



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 9

DATE: MARCH 7, 2024

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES AND SERVICE BETWEEN THE CITIES OF FILLMORE AND MOORPARK

RECOMMENDATION

- Receive and file update on progress of Valley Express vehicles replacement.

BACKGROUND

VCTC, on behalf of Valley Express, received CMAQ funding for fleet replacement and service between Fillmore and Moorpark.

The Valley Express fleet vehicles have met the end of their useful life benchmark and will be replaced in the fiscal year 2024-25. The current fleet vehicles were purchased in 2015 and consists of five 12 passenger cutaway buses, five 16 passenger cutaways buses, and five 26 passenger low-floor cutaway buses.

DISCUSSION

Vehicle Replacement

The FY2024/2025 Valley Express budget includes a total of \$2,683,320 in FTA 5339 capital grant funds, State of Good Repair grant funds and local match to purchase 15 replacements service vehicles. As stated above the current fleet is made up of a variety of cutaway buses that are used for dial-a-ride (DAR) and fixed route service with the smallest vehicles used for DAR service.

As staff plans for the replacement of these vehicles, we are focusing on passenger accessibility, ease of boarding for all passengers, and operational efficiency. As such, instead of replacing the 15 vehicles with a one for one replacement we are assessing the feasibility of introducing five 8 passenger + 2 wheelchair position vans into the fleet as demonstrated at our last TAC meeting in September 2023. These vans would be used to replace the 12 passenger cutaway buses.

While planning to purchase these vans, we have faced the challenge of finding a space inside the vehicle to fit the fare collection equipment which consists of a cash farebox, paper pass reader and a VCbuspass card reader. Staff have not committed to purchasing the vans until an area to fit the equipment has been identified. On March 14th, the vendor will be bringing the vehicle to the MV yard to work MV staff to identify a space for the equipment.

Regarding the other 10 cutaway buses, staff is planning to replace these with six medium-sized 22 passenger cutaways with wheelchair lifts and four larger cutaways that seat 24 passengers and have

ramps. The final determination is subject to change; however, the number of medium sized and larger sized cutaways will remain.

Service between Fillmore and Moorpark

Service is planned to begin to coincide with the start of the school year in August. Staff is reviewing the final route path and schedule and plans to bring that to the HVTAC at the next meeting. Staff is also working with our outreach consultant to develop the outreach plan.