



## GENERAL MANAGER

**\$84,221 - \$144,591**

*Plus Excellent Benefits*

*Apply by*

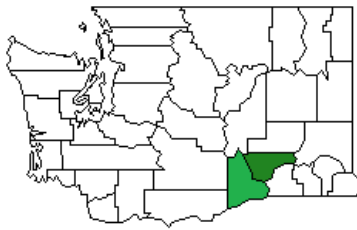
**February 21, 2016**

*(open until filled)*

**PROTHMAN**



**WHY APPLY?**



Located among the Columbia, Yakima, and Snake Rivers in southeastern Washington, Ben Franklin Transit provides public transportation for people who live and

work in both Benton and Franklin County. The area gets 300 days of sunshine a year, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy a multitude of outdoor activities, from water sports to golf to wine touring to outdoor theater.

Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) is a highly regarded agency and enjoys a great workplace culture and environment that is built on trust, pride, and teamwork. In 2004, the agency was recognized as one of the “Most Improved Transit Systems in the United States” by Metro Magazine.

BFT offers the right candidate an excellent career opportunity while working with a dedicated team to provide excellent customer service and vision to a vibrant community with a bright future!



**THE REGION**

Home to more than 268,000 residents, Benton and Franklin Counties cover a combined 3,025 square miles. Communities within Franklin County's boundaries include Pasco, Connell, West Pasco, Basin City, Mesa, Eltopia and Kahlotus. The largest city in Franklin County is Pasco with a population of just over 65,000. Benton County includes Kennewick, Richland, Benton City, West Richland, and Prosser, the county seat. The largest city in Benton County is Kennewick with a population of just over 76,000.

Richland, Pasco and Kennewick comprise the Tri-Cities metropolitan area. The Tri-Cities are just a few hours' drive from the major urban centers of Seattle, Spokane and Portland, and the Tri-Cities Airport has direct flights to Seattle, Denver, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Phoenix and San Francisco.



The area offers breathtaking parks, nostalgic downtown areas, upscale dining and retail, art galleries, antique shops, and a variety of entertainment venues. Residents and visitors enjoy endless recreational opportunities, including water sports, fishing, biking, hunting, skiing and more. Golf is one of the most popular sports enjoyed year round, with over ten premier courses. The massive Columbia River separates Richland from its neighboring communities and features many waterfront parks, trails, and easy river access.

The Tri-Cities area has many public athletic facilities and is home to three professional sports teams: Tri-City Americans WHL Ice Hockey, Tri-City Dust Devils, a professional affiliate of the Colorado Rockies, and the Tri-Cities Fever, a member of the Arena Football 2 League.

Known as the “Heart of Washington Wine Country,” the region is home to over 160 wineries producing some of the finest wines in the world. Tri-Cities has enjoyed many awards over the years, including ranking #1 for top U.S. cities people are moving to in 2012, #1 for most secure mid-sized U.S. City in 2011, and #1 in the nation for housing in 2010, and lowest cost of living in the state of Washington in 2010.

- For more information about the Tri-Cities area, visit:
- [www.visittri-cities.com](http://www.visittri-cities.com)
  - [www.tricityregionalchamber.com](http://www.tricityregionalchamber.com)



## THE ORGANIZATION

### Mission Statement

*To provide exceptional and cost-effective transportation services that consistently exceed customer expectations while promoting the principles and practices of livable communities and sustainable development.*

Ben Franklin Transit is a municipal corporation, which provides public transportation services in a 618 square mile area located in Benton and Franklin Counties. The area includes all of the cities of Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, West Richland, Benton City, Prosser and certain unincorporated areas of Benton and Franklin County. The service area contains a population of approximately 228,992 residents.

Ben Franklin Transit was formed May 11, 1981, when the voters in the service area voted to levy a 0.3 percent sales tax to support public transit. As of 2015, BFT employs 276 FTE's, has \$42.5 million in revenue, and an operating expense of \$33.8 million. The organization has a 2016 Capital Budget of just over \$6 million. Services of the organization include regular routed and scheduled transit, Dial-A-Ride, Vanpool, ridesharing, taxi feeder service, TransPlus night service, and Demand Response service in the cities of Prosser, Benton City, and Finley.

BFT has had several achievements over the last few years, having received the City of Richland's "Green Business of the Year" award in 2006, and the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainability in 2007. In 2008, Ben Franklin

Transit set all-time ridership records with just over 5.5 million passenger boardings. In 2014, combined ridership for all modes of service totaled 4,143,874. BFT is governed by an appointed nine-member Board of Directors. The Board consists of two Franklin County commissioners, one Benton County commissioner, and a city council member from each of six cities all within BFT's service area. The overall management of BFT is divided into six departments; Operations, Dial-A-Ride, Maintenance, Service Delivery, Human Resources and Administrative Services.

As a community partner, BFT provides over 34,800 rides each year to special events such as the annual International Hydroplane Race and Air Show, Benton County Fair, Cable Bridge Run, and Art in the Park.

## THE POSITION

Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the General Manager provides leadership and direction to all Ben Franklin Transit services and resources. In addition, the General Manager establishes annual goals and objectives, short and long range plans, and policies and procedures to ensure the policy direction of the Board is carried out in an expeditious and cost-effective manner.

### **Other responsibilities include:**

- Knowledge of budget development and administration.
- Demonstrated experience in labor relations and contract development.
- Experience in project planning and management.
- Demonstrated ability to lead effectively and to direct subordinate management and support staff.
- Possess excellent interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills.
- Available to travel as may be required.
- Possess a valid Class C driver's license.
- Composing, reviewing, and editing a variety of written materials for diverse audiences; producing written communications that convey the purpose and message in a succinct and organized manner, appropriate for audience, context, time and place.
- Influencing or persuading others to make or change decisions, reach consensus, or modify opinions, attitudes and behaviors of staff, peers,

higher-level managers, as well as internal and external customers or stakeholders, as applicable to the essential duties and responsibilities.

- Reasoning/analyzing; making sound decisions; using logic to identify and resolve problems.



## OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

**1. Ridership:** Ben Franklin Transit has experienced a downturn in ridership in recent years. Factors contributing to this decrease in ridership may be attributed to falling fuel prices, lower unemployment rates, and residual impacts from service cuts made in 2010. BFT is currently undergoing a Comprehensive Service Plan Study (CSPS) that will look at service provided through the six cities within a 616 square mile Public Transportation Benefit Area. The CSPS will provide a great opportunity for BFT, under the direction of the General Manager (GM) and Board of Directors, to institute significant changes to BFT's service plan, realize efficiencies, increase ridership, and better meet the transportation needs of the community. While this process is very exciting, it doesn't come without challenges. Not everyone in the community will agree with the changes or the implementation plan. This will need to be a very carefully orchestrated process. Due to the timing of this project, the new GM will immediately be put into a position to support and lead staff through this complex process.

**2. Staff Turnover and Development:** Currently, the average employee has been with BFT for 13.2 years. Many employees have been with the agency for 25+ years and some will be retiring soon. With those employees leaving, some of their institutional knowledge and experience walks out the door. Succession planning and mentoring new or existing employees at all levels of employment may be challenging. This is also an opportunity to effect change and look at new ways of doing business. The Board of Directors has recently ap-

proved an agency-wide training program through Franklin Covey's The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. This is a pivotal time for BFT as the hope and plans for the program are that it permeates throughout the agency at all employment levels, coordinates efforts, and promotes unity.

**3. Changing Culture:** Under the direction of the Board of Directors via its Strategic Plan, BFT has made a strong commitment to continue building relationships with community leaders, organizations, and the citizens it serves. Over the last three years there have been two different GMs and two different Interim GMs. Different management styles and professional cultures have made it difficult for staff to move forward on projects and improvements. This is a challenge for a new GM as staff will be concerned about yet another new management style and direction, yet it presents a great opportunity for the right person to continue recent momentum and maintain consistent management oversight, direction and focus.

**4. Technology:** Transit technology is advancing at an ever increasing rate. Keeping up with these technologies and implementing the "right size" technology throughout BFT is a challenge. In previous years when budgets were tight and services cut, technological implementations were not a priority. With the economy and fund balance stabilizing in recent years, there exists an opportunity in the near future for BFT to determine what technology is right for the community and the agency. A unified approach to addressing technological needs will help realize operational and administrative efficiencies, reduce costs, increase ridership, and involve the community.

**5. Union Relationships:** BFT currently manages three collective bargaining agreements. In prior years, the collective bargaining process has been time consuming and costly. A strong union presence may be a challenge for a new General Manager as all three agreements contain different work rules that contribute to administrative challenges. In recent years, BFT has worked hard at building trust and confidence with the local union office. Maintaining balance and fairness with the union may present different challenges for a new GM. The opportunity to interact with the union and play a key role in the negotiations process may be one of the first items of business for the new GM, as current contracts expire in May of 2016.

**6. Population Growth and Changing Demographics:** The Tri-Cities area has recently become the 4<sup>th</sup> largest metropolitan area in the State of Washington. Since the 2010 Census, the State of Washington's Office of Financial Management has estimated the current population to be 275,740, an increase of over 8.8%. Similar growth is expected to continue. Population growth will present both challenges and opportunities for a new GM. Along with population growth, BFT will face the challenges of demographic shifts in the population, notably age. The proper vision, guidance, and direction of a successful GM will seize these opportunities and address growth and demographic needs in the community.

### IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

Ben Franklin Transit is seeking candidates with proven track records that will show exemplary management skills coupled with comprehensive technical knowledge of transit agencies and systems. The next General Manager must be able to demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, coordinate and provide vision, direction and leadership to the agency, as well as the ability to delegate responsibility to and build consensus with the management staff.

The ideal candidate will need to maintain open and transparent relationships with the 9-member Board of Directors and must maintain positive and collaborative relationships with the counties and cities served by BFT. He or she must be confident and a good communicator with the ability to make effective and persuasive speeches and presentations on complex topics to top management, public groups and boards. A key component of the position will be representing BFT to legislators, civic groups, regulatory agencies and key stakeholders in the community.

The successful candidate will be a strategic thinker and understand the importance of planning into the future to assure Ben Franklin Transit is meeting the needs of the community. He or she will be a good steward of the agency's budget and finances, and will monitor and oversee BFT's budget process and major capital projects.

### EXPERIENCE & EDUCATION

- Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, General Business Administration, Transportation Planning or a related field
- Five to ten years of progressively responsible management level experience
- Transportation experience preferred, including fixed route, para-transit operations, maintenance, finance, planning, marketing, customer service, and human resources
- An equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job will be considered.
- Must also have knowledge of FTA requirements and guidelines
- ADA para-transit experience/knowledge preferred

### COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- **\$84,221 - \$144,591**
- Benefit Package, including Medical, Dental, and Life Insurances
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D)
- Long-term Disability (LTD)
- Optional WA State Retirement System (PERS)
- Optional 401(k)
- 6 Paid Holidays

Please visit: [www.bft.org](http://www.bft.org)



Ben Franklin Transit is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **February 21, 2016** (first review, open until filled). Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To **apply online**, go to **[www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com)** and click on "submit your application" and follow the directions provided. Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in.



[www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com)

371 NE Gilman Blvd., Suite 350  
Issaquah, WA 98027  
206.368.0050