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Jobs in Transit: Opportunity in the Transportation Sector

The transportation sector is growing in New York City, creating opportunities for accessible middle-wage jobs across the five boroughs. This data brief, the latest publication of our Middle Class Jobs Project, documents the industry's recent job gains, which have outpaced the city's overall economic growth over the past two years.

by Jonathan Bowles

Recent job gains in New York City's manufacturing sector suggest potential for additional growth. The industry added 3,400 jobs over the past five years, providing an important source of middle class jobs. But with manufacturing now accounting for just 2.1 percent of all private sector jobs in the city, it's time for economic development officials to go beyond manufacturing and nurture the middle class industries of the future.

This data brief is a publication of the Center for an Urban Future's Middle Class Jobs Project, a research initiative generously funded by **Fisher Brothers** and **Winston C. Fisher**.

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It's unlikely that any one industry will be able to replace manufacturing, which has provided a large supply of middle-income jobs for generations, including many that are accessible to New Yorkers with limited educational credential or English skills. But there are a number of different sectors that are growing in the New York City, creating thousands of middle-wage jobs and showing potential for further growth.

One clear opportunity is in the transportation and warehousing sector.

This data brief, the latest publication of the Center for an Urban Future's Middle Class Jobs project—a research initiative generously funded by Fisher Brothers and Winston C. Fisher— documents recent employment and wage trends in the transportation and warehousing sector. Our major findings include:

- New Yorkers working in the city's transportation and warehousing sector earn an average of $53,417 a year, in line with wages in the manufacturing sector ($56,479) and significantly more than annual salaries in fast-growing fields such as home healthcare ($25,754), restaurants ($25,462), and grocery stores ($23,039).

- In 2015, the transportation and warehousing sector employed 112,864 people across the five boroughs, 46 percent more than the city's manufacturing sector (which employed 77,213).

- The sector has been growing. Over the past two years, the transportation and warehousing sector added jobs at a rate faster than the city's overall economic growth. Between 2013 and 2015, the transportation and warehousing sector grew by 8.9 percent, an increase of 9,187 jobs (from 103,677 in 2013 to 112,864 in 2015). In contrast, the number of private sector jobs citywide increased by just 7.2 percent.

- Over the past five years, from 2010 to 2015, employment in the city's transportation and warehousing sector increased by 12.4 percent, from 100,405 jobs in 2010 to 112,864 in 2015. This is higher than the rate of growth in both manufacturing (1.3 percent) and in the finance and insurance sector (6.1 percent). But it is slightly lower than the rate of private sector job growth citywide, which increased by 16.5 percent from 2010 to 2015.

- Between 2010 and 2015, all transportation subsectors experienced a net gain in jobs, with five of them growing by at least 10 percent:

- Support Activities for Transportation +3,399 jobs (23.4 percent)
- Air Transportation +3,127 jobs (11.8 percent)
- Transit & Ground Transportation +1,943 jobs (6.8 percent)
- Truck Transportation +1,857 jobs (21.6 percent)
- Scenic & Sightseeing Transportation +998 jobs (70.9 percent)
- Couriers & Messengers +995 jobs (6.5 percent)
- Water Transportation +210 jobs (12.6 percent)

- While every transportation subsector has been adding jobs, the warehousing sector has experienced declining employment in recent years. Between 2010 and 2015, the warehousing and storage industry had a net loss of 96 jobs (-2.5 percent).

- Five transportation subsectors now employ at least 10,000 people in the five boroughs. The following transportation and warehousing subsectors have the most jobs:

- Transit & Ground Transportation 30,497
- Air Transportation 29,574
- Support Activities for Transportation 17,923

- Couriers & Messengers 16,400
- Truck Transportation 10,451
- Warehousing & Storage 3,679
- Scenic & Sightseeing Transportation 2,406
- Water Transportation 1,881

- Queens is home to 57 percent of all transportation and warehousing jobs in the city—64,649 out of 112,864. Brooklyn has the second largest concentration (19,361 jobs), followed by Manhattan (15,973), the Bronx (7,663), and Staten Island (5,218).

- Between 2010 and 2015, the Bronx had the largest percentage increase in transportation and warehousing jobs, with a 22.2 percent gain. Queens was second (15.1 percent increase) followed by Staten Island (12.5 percent), Manhattan (6.8 percent), and Brooklyn (5.5 percent).

- Of all the subsectors, the water transportation industry has the highest annual wages ($103,967) and the scenic and sightseeing transportation industry has the lowest ($35,039). The following is a breakdown of average annual wages for all transportation and warehousing sectors in 2015:

- Water Transportation $103,967
- Air Transportation $75,313
- Support Activities for Transportation $51,151
- Truck Transportation $45,000
- Couriers & Messengers $44,476
- Warehousing & Storage $43,488
- Transit & Ground Passenger Transportation $40,683
- Scenic & Sightseeing Transportation $35,039

- From 2010 to 2015, the transportation and warehousing sector grew faster in New York City (12.4 percent) than in the rest of the state (9.6 percent). In 2015, New York City accounted for 47.3 percent of all employment statewide in the transportation and warehousing sector.

Source: NYS Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW).Employment figures are annual totals. In this analysis, we used annual employment data for 2015 because that was the most recent year for which data was available.

Transportation and Warehousing Employment, 2010–2015

Sector	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Transportation and Warehousing	100405	102743	103813	103677	107031	112864
Air Transportation	26447	28069	28369	27777	27792	29574
Water Transportation	1671	1632	1655	1741	1786	1881
Truck Transportation	8594	9036	9559	9991	10264	10451
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	28554	28672	28148	27822	30472	30497
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	1408	1529	1646	1842	2052	2406

Transportation and Warehousing Employment, 2010–2015

Sector	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Support Activites for Transportation	14524	14573	14886	14948	15022	17923
Couriers and Messengers	15405	15584	15756	15760	15771	16400
Warehousing and Storage	3775	3623	3765	3766	3822	3679

Jobs in Transit: Opportunity in the Transportation Sector is a publication of the Center for an Urban Future. Written by Jonathan Bowles, with additional research by Jon Sokolsky and Ilha Youn. Edited by Eli Dvorkin.

Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is a catalyst for smart and sustainable policies that reduce inequality, increase economic mobility, and grow the economy in New York City. An independent, nonpartisan policy organization, CUF uses fact-based research to elevate important and often overlooked issues onto the radar of policymakers and advance practical solutions that strengthen New York and help all New Yorkers participate in the city's rising prosperity.

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