

# Chief Operating Officer

**Create, Collaborate, Lead at VTA**

*Where great minds  
transform the  
Silicon Valley*

## Our Community

Santa Clara County, sometimes referred to as “Silicon Valley”, is unique for its innovation, natural attractions, and social diversity. With numerous amenities and perfect weather, it has long been considered one of the best places in the United States to live and work. The county’s population of 1.9 million is the largest in Northern California and rich in ethnic culture and diversity. Enjoy access and the option to explore our closely neighboring counties of San Francisco and Alameda.

## VTA's Role in the Community

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is an award-winning, independent special district that provides sustainable, accessible, community-focused transportation options that are innovative, environmentally responsible, and promote the vitality of our region.

VTA provides bus, light rail, paratransit services, and participates as a funding partner in regional rail service including Caltrain, Capital Corridor, and the Altamont Corridor Express.

VTA is a collection of more than 2,000 dedicated employees working together to provide transportation throughout Silicon Valley. Our transit services are much more than simply a ride, they are a means of connection and enrichment that allow us to meet the varied needs of a diverse population. The transit services we offer improve health by connecting our riders to vital health services, advance our community by providing safe passage to school and educational institutions, and increase quality of life with access to recreation and economic opportunities. From highways to bikeways to safer routes to school, the people of VTA work together to ensure Silicon Valley residents and workers have the ability to get where they need to go. VTA has wide-ranging authority, including transit development and operations, congestion management, funding, highway design and construction, real estate and transit-oriented development, and bicycle and pedestrian planning. We are a truly a multi-modal transportation solutions agency.

## The Operations Division

Under the direction of the Chief Operating Officer, the Operations Division operates, analyzes, maintains, and manages VTA's bus and rail transit system and facilities. It also oversees contracted shuttle and ADA paratransit services.

Operations consists of the Chief Operating Officer's Administrative Unit - Operations Administration - as well as Bus & Rail Transit Operations, Bus & Rail Transit Maintenance, Special Event Service, Facilities Maintenance, Operations Analysis Reporting & Systems, Operations Workforce Development, and Regional Transportation Services.

Together, Operations comprises 14 functional units - Operations Administration, Bus & Rail Transit Operations, Service Management, Bus & Rail Maintenance, Way, Power & Signal Maintenance, Facilities Maintenance, Maintenance Engineering, Warranty & Quality Assurance, Regional Transportation Services, Paratransit, Operations Analysis, Reporting and Systems, Operations Development, Bus & Rail Technical Training and Bus & Rail Maintenance Training.

## Ideal Candidate

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is seeking a dynamic and visionary leader with a passion for public transportation and a track record of delivering results in complex, multi-modal environments to join VTA's executive leadership team as our next Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Reporting to the General Manager/CEO, the Chief Operating Officer is responsible for providing a safe and efficient countywide transportation system by planning, organizing, and directing VTA's Operations Division.

The ideal candidate will bring a blend of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in transportation/logistics, public administration, engineering, business administration or a related discipline, and extensive, increasingly responsible managerial experience working in a multi-modal public transportation operations and/or maintenance environment. Experience as a manager in a major functional transportation area, or as General Manager of a smaller transportation organization, is highly desirable. Managerial experience in a large public transportation organization is required.

Completion of leadership training and active engagement in professional transportation associations are highly desirable, as they reflect a commitment to innovation, collaboration, and continuous growth.



## Position Highlights

This position offers the chance to lead and influence a range of high-profile projects and strategic initiatives, including:

- **Executive Oversight of Transit Operations** – Provide strategic direction and leadership for VTA's bus and light rail operations and maintenance, ensuring safe, efficient, and reliable service delivery across the region.
- **Enterprise Asset Management (EAM)** Implementation – Oversee the deployment of a cutting-edge EAM system to optimize asset utilization, improve maintenance outcomes, and enhance decision-making.
- **Policy and Program Development** – Establish and monitor operational objectives, policies, and procedures that drive continuous improvement and support organizational success.
- **Global Event Operations** – Lead planning and coordination efforts for world-class events such as the Super Bowl and the upcoming FIFA World Cup, requiring advanced logistics, cross-agency coordination, and real time responsiveness.
- **Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Program** – Guide VTA's transition to a fully electric bus fleet, supporting California's clean energy goals and modernizing service infrastructure.
- **Light Rail Fleet Replacement** – Direct the procurement and rollout of VTA's next-generation light rail vehicles, focused on improving system performance, accessibility, and the rider experience.



# Benefits



Santa Clara VTA offers a comprehensive and generous benefits package that includes but is not limited to:

**Medical** - VTA pays up to the Kaiser Bay Area family rate for employees. Employees pay the excess above the Kaiser Bay Area family rate if a different medical plan is selected.

**Dental** - The premium for family coverage for each of the two plans is fully paid by VTA

**Vision** - The premium for family coverage is fully paid by VTA.

**Deferred Compensation Plans 457 & 401(a)** - Executive Management may set aside up to the maximum allowed by law on a tax-deferred basis in a 457 Plan. They may also choose to participate in a supplemental 401(a) tax-deferred retirement plan.

**Retirement** - California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) pension plan.

Classic Members: VTA shall contribute the required employer contribution for the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) Miscellaneous Employees 2% at 55 retirement plan. Average final earnings are calculated on the highest consecutive 12 months. To be eligible for a service retirement under PERS, you must be age 50 with five years of service. A PERS disability retiree need not be 50 years old, but must have five years of service.

Executive Managers who were hired before 1/9/12 contribute a total of 7% of salary toward the required employee contribution for PERS effective January 1, 2016 (01/22/16 pay date).

Executive Managers who were hired on or after 1/9/12 contribute a total of 7.25% of salary toward the required employee contribution to PERS.

**Retirement Medical** - Executive Management are eligible for retiree medical coverage if they have five years of PERS service time, qualify for a PERS pension, and retire within 120 days of separation from VTA.

**Social Security** - VTA contributes the required employer contribution on behalf of all employees. The employees also make their required contributions.

**Life Insurance** - VTA will provide \$100,000 in term life insurance and \$100,000 in AD&D insurance.

**Relocation Assistance** - A specifically tailored relocation package is available.

## Additional Benefits

- 31 Days of Scheduled time off.
- 8 Days of Sick Leave, per fiscal year with unlimited accumulation.
- Potential for Hybrid Work Schedule
- 12 paid, observed holidays per year and one floating holiday after the first year of employment.
- Annual leave "cash-out" program. Commuter Tax Benefit Plan.
- Complimentary Transit Passes for you and your family.
- Tuition Reimbursement, Professional Development, and Wellness Programs

## How to Apply

The application deadline for this exciting leadership opportunity is Tuesday, **July 6, 2025, at 11:59 PM (PDT)**. To be considered, please submit the following materials:

- A compelling cover letter
- A detailed resume
- A list of six (6) professional references

Submit your complete application package to:

**Sonya Morrison**

Chief People Officer

[Sonya.Morrison@vta.org](mailto:Sonya.Morrison@vta.org)

## Selection Process

Following the application deadline, candidates deemed to be the most qualified will be invited to participate in preliminary interviews.

Key dates in the selection process are as follows:

- **First-Round Interviews: July 17, 2025**
- **Department Interviews with the General Manager and Deputy General Manager the week of July 21, 2025**

VTA expects to make a final selection shortly after these interviews, pending successful completion of reference checks and background screening. References will only be contacted once mutual interest has been established.