

Transit Retreat: Mobile, AL March 4-5, 2026

Content Overview:

More session descriptions to be added soon!

This is a Retreat, not your typical “conference.” Come prepared to join your peers, national technical resource and association partners, vendors and more for small group, relevant discussion in a relaxed setting in downtown Mobile. Many people attend conferences and find the most value in the conversations held in the hallways and during networking events. This Retreat will capitalize on that mindset by strategically integrating networking events with relevant sessions on topics that you need to know. Each session is designed to be interactive, not just a static presentation. With a Retreat theme, expect session content to spill into the hallways and networking events, expect open conversation, expect engaging networking with opportunities to gain experience and share. Expect to return home refreshed and ready to address the challenges of today’s transit world.

Get to know your FTA Technical Assistance Centers and National Partners

Curtis Sims, S & Associates Consulting, LLC

This interactive session is designed for attendees to learn about some of the best Associations and FTA Technical Assistance Center partners in the industry. Hear from the Transit Workforce Center (TWC), the Shared Use Mobility Center (SUMC) The Association of Mobility Managers, CALSTART and other National Partners. These partners exist to support transit and mobility providers throughout the country. Learn, ask questions, and hear about exciting projects, initiatives, grant opportunities and more.

A Conversation on Safety Culture and Safety Planning

JD Allen, AICP ATG | DCCM

The foundation of safety in transit extends beyond compliance—it begins with culture. With the adoption of 49 CFR Part 670 and the Safety Management Systems (SMS) framework, agencies are rethinking how human behavior, leadership, and communication shape safer outcomes. This session will unpack federal safety requirements, including Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP), and highlight best practices that go beyond regulation. Attendees will discuss how to cultivate a proactive safety culture that protects employees, passengers, and communities—making safety not just a rule, but a shared value.

Driving Forward with a Next-Gen Workforce

Facilitated by: The Transit Workforce Center (TWC)

Engage with presenters from Introducing Youth to American Infrastructure (Iyai) and from the Transit Workforce Center (TWC) in exploring effective outreach, messaging, and career awareness strategies designed to attract young people in our communities into transit careers.

A Conversation on ADA Compliance and Federal Updates

Ed Elam & Marcus Arnold ATG | DCCM

Ensuring ADA compliance is fundamental to creating accessible, equitable public transit systems. This session explores how integrating ADA standards into planning, operations, and outreach upholds the principles of equity, dignity, and independence for all riders. Participants will gain insight into current federal updates, best practices for maintaining compliance, and strategies that strengthen inclusive mobility across communities. Join the conversation on how ADA compliance not only fulfills legal requirements but also advances our shared commitment to accessible, connected, and thriving transit networks.

Opening Remarks and Rapid-Fire Vendor Intros

This session will officially welcome all attendees to the Retreat. After some opening remarks and housekeeping from our hosts, we will move onto the Rapid-Fire Intros. All vendors will submit 1 single PowerPoint slide in advance that will be used as an introduction to the audience. Every 60 seconds a new slide will be displayed, and that vendor will have 60 seconds to introduce themselves and provide quick highlights on their company/product/service or other relevant information. This session is intended to provide all attendees with an opportunity to see who is here at the Retreat so you can maximize your time with vendors you need to meet with. This is going to be fun!

Supporting and Strengthening a Skilled Frontline Workforce – How to Use the Transit Core Competencies Curriculum

Facilitated by: The Transit Workforce Center (TWC)

Explore Transit Workforce Center's Transit Core Competencies Curriculum (TC3), with a newly updated foundational skills component. TC3 contains strategies and ready-to-use courseware and materials to support transit agencies in attracting and preparing new hires and other members of the frontline workforce, strengthening skills and elevating competencies to meet the standards required for effective and safe performance in the industry.

Driving Success Through Servant Leadership

Facilitated by: AL RTAP Michael Jackson, Troy University

In the fast-paced, people-focused world of transit, leadership is about more than managing schedules and vehicles — it's about serving the people who depend on you. This keynote explores the principles of servant leadership and how they translate to the unique challenges of the transit industry. Attendees will learn how putting drivers, dispatchers, and passengers first leads to stronger teams, better service, and safer roads. Attendees leave with practical strategies to inspire, support, and lead from the driver's seat of their organization.

Behind the Wheel of Emotional Intelligence

Facilitated by: AL RTAP - Jane Goodson, Troy University

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a powerful role in how we lead, communicate, and serve others. In this session, we'll explore the foundations of EI and why it matters in today's workplace. Attendees of this session will gain insights into how emotional awareness can strengthen teamwork, improve communication, and support positive interactions with both coworkers and passengers.

De-escalation – policies and procedures discussion

Facilitated by: Curtis Sims, S&A Consulting

De-escalation is a new term for the public transit industry. The Federal Transit Administration has issued a mandate requiring all transit agencies to establish and implement a comprehensive safety training program that includes de-escalation training. De-escalation Policies and Procedures training encourages Transit Managers and Directors to go beyond “checking the boxes” and evaluate policies and procedures to ensure they are clear, concise, and completely understood by all front-line transit workers. It is valuable to review whether the policy and/or procedure may be counterproductive to the objective as it was initially intended, and ineffective to the goal of creating a safe and calm working environment.

Vendor sponsored content: Modeshift

Unleashing the Power of Flexibility and Innovation in Fare Collection Explore with us the dynamic realm of fare collection, where innovation meets flexibility to redefine the passenger experience. We are excited to showcase our strengths in addressing key challenges faced by transit agencies in the U.S. The Modeshift platform offers unparalleled flexibility in the administration of transit services, empowering agencies with tools for seamless fare configurations and enhanced reporting. This adaptability boosts operational efficiency and responsiveness to evolving transit demands. Discover how we can help you configure and launch your new fare collection system that will transform the world for both your operations and customers!

Vendor sponsored content: Ecolane

Ecolane provides intelligent web-based transit scheduling software. With Powerful and intuitive demand-response platform, the software enables transit, allows for more productivity and efficiency, and outstanding customer satisfaction.