

Regional Transit Authority (RTA) CEO Search Advisory Committee



*Convened by
Ride New Orleans*

CANDIDATE RUBRIC

Convened and Published: October 2026



Justin Augustine
CEO Candidate



Mark Major
CEO Candidate



Reginald Mason
CEO Candidate

Ride New Orleans (RIDE) convened a committee of transit professionals to review the candidates for RTA CEO and provide feedback on their qualifications.

*Please note: The RTA Board of Commissioners will take no action on the rubric. The Board will consider them as supplemental stakeholder feedback alongside its interviews, candidate qualifications, references, and community input. These resources will help Commissioners identify strengths, concerns, and follow-up questions to inform their assessment. Responsibility for selecting the next CEO rests solely with the Board. These reviews are the opinions of the advisory group members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of RIDE.

RTA CEO Search Advisory Committee Members

Ride New Orleans (RIDE)*

Anonymous – Former RTA Employee

Denise Davies – RTA Employee & ATU Member**

Ashleigh Duarte – Former Senior Planning and Scheduling Analyst, NORTA;
Current Supervisor of Vehicle Schedules, Ops/Plans/Schedules, MBTA

Kelsey Foster – Algiers Community Member

Eric Gabourel – Founder, Critical Mass Nola

Dasjon ‘DJ’ Jordan – Executive Director, Broad Community Connections

Monica Kelley, AICP – Director of Planning, Manning, APC

Melissa Lee, CNU-A, WEDG – Principal, Public Works Partners

Jason Sappington – Deputy Director,
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

Tara Tolford, AICP – Transportation Planner & Researcher,
LSU New Orleans Transportation Institute (LTI)

* RIDE’s core staff collaboratively completed and submitted a single rubric.

** Denise Davies participated in the advisory group sessions but did not submit a rubric

Methodology

The advisory group met in two sessions to discuss the candidates and complete assessment rubrics. **Each question was scored by each advisory group member on a scale from -2 to +2 points. Negative scores were used by an advisory group member when a candidate was perceived by to have a deficiency in a category. Zero scores represent a neutral analysis, or a lack of available information. Positive scores indicate a perceived strength in the category.** For each question, all 10 submitted rubrics were averaged to create an aggregate score. The highest score possible for a question is +2, and the lowest is -2. Advisory group members’ scoring represents their individual opinions. These scores do not represent the views of Ride New Orleans.

Section 1: Experience & Qualifications

1) Does the candidate have demonstrated experience in public transit operations leadership, including executive leadership experience at a publicly managed agency?



Justin Augustine
+1.3



Mark Major
+0.6



Reginald Mason
+1.4

2) Does the candidate have diverse experience across multiple sectors of the transit industry (e.g., operations, capital planning, financial, safety, customer service, risk management, etc.)



Justin Augustine
+0.7



Mark Major
+0.2



Reginald Mason
+1.1

3) Does the candidate have a demonstrated knowledge of and understanding of the processes involved in the implementation of reliable transit service?



Justin Augustine
+0.4



Mark Major
-0.1



Reginald Mason
+1.5

4) Does the candidate have demonstrated experience securing capital grants and federal funding?



Justin Augustine
+0.4



Mark Major
+0.9



Reginald Mason
+0.9

5) Does the candidate have demonstrated experience in executing major long-range capital projects and planning, on time and within budget?



Justin Augustine
-0.4



Mark Major
-0.2



Reginald Mason
+1.2

Section 1: Experience & Qualifications

6) Has the candidate demonstrated an ability to grow, maintain, and modernize transit vehicle fleets?



Justin Augustine
-0.8



Mark Major
-0.5



Reginald Mason
+1.2

7) Does the candidate have demonstrated experience in successful long-term management of transit agency financials?



Justin Augustine
+0.3



Mark Major
+0.7



Reginald Mason
+0.3

8) RTA is a public agency. Does the candidate have demonstrated experience leading a public agency with a large staff of public employees?



Justin Augustine
0



Mark Major
+0.4



Reginald Mason
+1.0

Section 2: Leadership

9) Does the candidate have a demonstrated record of professionalism and professional integrity?



Justin Augustine
0



Mark Major
-0.2



Reginald Mason
+0.8

10) Does the candidate have a demonstrated ability to work effectively with leaders at all levels (local, regional, state, and federal) to advance transit goals?



Justin Augustine
+0.6



Mark Major
+0.6



Reginald Mason
+0.7

11) Does the candidate have a record of successful engagement with community partners?



Justin Augustine
-0.4



Mark Major
+0.3



Reginald Mason
+0.9

12) Does the candidate's public leadership record align with the experience indicated in their resume?



Justin Augustine
-0.1



Mark Major
+0.4



Reginald Mason
+0.3

13) Has the candidate demonstrated success in addressing potential problems within an agency before they become serious?



Justin Augustine
-0.8



Mark Major
-0.7



Reginald Mason
+0.3

Section 3: Vision & Innovation

14) Has the candidate demonstrated leadership in developing and implementing new and innovative transit services or strategies?



Justin Augustine
-0.3



Mark Major
-0.4



Reginald Mason
+1.2

15) Has the candidate demonstrated a capacity to lead and support public outreach and engagement that builds community trust and ensures that transit riders have a significant voice in agency decisions?



Justin Augustine
-0.6



Mark Major
-0.1



Reginald Mason
+0.9

16) Has the candidate demonstrated an understanding of the shortcomings, biases, and blind spots of traditional transit methodologies and practices?



Justin Augustine
-0.6



Mark Major
-0.8



Reginald Mason
+0.3

17) Has the candidate demonstrated leadership in identifying and guiding approval and implementation of sustainable funding sources for transit operations?



Justin Augustine
-0.1



Mark Major
+0.1



Reginald Mason
+0.7

18) Has the candidate demonstrated leadership working in communities with long-term financial and budgetary challenges, and adapting the transit service and system to maintain effective service for the community?



Justin Augustine
+0.1



Mark Major
+0.2



Reginald Mason
+0.8

Section 4: Potential Challenges

19) Are there inconsistencies in the candidate's application materials or record?



Justin Augustine
-0.7



Mark Major
+0.1



Reginald Mason
+0.4

20) Does the candidate have a history of conflict, controversy, or potentially unethical actions?



Justin Augustine
-0.2



Mark Major
-0.9



Reginald Mason
-0.1

21) Do you believe that the candidate is equipped to lead a modern, multi-modal transit agency into an emerging 21st century era where rapidly changing technologies, data and AI-driven decision making, and rapidly changing urban demographic and travel patterns will continue to rapidly shift transportation destinations and travel choices?



Justin Augustine
-0.4



Mark Major
-0.2



Reginald Mason
+1.1

Advisory Committee's Suggested Interview Questions for Candidates



Justin Augustine



Mark Major



Reginald Mason

- What's your experience working with ATU? Are you aware of any general limitations of the ATU contract or operations procedures that you would like to address immediately?
- Have you had to enforce/negotiate contract adherence and amendments, etc.?
- Transit optimization can be achieved through operations via schedule specifications. Agencies around the country address this differently. Did the agencies you've worked for deploy any specific tactics to mitigate loss of service due to bus operation procedures or operator contract limitations?
- How would others describe your leadership style?
- What program, initiative, etc. are you most proud of?
- What was your most challenging issue at your last job, and how did you handle it?
- What's your vision for moving the RTA into the next century?
- How do you propose to restore/maintain public trust in the RTA?
- What new technologies, services, or practices do you hope to introduce to the New Orleans transit system during your tenure, and what steps will you take to achieve those goals?

Advisory Committee's Suggested Interview Questions for Candidates



Justin Augustine

- Public accountability: How would you distinguish your responsibilities as CEO of a public agency from your previous role leading operations under a private contractor?
- Demonstrated performance: What measurable improvements in reliability, ridership, safety, cost control, or rider satisfaction can be attributed to decisions made during your leadership?
- Organizational culture: What specific steps would you take to build employee trust, strengthen internal leadership, and establish a transparent decision-making culture?
- Governance and independence: How would you manage disagreements with the Board, mayoral administration, and other influential stakeholders while protecting the agency's professional decision-making?
- Strategic change: Which aspects of RTA's previous operating model would you preserve, and which would you change?

Advisory Committee's Suggested Interview Questions for Candidates



Mark Major

- Operational performance: What measurable improvements occurred during your previous leadership at RTA?
- Financial stewardship: How would you address the agency's financial challenges while maintaining or improving service?
- Organizational culture: What lessons did you take from your previous tenure and departure?
- Governance: How would you maintain professional independence while working with the mayor and RTA Board?
- Future direction: What would you do differently if given another opportunity to lead RTA?

Advisory Committee's Suggested Interview Questions for Candidates



Reginald Mason

- Scaling leadership: How would you adapt your leadership approach from Greensboro to a larger, multimodal agency operating buses, streetcars, ferries, and paratransit?
- Implementation: What did you learn from translating GoBORO 2045 into actual service, and what would you do differently?
- Equitable access: How would you prioritize neighborhoods where residents face long travel times, limited service frequency, or barriers to employment?
- Organizational health: What is your approach to labor relations, executive accountability, management development, and employee retention?
- Community trust: How would you create an ongoing role for riders in evaluating service decisions—not just participating in occasional planning exercises?
- First-year outcomes: What three measurable improvements would you commit to delivering in your first 12 months?