

Transit Coalition Executive Director



About Greenville Connects

Greenville Connects seeks to increase investments in Greenlink, the transit system in Greenville County, South Carolina. A coalition formed in 2019, Greenville Connects is a partnership of the local public transit system, philanthropy, business leaders, neighborhood activists, faith communities, and national experts that has achieved some important wins for public transportation in Greenville and wants to build on that success. Greenville Connects seeks to be a key player in meeting the transportation needs of a quickly growing community in equitable ways. This means doing the organizing, communicating, and advocacy needed to make good decisions and secure the right investments at the city, county and state levels. We need a visionary person to lead this work.

Job Overview

Greenville Connects is seeking a collaborative, strategic leader to serve as the first Executive Director to develop and implement an integrated strategy to advance Greenville Connects' vision for transit expansion and accessibility. By strengthening the coalition and creating a long-term strategy, the Executive Director will spearhead a campaign to support better transit. With the ultimate goal of securing long-term, recurring operational funding for public transportation, the Executive Director will bring extensive experience in advocacy and community-building and have a passion for creating a better community through an equitable transportation system in Greenville.



Attributes

Candidates for this position will share Greenville Connects' deep commitment to advocating for improving the quality of life for all Greenville County residents regardless of race, zip code, or income, by creating transportation options that get people where they need to go. The ideal candidate is:

- Experienced in creating campaign strategy including communication, advocacy, coalition building, power mapping, and more.
- Visionary, demonstrating openness, strong reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities in developing goals and strategies.
- Action-oriented but collaborative in approach with well-honed listening skills.
- Results-driven. Sets and achieves goals.
- Trusted and trustworthy. Listens well, builds trust, and advances relationships.
- Able to “command the room” and possesses strong leadership skills
- A quick study with a wealth of personal insight; hands-on and can hit the ground running.
- Highly organized and detail oriented.
- A strong manager of high-performing teams.
- An entrepreneurial spirit to improve the way the organization operates and sustains itself. Embraces innovation and a can-do mindset.
- Open to feedback and committed to continuous improvement.

Required Experience, Skills and Abilities

- Minimum of 7-10 years of leadership experience in nonprofits, coalitions, public/private partnerships, or advocacy organizations particularly with campaign-related work and/or having led a startup organization.
- An undergraduate degree is required; a graduate degree in business, finance, public administration or related field is preferable but not required.
- Experience with the public and private sectors, including government officials, philanthropic organizations, business community, donors, and community leaders.
- Effective management of operational and financial resources.
- Strong proficiency in transit/transportation is ideal, but not required.
- Relationships with influencers in Greenville and/or South Carolina a plus.
- Track record of planning and executing winning strategies.

Essential Responsibilities

- Develop a long-term strategy for how Greenville Connects can use political and civic engagement to build sustainable power for public transit, resulting in an increased investment in public transit in Greenville County.
- Establish sound working relationships with and serve as primary liaison to city and county governments, major employers, local businesses, neighborhood leaders, nonprofit organizations, media and other key stakeholders to support Greenville Connects' mission.
- Generate resources to support this work.
- Effectively execute strategic activities to advance policy goals such as developing reports/fact-sheets; identifying needed research; conducting social and earned media campaigns; analyses of policy proposals; and power mapping.
- Remain up-to-date on local and national trends that affect the organization and shape the issue of public transit.
- Demonstrate understanding of local government inner-workings and proficiency moving an initiative through necessary policy approval processes. Mobilize various constituencies as required over the course of the campaign.
- Develop a deep understanding of the transportation sector, as well as the history of public transit in Greenville. Analyze market trends, research best in class solutions, review organization data, and identify opportunities for growth.
- Oversee a team to execute on strategies including advisory board members, staff, and vendors.
- Manage a base budget of \$400,000 and grow it to meet the needs of the campaign.

Position Details

Greenville Connects is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes all qualified candidates to apply without regard to race, religion, creed, nationality, sex, gender, veteran status or any other non-job-related qualification.

- Salary is based on experience and qualifications, in the range of \$110,000 to \$130,000.
- As a start-up coalition, details of benefit packages, paid time-off, holidays will be negotiated with the final candidate(s).
- Executive Director reports to Chairperson of the Board.
- As the coalition grows, ED will hire and manage consultants and/or staff as additional capacity is needed.
- Travel and Remote work - Because the job requires a deep understanding of Greenville's political and business culture, we expect the selected candidate to work from Greenville. However, remote work options and travel expectations will be discussed with final candidates based on individual circumstances to find an arrangement that is mutually beneficial to all parties.
- To Apply: Send cover letter and resume to shannon.cole@greenvilleconnects.org. No calls please.

Greenville Connects Background

Five years ago, conventional wisdom in Greenville County held that transit was part of our past, that the transit system was terrible, and that no one would ever ride the bus. Various community assessments had found that lack of transportation was a significant contributing factor in individuals' inability to secure better paying jobs, acquire quality medical care, and access the diverse array of educational, recreational, and retail opportunities in this thriving community. But while transportation was widely known to be a need, it was considered to be an intractable issue with little chance of garnering the support needed to keep the struggling bus system afloat, much less expand the system to meet the needs of the rapidly growing community.

In 2014 Piedmont Health Foundation (PHF) named transit a priority, and commissioned a comprehensive transportation and mobility study. This research and planning brought to light the many ways lack of transportation was impacting the community, and created a framework for improvements to the existing system. Since then progress has been steady, as have the additions of new partners to work on improved mobility.

2015 PHF releases transportation and mobility study. James Keel joins Greenlink as General Manager of transportation.

2016 Other new staff come on board at Greenlink, and several new members are appointed to GTA board

2017 PHF local revenue study released, which shifted understanding around our transit system's deficiencies being a result of poor management to woeful lack of local funding. PHF launches transit field trips to expose nonriders to the transit experience.

Greenlink secures funding for Proterra buses and launches an Intelligent Transit System with help from Hollingsworth Funds and The Graham Foundation. Greenlink starts Comprehensive Operational Analysis.

2018 Greenlink completes a Transit Development Plan and wins a \$11 million federal grant for a new maintenance facility.

PHF hosts Greenville Faces: Transit photo competition with sponsorship from the Jolley Foundation and assembles first advocacy partners among riders and allies.

2019 Advocacy efforts formalize under Greenville Connects, a partnership of Greenville Chamber, Hollingsworth Funds, GTA board members, and others.

Impact Greenville, led by PHF, hosts transit forum with 250 attendees, the first such large session focused on transit.

Greenlink launches mobile pay, allowing riders to pay on their smart phones, payment cards with a monthly cap on maximum payment, and route changes to better serve customers.

Advocacy efforts result in first significant funding increase for Greenlink in decades. Lt. Gov hosts a summit on transit in partnership with Greenlink and PHF.

2020 In an effort to recruit drivers to expand hours, Greenlink hires a CDL driver trainer. Land for new maintenance facility approved by Greenville County Council.

Greenlink's Transit Development Plan and its impact

Greenlink's Transit Development Plan, which serves as the basis for all of its service changes and expansions, was developed in 2018 after significant input from riders and community members. The next steps in the plan are those most desired by riders and the most likely to have a significant impact on ridership. Securing on-going operational funding will ensure the plan remains on target.

2021	Extend Saturday service from 5:30 am to 11:30 pm	Estimated 38,352 more rides per year
-------------	--	--------------------------------------

2023	Open new maintenance facility Purchase new vehicles for 30-minute service Improve all weekday routes to 30-minute frequency	Estimated 421,000 more rides per year
-------------	---	---------------------------------------

2024	Improve all Saturday routes to 30-minute frequency Add Sunday service with 60-minute frequency during 12 hr span	Estimated 63,000 more rides per year Estimated 71,000 more rides per year
-------------	---	--

Why Greenville

The Upstate of South Carolina is in the northwest corner of the state (the foothills of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains). The Upstate is a vibrant commercial corridor, putting it in the top ten markets for economic development in the United States. If you have ever been here, you know how beautiful it is, how temperate the climate is, and how friendly the people are. Whether schools, safe communities, culture, healthcare, shopping, recreation, access to travel, mountains, lakes, golf or the beach (3½ hours south), or low cost of living are important to you, we are confident you will find what you are looking for in Greenville. Home to corporate headquarters for major companies like Fluor and Hubbell Lighting, Greenville is widely recognized as the pre-eminent economic center of the Upstate. Complementing Greenville's robust business climate is an unprecedented array of community assets ranging from the Peace Center for the Performing Arts to picturesque Falls Park. Greenville's 500 acres of parkland, collection of unique boutiques and restaurants alongside major sports and entertainment arenas deliver limitless recreation opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

Education

Greenville County Schools are in an award-winning public-school system including Blue Ribbon and National Schools. The District offers a wide range of programs to meet every need. With more than 65 private and parochial schools in the region, the Upstate also offers exciting opportunities for those seeking private or parochial education. There are also more than a dozen higher learning institutions in the area. [Click here for more information on schools in Greenville.](#)

Healthcare

Greenville has some of the best healthcare services and facilities in the state, if not the Southeast. Two major hospitals – Prisma Health System and Bon Secours St. Francis Health System – offer high level medical care, with services such as a level-one trauma center and cancer centers. In addition to these hospitals, Greenville is also home to the Shriner's Children's Hospital and many other healthcare groups. [Click here for more information on the healthcare systems in the area.](#)

Accolades

Favorable Business Climate

- Top 10 Small Cities Where Business is Thriving (Greenville, SC ranked #9)
- Greenville: #1 Micro American City of the Future – Overall, Economic Potential and Friendliness
- Top Destination for Foreign Direct Investment (Upstate SC)
- #3 for Top State to Do Business (SC)
- The Greenville Metro area is listed No. 6 on Forbes's list of "America's Engineering Capitals"

Cost of Living

- Affordable Cost of Living – 93.7
- 2013 Best Places to Retire

Education

- Nine Greenville County Public High Schools plus the Governor's School for Arts and Humanities in top 6% nationally
- 684 Greenville County teachers are National Board-Certified Teachers, more than 24 states
- Greenville County Schools, 2016
- Clemson ranked as 23rd Best National Public University

Quality of Life

- 52 Places to Go (In the World) in 2017 (Greenville, SC #12)
- #7 Best in the US to Visit in 2015
- One of "50 of the World's Last Great Places" - Jocassee Gorges
- Top 10 Cycling Cities in the United States
- GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail: #3 Best Urban Trail
- Artisphere: Top 10 Fine Art Show in the US

For information on Upstate South Carolina, you can also visit:

- <http://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/things-to-do/downtown/>
- <http://www.upstateforever.org/>
- https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g54258-Activities-Greenville_South_Carolina.html
- <http://www.greenvilleeconomicdevelopment.com/index.php>

