

TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES
3628 South 35th Street
Tacoma, Washington 98409-3192

To: Teresa Green, Assistant Finance Director
From: Alex Yoon, Utilities Deputy Director, Management Services *AY*
Subject: Fiscal Impact of SMART-TD Conductors LOA Conductor Trainee Program for 2021-2027
Date: February 20, 2026

Background:

The City of Tacoma and the SMART-TD Conductor bargaining unit have reached a tentative agreement for a Letter of Agreement. The Parties have signed a collective bargaining agreement covering the years July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2027.

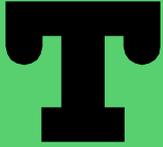
Tacoma Rail and SMART-TD have a shared desire to create an in-house training program to allow candidates with no prior railroad industry experience the opportunity to become journey-level Railway Conductors, the terms of which are detailed as follow:

Agreement:

- **Recognition.** The City will establish a new classification titled “Railway Conductor Trainee” (CSC #TBD), and hereby recognizes SMART-TD as the exclusive bargaining representative. (Hereafter: “Conductor Trainee”.)
- **Recruitment.** Conductor Trainees will be recruited and hired consistent with the City’s civil service process, as detailed in Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Chapter 1.24.
- **Duration.** The training program shall last up to nine (9) months. During that period, Conductor Trainees will build the experience necessary to achieve Railway Conductor Certification (49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 242) and become eligible for promotion to a permanent Railway Conductor position.
- **Schedule.** Conductor Trainees will be regularly assigned to work forty (40) hours per week with two consecutive rest days. Overtime worked shall be compensated consistent with the SMART-TD CBA, however Conductor Trainees shall be exempt from the overtime and holiday bidding procedures in the CBA.

During the course of their nine (9) month training program, Conductor Trainees will be scheduled to work all shifts (day, swing, and graveyard) at the direction of the Training Coordinator and with the concurrence of the Program Administrator. Conductor Trainees will generally observe City holidays listed in the CBA.





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- **Conductor Trainee Wages.** The Conductor Trainee program will include four stages, with compensation progression based upon successful progression through these stages:
 - Phase 1: Orientation and Initial Training
Duration: Up to 9 weeks
Wages: 70% of the Railway Conductor journey level hourly rate
 - Phase 2: On-the-Job Training (OJT 1) and Skill Development
Duration: Up to 9 weeks.
Wages: 75% of the Railway Conductor journey level hourly rate.
 - Phase 3: Advanced Training and Independent Work (OJT 2)
Duration: Up to 9 weeks.
Wages: 80% of the Railway Conductor journey level hourly rate.
 - Phase 4: Final Preparation (OJT 3) and Job Placement
Duration: Up to 9 weeks.
Wages: 85% of the Railway Conductor journey level hourly rate.
- **Promotion to Conductor.** Upon successful completion of the Railway Conductor Trainee program, the candidate will be eligible to compete for a vacant permanent Railway Conductor position. Upon promotion to Railway Conductor, the candidate will be placed at **Step 2 (100% of the Railway Conductor journey level hourly rate)** and begin the 125 work shift probationary period.
- **Benefits.** As probationary employees, Conductor Trainees will be eligible for all City of Tacoma benefits provided under the SMART-TD CBA, including but not limited to: health insurance benefits, Personal Time Off (PTO), and paid holidays.
- **Training Coordinator:**
 - Compensation: For any shift assigned as a Peer Trainer, the assigned Railway Conductor will receive an arbitrary of two (2) hours at the Conductor straight time rate of pay.
- **Peer Trainer:**
 - Compensation: For any shift assigned as a Peer Trainer, the assigned Railway Conductor will receive an arbitrary of two (2) hours at the Conductor straight time rate of pay.
- **Second Conductor:**
 - Compensation: For any shift so assigned, the Second Conductor will receive an arbitrary of one (1) hour at the Conductor straight time rate of pay as outlined in the CBA, (Article 2, Section 2.12 – Training, Paragraph B).





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Fiscal Impact:

2026 Annual Impact of New Classification				
Department/Fund	Budgeted FTE	Impact	2026 Budget	Under/(Over) Budget
4500 Tacoma Rail	4.00	433,296	472,692	39,396

The total includes 9-month Railway Conductor Trainee and 3-month promotion to Railway Conductor journey-level step 2 wages. The fiscal impact of 2026 will be absorbed within the current biennial budget.

Concur:



Jackie Flowers, Director of Utilities, CEO

