

- **Good Jobs:** High quality jobs for workers with pathways to career advancement
- **Accessibility:** Jobs that are available to workers with limited education or work experience, and/or barriers to employment
- **Demand:** Evidence of a current labor shortage and/or growing demand, and
- **Climate Impact:** The potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Investments in: pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship development; short-term training leading to entry-level employment concurrent with technical community college training; EV-specific training; tool access; financial literacy; wrap-around services; and strong employer partnerships have the potential to positively align transportation employer demand, equity, economic mobility, and regional industry and environmental priorities in the Bay Area and beyond.

Recommendations: Actionable Next Steps for Workforce Education Organizations, Regional Leaders, and Funders

The following recommendations translate employer feedback into concrete actions that workforce education providers, workforce boards, regional leaders, policy-makers, employers, and funders can take to strengthen transportation career pathways and meet documented labor market demand.

1. Invest in Entry-Level On-Ramps That Employers Trust

Employers consistently identified entry-level support roles—such as porters, washers, detailers, bus servicers, and customer service—as the most viable access points into

transportation careers. Workforce programs can align training and placement efforts with these roles when needed, and focus on direct placement into technician or mechanic positions only where there is a match between participant experience and employer requirements.

Action Steps:

- Design short-term training programs explicitly connected to these entry-level roles.
- Partner with local employer partners to further define their specific “day-one readiness” expectations for on-ramp positions.
- Fund or connect with paid work-based learning or transitional employment models, such as registered apprenticeships and WIOA OJT funding³, that allows participants to earn wages while gaining exposure and experience.
- Track and support participant career advancement beyond initial placement to ensure these roles function as true career pathways.

2. Expand Pre-Apprenticeship and Bridge Programs for Technician and Mechanic Roles

Both automotive and transit employers emphasized that technician and mechanic roles are difficult to fill not due to lack of interest, but because candidates often lack sufficient hands-on work experience and technical training. Pre-apprenticeship and community college career technical education programs are essential to reducing employer risk and increasing apprenticeship access.

Action Steps:

- Develop or expand pre-apprenticeship programs aligned to automotive technician and heavy-duty mechanic standards.
 - Focus curricula on foundational mechanical skills, shop safety, tool use, and diagnostic basics.
 - Integrate employer site visits, job shadowing, and mock work environments.
- Concurrently support participant entry-level employment in oil and tire change shops, and enrollment in Community College technician programs.
- Where additional skills training is needed, prioritize placement into internal feeder roles (e.g., bus servicer → mechanic helper → mechanic apprentice).

³ WIOA OJT Funding Examples: City of [Oakland](#), City of [San Francisco](#), and the [North Bay](#)

3. Address Tool and Equipment Barriers as a Core Workforce Strategy

The cost of tools emerged as one of the most significant barriers to entry and advancement across mechanical transportation occupations. Without access to tools, many otherwise qualified workers are unable to progress into higher-wage roles.

Action Steps:

- Allocate funding for tool stipends, tool purchases, or coordinate industry/employer-matched tool grants.
- Partner with manufacturers and vendors for discounted tool programs.
- Embed financial literacy and credit-building support into training programs to help participants manage tool investments.
- Treat tool access as essential infrastructure for economic mobility and industry needs, not a supplemental support.
- Support training programs to invest in training equipment and the required instructional space.

4. Align Training with EV and Zero-Emission Workforce Needs

Employers across sectors emphasized that electrification is already reshaping needed job skills. Workforce systems must move quickly to integrate EV and zero-emission skills into existing transportation pathways rather than treating them as niche or future-focused.

Action Steps:

- Integrate EV fundamentals such as high-voltage safety into automotive and transit training programs.
- Support incumbent worker training to upskill existing technicians and mechanics.
- Fund instructor professional development and training equipment upgrades related to zero-emission technologies.
- Coordinate with transit agencies and fleet operators transitioning to electric vehicles to align curricula with real-world equipment and employer needs as they evolve.

5. Strengthen Occupational English and Licensing Support

Language proficiency was identified as a critical factor for safety, certification exams, and licensing—particularly for commercial driver licenses and mechanic apprenticeships. Targeted language support can significantly expand the talent pool.

Action Steps:

- Offer English courses tailored to transportation vocabulary and testing requirements.
- Provide commercial driver license test preparation that integrates technical language instruction.
- Collaborate with employers to identify and then teach key terminology used in safety protocols, diagnostics, and documentation.
- Pair language instruction with hands-on training to accelerate skill acquisition.

6. Support Employers' Capacity to Train and Mentor

Employers repeatedly noted that limited mentoring capacity and productivity pressures restrict their ability to onboard and train new workers. Workforce investments should reduce this burden rather than shifting it entirely onto employers.

Action Steps:

- Fund wage subsidies, mentorship stipends, or training offsets for employers hosting trainees or apprentices.
- Support small cohort-based hiring and on-the-job training models that reduce individual employer burden.
- Invest in shared training infrastructure, such as regional labs or mobile training units.
- Recognize and compensate journey-level workers who serve as mentors.

7. Use Data to Prioritize Quality, Not Just Placement

Employers emphasized that retention and advancement matter more than short-term placements. Workforce boards and funders should measure success based on progression into higher-skill, higher-wage roles.

Action Steps:

- Track outcomes beyond initial job placement, including wage growth, credential attainment, and internal promotion.

- Prioritize training program/employer partnerships that demonstrate strong employer alignment and advancement outcomes.
- Use employer feedback loops to continuously refine recruitment criteria and training content.
- Disaggregate data to ensure equitable access to high-quality transportation careers.

8. Treat Transportation as a Priority Sector for Long-Term Workforce Investment

Transportation careers offer the rare combination of accessibility, stability, strong wages, and benefits without requiring four-year degrees. As electrification accelerates, this sector will remain central to both economic mobility and climate goals.

Action Steps:

- Designate transportation as a priority sector within regional and state workforce plans.
- Coordinate funding across workforce, education, climate, and infrastructure initiatives.
- Support long-term partnerships between employers, workforce boards, and education providers.
- Invest in systems-building, not just short-term programs.

Employer findings make clear that transportation workforce challenges are solvable with coordinated, targeted investment. By strengthening entry points, reducing barriers, aligning training with emerging technologies, and supporting employer capacity, workforce education and training organizations and funders can build durable pathways into family-sustaining transportation careers while meeting immediate and long-term employer demand and climate goals.

Appendix A: Employer Interviews

Thank you to our employer partners for the insights they have provided to inform this report. Employer interviews include:

1. Luxe Collision
2. Hansel Lincoln & Ford of Petaluma & Santa Rosa
3. Toyota Marin
4. Cadillac Marin
5. Marin Transit
6. Marin Airporter
7. Teamsters Local 665
8. Golden Gate Transit
9. Machinist Institute
10. Machinists Apprenticeship
11. International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District 190
12. Cooglers Auto
13. Transdev
14. Volvo Cars Marin
15. Mazda Marin
16. Rebel Group
17. Jim Bone Auto Group
18. Elevated Electric
19. Nook & Cranny Mobile Detailing
20. AC Transit
21. Sonoma Sparkies

Appendix B: Description of Recruitment and Training Pathways

