

Top 18 COOL Transportation Jobs You May Not Have Known About!

What do you think of when you think of a career in the transportation industry? If you think you know just what a transportation job is, you may be surprised to learn about just a few of the many, many exciting and challenging careers that have tremendous impact on people in the U.S. and around the world! If you set your path on a course of study with the right focus, you may find yourself in one of these cool transportation jobs one day!

Traffic / Transportation Planner for Special Events

If you're a Traffic Planner for Special Events like Olympics, Super Bowl, Democrat and Republican National Conventions, you figure out how to move large numbers of people in a short period of time— including many VIPs! There are many factors involved in the planning, including special challenges related to geography, security, customs and culture, etc.

Copywriter / Reporter

With the appropriate STEM education credentials and excellent writing skills, you could be an editor or writer for national and international publications focused on the transportation industry: Check out Aileen Cho at the *Engineering News-Record*, as an example. This is a job that gives you the opportunity to travel, talk to people in a wide range of industries and gain access to some fascinating places and projects.

Forensics Expert

Forensics isn't just for *CSI Miami*. Forensics Experts are needed in the transportation industry to figure out the causes of failures, such as a bridge collapse, train crash, or traffic pile-up.

Historic Preservation Specialists

By combining expertise in history, architecture, and environmental studies, Historic Preservation Specialists work with transportation agencies or consulting firms to ensure that historic properties and facilities are repaired according to federal codes. Finding modern materials that replicate the look and feel of an historic structure is rewarding!

Automotive "Stylist"

How cool is this? There are people who come up with the styles, colors and interior layouts of automobiles (and other vehicles as well). This is the kind of role where you'd be charged with figuring out, for example, where women drivers would want to store their purses.

Special Contracts Coordinator

This cool job entails negotiating access permits and coordinating agency staff for special revenue projects, like when requests come in to use transit-agency properties (rail stations, bus stops, historic ferry or passenger terminals) for photo shoots, movies, and advertisements.

Public Involvement Specialist

"Say WHAT?" That's a typical reaction from a person when a project engineer tries to explain that decibels on a logarithmic scale will determine if their neighborhood is eligible for a sound wall, or that they will be living next to a traction power sub-station. One of the roles of a *public involvement specialist* is to translate complex, technical information into easily understood language, documents, and graphics for non-technical people to understand.

Marketing Coordinator / Ad Exec

The Marketing Coordinator keeps everyone working! She researches, strategizes, designs, and produces proposals for architecture and engineering firms to submit to their prospective clients.

Government Affairs / Lobbyist

If you're passionate about light rail, alternate transportation or how projects get funded, as a Lobbyist you can use your communications skills to influence transportation policy with State and Federal senators and representatives. Being a Lobbyist can mean opportunities to travel to the nation's capital and meet with people who are elected and appointed to key positions.

Roadway Designer

With graphic art and CADD (*computer-aided design and drafting*) skills, a Roadway Designer draws roadway plans. This job affords talented women great opportunity for growth and a chance to work on projects in different parts of the world.

GIS Analyst

GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems, and in the transportation realm it can be used for infrastructure management, fleet and logistics management, and transit management, just to name a few examples. As a GIS Analyst there are a variety of projects you may get involved with. You could be making maps for traffic planning reports, you may use GIS to do environmental impact studies, and more. GIS allows engineers to compare alternatives at early phases in various transportation challenges.

Traffic Engineer

Traffic Engineering consists of analyzing existing or proposed road designs to determine how many lanes are needed, how long turn lanes should be, or determining what type of intersection should be implemented. Traffic engineers use simulation software to create proposed designs and input traffic volume data to determine how smoothly the intersection or corridor will operate. They also can do travel time studies, help with environmental documents determining the impacts on the natural and human environments, and they attend public workshops to help inform the public about projects.

Government Relations Manager

This person is a born diplomat. She deftly acts as a liaison between her organization and government leaders to ensure their concerns are handled during the design, construction and/or operation of the transportation system. She is also an expert in government rules and requirements that pertain to transportation.

Landscape Architect

A green thumb isn't even a requirement for a Landscape Architect's job, but it might help! She's the creative genius behind designing landscapes that work in harmony with transportation systems. This interesting job can include choosing shady trees to provide passenger comfort at stations in hot climates or recommending a spiny variety to discourage pedestrians from walking where they shouldn't be – part psychology, part botany, all fun!

Geotechnical Engineer – You made this sound interesting!

A Geotechnical Engineer is actually a soil scientist. She studies the relationships between construction, geological features, and soils to make sure projects can be built and how they need to be designed to fit into whatever terrain is necessary. This person isn't at a desk all day long; some of her work will be done in the field – literally!

Public Information Officer

Public Information Officers, or PIOs, are the women with the answers. They are called on to help craft messages and attend public events, so they have a pretty high profile. This officer has contacts in every part of an organization.

Public Relations Manager

The Public Relations manager is the go-to gal when news reporters want someone to answer questions and give information on transportation projects and systems. Imagine chatting with Katie and Matt or sharing the spotlight with Anderson Cooper – totally A list!

Graphic Designer

A graphic designer in transportation is a busy, creative, tech-savvy person who gets to create a wide variety of important graphics on a daily basis. One day she might be laying out the entire system map, the next she might be on-location taking photographs of passengers at an event. She can be called on to create anything from advertisements to vehicle signage – and everything in between!

Did this list change your perception of what the transportation industry is all about? If you've got a thirst for learning a bit more about how studying science, technology, engineering or math can make a difference to our world, contact WTS International or your local chapter to participate in our Transportation YOU program, designed for girls 13 – 17 years old. We'd loved to have you! Find us at www.TransportationYOU.org.