



VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
**Heritage Valley Policy Advisory Committee (HVPAC)**  
[www.goventura.org](http://www.goventura.org) | [www.valleyexpressbus.org](http://www.valleyexpressbus.org)  
**Santa Paula City Council Chambers**  
970 E Ventura Street, Santa Paula  
**Wednesday, May 14, 2025**  
**8:30 a.m.**

## **AGENDA**

(Action may be taken on any item listed on the agenda.)

- ITEM 1      CALL TO ORDER**
- ITEM 2      INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- ITEM 3      PUBLIC COMMENTS**  
Under the Brown Act, the committee should not act on or discuss matters raised during the Public Comment portion of the agenda which are not listed on the agenda. Committee members may refer such matters to staff for factual information or to be placed on the subsequent agenda for consideration.
- ITEM 4      AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**
- ITEM 5      ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**  
**Recommended Action:**  
• Receive and file.  
**Responsible Staff: Cecilia Perez**
- ITEM 6      FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 VALLEY EXPRESS FINAL BUDGET**  
**Recommended Action:**  
• Approve the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Valley Express Budget.  
**Responsible Staff: Matt Miller**
- ITEM 7      RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**  
**Recommended Action:**  
• Receive and file.  
**Responsible Staff: Erin Kenneally**

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In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a committee meeting, please contact the Administrative Assistant at (805) 642-1591 ext. 111. Notification of at least 48 hours (about 2 days) prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.

**ITEM 8 VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ PROJECT APPLICATION**

**Recommended Action:**

- Approve VCTC staff submitting CMAQ application for Valley Express fixed route expansion.
- Approve VCTC staff submitting AHSC application for Fillmore fixed route expansion.

**Responsible Staff: Erin Kenneally**

**ITEM 9 UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES**

**Recommended Action:**

- Receive and file.

**Responsible Staff: Matt Miller**

**ITEM 10 ADJOURNMENT**



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**Santa Paula City Council Chambers**  
970 E Ventura Street, Santa Paula  
**Wednesday, March 12, 2025**  
**8:30 a.m.**

## MEETING MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kelly Long County of Ventura (Chair)  
Jenny Crosswhite, City of Santa Paula (Vice Chair)  
Carrie Broggie, City of Fillmore

**VCTC STAFF PRESENT:** Claire Grasty, Public Transit Director  
Matt Miller, Transit Operations Manager  
Erin Kenneally, Transit Planner

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**ITEM 1 CALL TO ORDER –** Meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m.

**ITEM 2 INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ITEM 3 PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**

**ITEM 4 AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None**

**ITEM 5 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The committee received the meeting minutes from the October meeting.

**ACTION:** Carrie Broggie moved to accept the minutes, Jenny Crosswhite seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ITEM 6 HONOR 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Claire Grasty shared that the Valley Express service celebrated its 10 anniversary on March 2 and plans would be made for a celebration later in the year.

**ITEM 7 FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 VALLEY EXPRESS BUDGET**

Matt Miller updated the committee on the FY25-26 budget.

The committee discussed the decrease in budgeted hours for the Fillmore-Moorpark route as well as the budgeted hours for Dial-A-Ride service.

**ACTION:** Carrie Broggie moved to accept the draft budget, Jenny Crosswhite seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**ITEM 8           RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**

Erin Kenneally updated the committee on the Valley Express Transit Service ridership for Quarter 2 (October, November, December) as well as marketing and community outreach efforts including final vehicle artwork and upcoming outreach events.

Jenny Crosswhite asked about the decrease in ridership on the Santa Paula Tripper. Asked that staff reach out to the school district to discuss schedule and promotion of the tripper. She also asked that staff look into the feasibility of adding an afternoon tripper. Manuel Minjares commented that the current school bus service provided by the district can be unreliable.

**ITEM 9           UPDATE ON THE COUNTYWIDE SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN**

Claire Grasty provided a verbal update on the Short Range Transit Plan.

**ITEM 10          UPDATE ON REPLACEMENT VEHICLES**

Erin Kenneally shared that the first five replacement vehicles have been delivered. Six more were scheduled for delivery by the end of March 2025 and the final four are scheduled to be delivered in October. The committee discussed the benefits of ramps versus wheelchair lifts. The committee was invited to view one of the new vehicles after the meeting.

**ITEM 11          UPDATE ON DIAL-A-RIDE SCHEDULING SOFTWARE (RIDEKO)**

Matt Miller updated the committee on the new Dial-A-Ride scheduling software including new efficiencies and challenges. The committee discussed the challenges of GPS coordinates not matching up with actual drop-off/pick-up locations as well as ways to increase usage of the app and website for self-booking. Possible outreach opportunities were discussed. The committee suggested that dispatchers begin polling callers as to their access to computers and/or smartphones for self-booking.

**ITEM 12          ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, May 14 at 8:30 a.m. at the Santa Paula City Council Chambers. Chair Long adjourned the meeting at 9:26 a.m.



# Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

**DATE:** MAY 14, 2025

**MEMO TO:** HERITAGE VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVPAC)

**FROM:** MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 VALLEY EXPRESS FINAL BUDGET

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- Approve the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Valley Express Budget.

## **BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to the Cooperative Agreement for the Heritage Valley Transit Service, the HVTAC will make recommendations to the Heritage Valley Policy Advisory Committee (HVPAC) regarding, among other things, the annual level of service and budget. Following the HVTAC review, the item will then be reviewed by the HVPAC. Once final, the budget will be incorporated into the overall agency budget of VCTC. The budget process for VCTC includes a review by a budget and finance sub-committee, subsequent review by the full Commission with final budget adoption by June. This item is to consider recommendation of the budget to the Heritage Valley Policy Committee for the upcoming fiscal year.

## **DISCUSSION**

Over the past year the Valley Express bus service has been funded with a mix of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recurring formula funds, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program funds, State of Good Repair (SGR) funds, farebox and local funding from the member agencies. In FY25-26 service will be, once again, funded with the same mix of funds including SB125 funds.

The budget was developed based on the following factors and assumptions:

1. Contract provider rate increase in FY25-26.
2. Sustained demand on dial-a-ride service hours.
3. Purchase of four (4) replacement service vehicles using FTA, SGR, and SB125 funds.
4. Continuation of CMAQ funded Fillmore to Moorpark Fixed Route for FY25-26.

This year's total budget will be lower than the FY24-25 budget by about 30% and is due to less vehicle replacements being planned since a majority of them occurred in FY24-25, lower estimated fuel cost, and a lower number of hours planned on the Fillmore to Moorpark Route. Dial-a-Ride (DAR) service hours will remain the same as last year's budget.

So far, DAR service hours have trended lower than expected but to insulate the jurisdictions from unexpected requests for additional funding in the middle of next fiscal year as we have seen in prior years, staff recommends that the number of DAR service hours planned matches the same number from the

current budget. DAR demand and use is very difficult to predict and can fluctuate from year to year and therefore best practice to budget conservatively.

Since presented in March, the budget has been revised. It now includes a higher number of hours needed to run the Fillmore-Moorpark route, which increased the contractor cost line item, and a correction to the formula for distribution of hours per jurisdiction to be based on the FY25-26 planned hours, which changed the amounts due to VCTC for each jurisdiction.

Additionally, further refinement was needed after the budget presentation to the HVTAC on May 5<sup>th</sup>. This revised budget includes additional funds from SB125 and a final correction to the amount of funds needed to run the Fillmore-Moorpark Route which slightly lowered the budget.

### RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SERVICE

	<i><b>FY 2025-2026</b></i>	<i><b>FY 2024-2025</b></i>
<b><u>Fixed Route</u></b>	<b><u>Projected Hours</u></b>	<b><u>Current (Budgeted)</u></b>
<b>Fillmore</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>1,782</b>
<b>Fillmore – Moorpark*</b>	<b>5,064</b>	<b>5,940</b>
<b>Santa Paula</b>	<b>1,783</b>	<b>1,792</b>
<b>County</b>	<b>3,015</b>	<b>3,015</b>
<b>Subtotal Fixed Route</b>	<b>11,611</b>	<b>12,529</b>
<b><u>Dial-a-Ride</u></b>	<b><u>Projected Hours</u></b>	<b><u>Current (Budgeted)</u></b>
<b>Fillmore</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>7,111</b>
<b>Santa Paula</b>	<b>10,740</b>	<b>10,180</b>
<b>County</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,921</b>
<b>Subtotal Dial-a-Ride</b>	<b>19,200</b>	<b>19,211</b>
<b>Total All Services</b>	<b>30,811</b>	<b>31,740</b>

\*Hours for the planned Fillmore-Moorpark funded by a CMAQ grant.

### ***Replacement Vehicles***

The FY25-26 budget also includes a total \$1,704,096 in FTA 5339 Capital, SGR, SB125 grant funds and local match to purchase four (4) replacement revenue service vehicles. This purchase will complete the replacement of the entire Valley Express bus fleet.

### ***Anticipated Revenues***

The Valley Express has historically utilized revenues from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding, Passenger Fares, and the City of Santa Paula's sales tax Measure "T" in addition to the State Local Transportation Fund (LTF) revenues each member agency receives and budgets for transit programs.

Similar to last year, this budget uses a blend of Federal formula funds, CMAQ grant funds, SGR grant funds, SB125 funds, fare revenue, and local contributions by member agencies. The following is a table of the prior three years' budgets for reference.

	<b>FY22-23</b>	<b>FY23-24</b>	<b>FY24-25</b>	<b>FY25-26</b>
<b>FTA - Cares Act/CMAQ</b>	\$ -	\$ 206,077	\$ 566,711	\$ 478,062
<b>FTA</b>	\$ 1,288,926	\$ 1,081,654	\$ 2,175,076	\$ 1,217,316
<b>State of Good Repair</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 80,409
<b>SB125</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 198,774
<b>Local Contribution - Bus Operations</b>	\$ 676,034	\$ 1,016,319	\$ 1,673,414	\$ 1,972,287
<b>Local Contribution - TDA Funds</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Local Contribution - Route Guarantee</b>	\$ 190,740	\$ 228,150		\$ -
<b>Local Fee - Contract Administration</b>	\$ 100,000	\$ 129,100	\$ 133,800	\$ 136,300
<b>Local Fee - Farebox</b>	\$ 38,700	\$ 39,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 53,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 2,294,400</b>	<b>\$ 2,700,300</b>	<b>\$ 5,916,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,136,148</b>

The FY25-26 Valley Express Budget is attached to this item as "Attachment A". A breakdown of each member agency's local contribution is attached to this item as "Attachment B" Valley Express Budget Model (FY2025-26).

If approved at this stage, the next step is to present the budget to the HVPAC, and if approved there it will then be incorporated into the VCTC Budget package presented to the Commission at its June 2025 meeting.

## Attachment A: FY2025-2026 VALLEY EXPRESS BUS SERVICE

### FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET

#### FUNDING:

Funding Source	Funding Dollars
FTA, CMAQ	\$1,695,378
SGR Fund Transfer	80,409
SB125	198,774
Local Contribution – Bus Operations*	1,972,287
Local Fee – Contract Administration*	136,300
Local Fee – Farebox	53,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$4,136,148</b>

\*Local LTF contributions and fee provided by cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore and County of Ventura.

#### EXPENDITURE COMPARISON:

	Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Actual	Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget*	Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget
Salaries	\$ 49,317	\$ 52,600	\$ 54,600
Fringe and Tax	21,987	22,400	23,800
Indirect Cost Allocation	61,257	58,800	57,900
Mileage	973	1,000	1,500
Office Support	19	1,000	1,000
Printing	3,268	10,000	10,000
Bank Fees	0	1,000	1,000
Legal Services	41	8,000	8,000
Communications Wi-Fi	6,842	7,000	7,000
Contract Services	2,433,627	3,193,400	2,984,300
Equipment	589	10,000	10,000
Outreach	69,996	70,000	70,000
Professional Services	49,155	55,000	55,000
Vehicle Replacements	0	2,933,300	852,048
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,697,071</b>	<b>\$6,423,500</b>	<b>\$4,136,148</b>

\* This budget task was amended after the Commission approved the budget in June 2024.





**Attachment B: VALLEY EXPRESS BUDGET (FY2025-2026)**

<b>TAC/PAC Draft Budget Cost of Service 2025/26 (30,862 hours)</b>		
Overhead: Staff	\$	136,300
Overhead: Other	\$	163,500
Vehicle Replacements	\$	852,048
Contractor	\$	2,984,300
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,136,148</b>
<b>External Revenues</b>		
FTA & CMAQ	\$	1,695,378
State of Good Repair	\$	80,409
SB125	\$	198,774
Projected Farebox	\$	53,000
<b>Total External Revenues</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,027,561</b>
<b>(1) Total Net Due (Less External Revenues)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,108,587</b>
<b>(2) Member Agency Share Overhead</b>		
		<i>% Share Overhead</i>
Fillmore	\$	99,933
Santa Paula	\$	99,933
County	\$	99,933
<b>Subtotal Overhead Costs</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>299,800</b>
<b>(3) Member agency share of Contractor Costs (rounded)</b>		
		<i>% Share of total planned hours (25/26)</i>
Fillmore	\$	651,163
Santa Paula	\$	886,306
County	\$	271,318
<b>Subtotal Contract Costs</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,808,787</b>
<b>Total Costs: Member Agency (Overhead Staff + Other &amp; Contractor Cost)</b>		
Fillmore	\$	751,097
Santa Paula	\$	986,239
County	\$	371,251
<b>Total Costs: Member Agency</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,108,587</b>
<b>Member Agency Available FY23/24 Carryover</b>		
Fillmore	\$	-
Santa Paula	\$	-
County	\$	-
<b>Projected Amount Due to VCTC</b>		
Fillmore	\$	751,097
Santa Paula	\$	986,239
County	\$	371,251



# Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

**DATE:** MAY 14, 2025

**MEMO TO:** HERITAGE VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVPAC)

**FROM:** ERIN KENNEALLY, TRANSIT PLANNER – TRANSIT SERVICES

**SUBJECT:** RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

- Receive and file.

## **BACKGROUND**

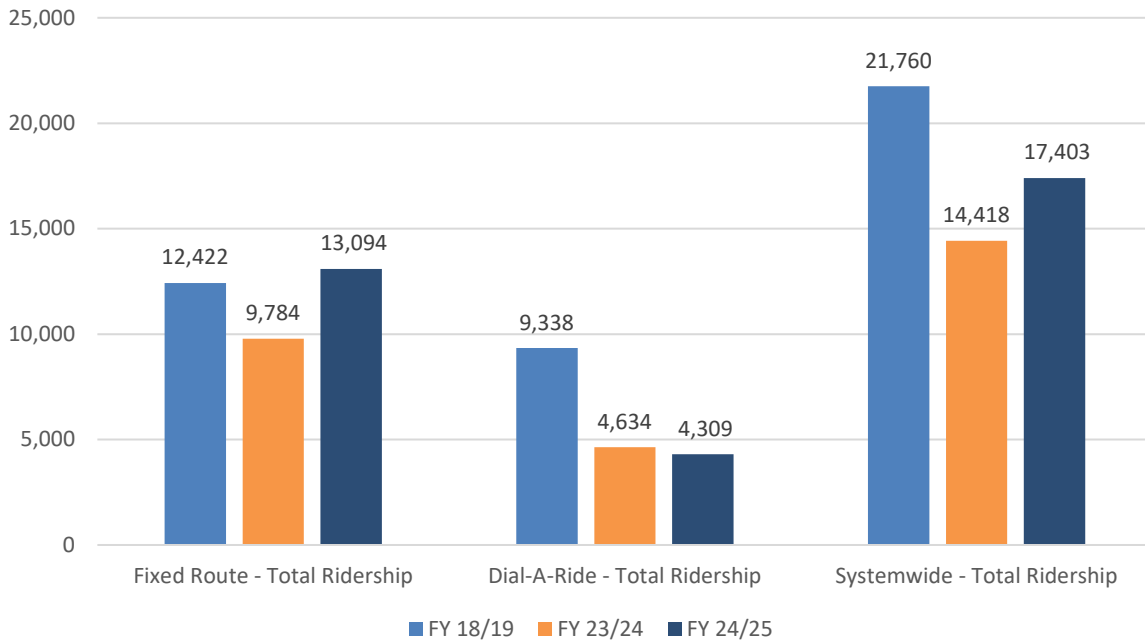
Valley Express service includes four fixed routes serving the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and the unincorporated area of Piru, Dial-A-Ride services for the general public, and complementary ADA paratransit. In August 2024, a fifth fixed route was added to the service connecting the cities of Fillmore and Moorpark.

This report provides a Quarter 3 (January-February-March) comparison between key performance indicators (KPI) in FY 24/25 and previous years. In addition, this report provides an update regarding the recent marketing and outreach activities for Valley Express. Though overall ridership in Q3 increased over the same quarter last year, that was primarily due to an increase in fixed route ridership as Dial-A-Ride saw a decrease this quarter.

### **Key Performance Highlights:**

- The Fillmore-Moorpark Route began on August 1, 2024. It has now completed eight months in service and accounts for 15% of all fixed route ridership.
- This quarter, Valley Express ridership increased by 20% percent to 17,403 passenger trips compared to 14,418 in the same quarter of last year. Fixed route ridership increased by just over 33.8% while Dial-A-Ride ridership decreased by 7%.
- The Piru route currently accounts for nearly 59% of fixed route ridership as well as 44% of systemwide ridership. It is currently at 91% of pre-COVID ridership and has seen the most ridership recovery.
- DAR ridership is currently at 46% of our pre-COVID numbers while fixed route ridership has exceeded our pre-COVID numbers and is currently at 105%. This is primarily due to the addition of the Fillmore-Moorpark route. Without that route it would be at 90%.
- Although Dial-A-Ride ridership has decreased when compared to last year, it has seen a significant increase over last quarter (46%). We attribute this increase to the new RideCo software which has made scheduling both passengers and drivers more efficient.

## Valley Express Ridership THIRD QUARTER COMPARISON



### Quarterly Ridership Comparison by Route

#### THIRD QUARTER COMPARISON (Jan-Feb-Mar)

Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride	FY 18/19	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	% Change from FY 23/24	% Change from FY 18/19
Santa Paula Fixed Route	851	471	492	4.5%	-42.2%
Santa Paula Tripper	355	72	78	8.3%	-78.0%
Fillmore Fixed Route	466	662	805	21.6%	72.7%
Fillmore Tripper	2,348	1,370	2,069	51.0%	-11.9%
Fillmore-Moorpark Route*	n/a	n/a	1,964	n/a	n/a
Piru Fixed Route	8,402	7,209	7,686	6.6%	-8.5%
<b>Fixed Route Total</b>	<b>12,422</b>	<b>9,784</b>	<b>13,094</b>	<b>33.8%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
Santa Paula DAR	6,740	3,682	3,704	0.6%	-45.0%
Fillmore DAR	2,598	952	605	-36.4%	-76.7%
<b>Dial-A-Ride Total</b>	<b>9,338</b>	<b>4,634</b>	<b>4,309</b>	<b>-7.0%</b>	<b>-53.9%</b>
<b>Valley Express Bus &amp; Dial-A-Ride Total</b>	<b>21,760</b>	<b>14,418</b>	<b>17,403</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>-20.0%</b>

\*Fillmore-Moorpark route launched August 1, 2024

#### Valley Express

#### FY 24/25 Previous Quarters

	Q1 (Jul/Aug/Sep)	Q2 (Oct/Nov/Dec)	Q3 (Jan/Feb/Mar)	Change over Q2
<b>Fixed Route - Total Ridership</b>	11,553	12,404	13,094	6%
<b>Dial-A-Ride - Total Ridership</b>	3,632	3,164	4,309	36%
<b>Systemwide - Total Ridership</b>	15,185	15,568	17,403	12%

Detailed Quarterly comparisons system-wide and for fixed route service and DAR service are shown in the following Tables 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1 System-wide Quarterly Comparison**

<b>SYSTEM-WIDE SERVICE - Valley Express KPI</b>		<b>Qtr 3 FY 2023/24</b>	<b>Qtr 3 FY 2024/25</b>	<b>Yr over Yr % Change</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	System-wide	14,418	17,403	<b>21%</b>
<b>Passengers per Mile</b>	System-wide	0.27	0.25	<b>-8%</b>
<b>Passengers per Hr</b>	System-wide	2.55	2.88	<b>13%</b>
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	System-wide	5,648	6,040	<b>7%</b>
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	System-wide	52,742	68,865	<b>31%</b>
<b>Operating Cost</b>	System-wide	\$ 594,099	\$ 627,010	<b>6%</b>
<b>Cost per Hr</b>	System-wide	\$ 105.19	\$ 103.81	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Cost per Passenger</b>	System-wide	\$ 41.21	\$ 36.03	<b>-13%</b>

**Table 2 Fixed Route Quarterly Comparison**

<b>FIXED ROUTE - Valley Express KPI</b>		<b>Qtr 3 FY 2023/24</b>	<b>Qtr 3 FY 2024/25</b>	<b>Yr over Yr % Change</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	Fixed Route	9,784	13,094	<b>34%</b>
<b>Passengers per Mile</b>	Fixed Route	0.33	0.26	<b>-22%</b>
<b>Passengers per Hr</b>	Fixed Route	6.00	4.54	<b>-24%</b>
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	Fixed Route	1,632	2,883	<b>77%</b>
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	Fixed Route	29,637	50,572	<b>71%</b>
<b>Operating Cost</b>	Fixed Route	\$ 168,569	\$ 298,009	<b>77%</b>
<b>Cost per Hr</b>	Fixed Route	\$ 103.29	\$ 103.38	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Cost per Passenger</b>	Fixed Route	\$ 17.23	\$ 22.76	<b>32%</b>

The large increase in Revenue Hours and Miles is due to the addition of the Fillmore-Moorpark route.

**Table 3 Dial-A-Ride Quarterly Comparison**

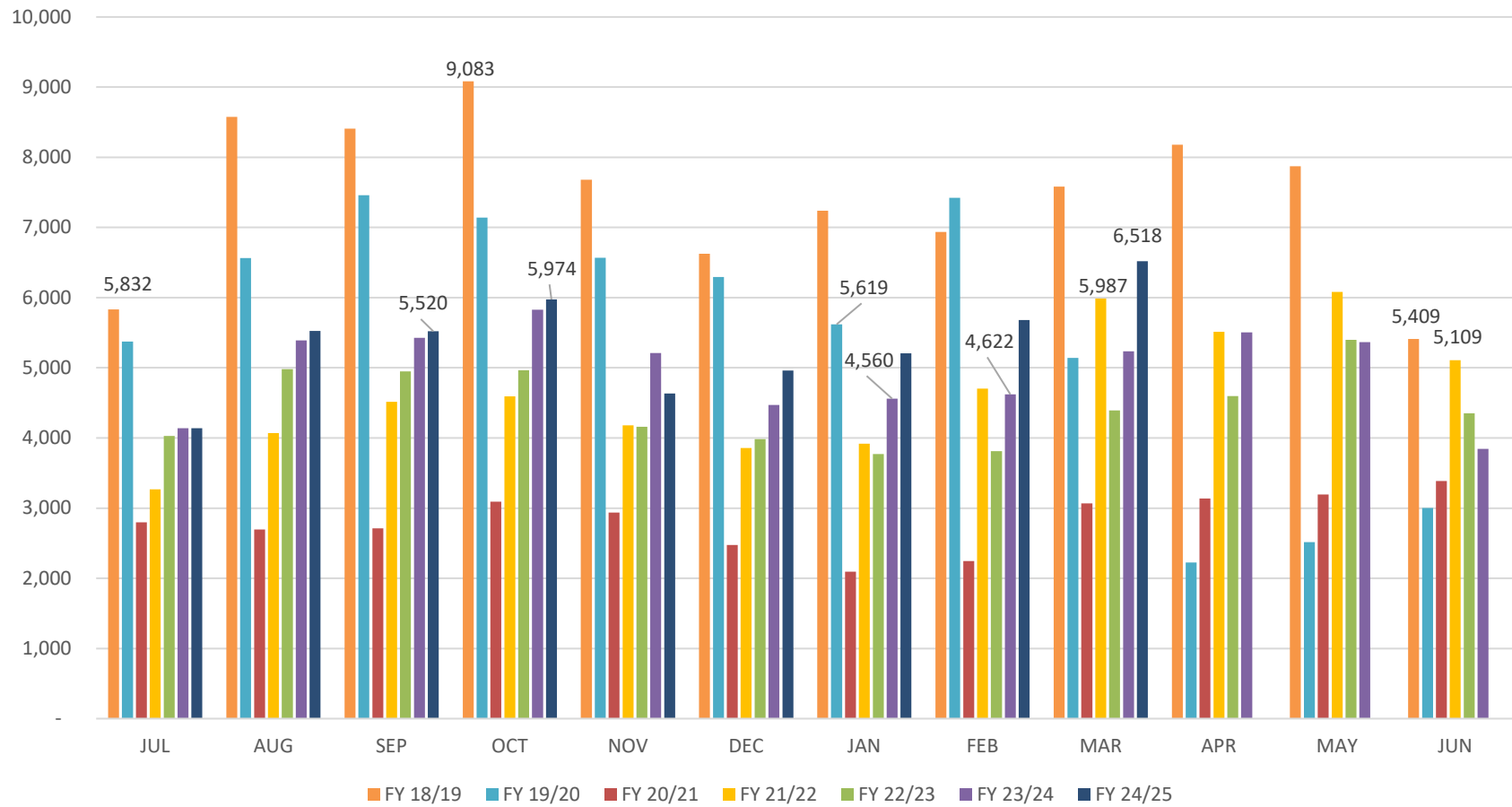
<b>DIAL-A-RIDE (DAR) - Valley Express KPI</b>		<b>Qtr 3 FY 2023/24</b>	<b>Qtr 3 FY 2024/25</b>	<b>Yr over Yr % Change</b>
<b>Ridership</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	4,634	4,309	<b>-7%</b>
<b>Passengers per Mile</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	0.20	0.24	<b>17%</b>
<b>Passengers per Hr</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	1.15	1.36	<b>18%</b>
<b>Revenue Hours</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	4,016	3,158	<b>-21%</b>
<b>Revenue Miles</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	23,105	18,293	<b>-21%</b>
<b>Operating Cost</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 425,530	\$ 329,000	<b>-23%</b>
<b>Cost per Hr</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 105.96	\$ 104.20	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Cost per Passenger</b>	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 91.83	\$ 76.35	<b>-17%</b>

#### **RideCo Update**

Currently, an average of 31% of all rides are shared with an on-time performance score of 97%. Passengers per mile and passengers per hour have both increased while cost per passenger has decreased 17% when compared to the same quarter last year. Our drivers have an average rating of 4.9 stars out of five.

Valley Express Total Monthly Ridership FY 18/19 to present.

### Valley Express Total Monthly Ridership



#### MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Celtis Ventures, Inc., continues to assist us in promoting the Valley Express service within the Heritage Valley. Celtis is currently working on general service promotion as well as making sure all new vehicles have the appropriate decals displayed inside.

In April, staff attended a youth travel training session at the One Step A La Vez teen center. We attended the Santa Paula Wellness Fair on Wednesday, May 7, where we once again provided courtesy shuttle service.



# Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 8

**DATE:** MAY 14, 2025

**MEMO TO:** HERITAGE VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVPAC)

**FROM:** ERIN KENNEALLY, TRANSIT PLANNER – TRANSIT SERVICES

**SUBJECT:** VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ PROJECT APPLICATION

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- Approve VCTC staff submitting CMAQ application for Valley Express fixed route expansion.
- Approve VCTC staff submitting AHSC application for Fillmore fixed route expansion.

## **BACKGROUND**

For the last year, VCTC staff have been working with the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) consultant to develop recommendations to improve services and efficiency, increase transit use, and strengthen the long-term sustainability of the Valley Express service. While studying the Valley Express service, staff found that the Santa Paula A & B fixed-route service was not attractive due to its limited availability. For the fixed route to be an attractive modal option and used more, it must be a practical alternative, which is not in its current form.

Among some of the recommendations are to add all-day service (more trips) on the Santa Paula A & B fixed routes as well as extend service on the Fillmore route past 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and add weekend service. In essence, the goal is to create a fixed-route transit service that is the backbone of transit service in the Heritage Valley with paratransit, senior dial-ride and general public dial-a-ride supplementing the fixed-route service. This will help the service to be more financially sustainable, easier to project costs and is the typical way transit networks are designed to serve more passengers.

A strategic reinvestment and restructuring of fixed route service will improve coverage and consistency of service in each community as well as greatly benefit useability.

While there are many details to be worked out regarding the service expansion including route path determination and operator/vehicle demands, VCTC staff are recommending applying for CMAQ funds now to support this since the call is for projects in years FY 26-27 and FY 27-28. Additionally, there is an opportunity to apply for some of the service span cost increases through the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program.

Currently, the Santa Paula routes A and B operate seven trips on weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and six trips on weekends from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Santa Paula Tripper operates once a day during school days starting at 7:00 a.m. The Fillmore route operates weekdays only from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We are proposing increasing service in Santa Paula to eighteen weekday trips with a service span of 6:15 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and increasing weekend service to ten trips, 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. We will also add an afternoon trip on the school tripper to coordinate with the afternoon bell schedules. In Fillmore we are proposing three additional weekday trips so that service ends at 7:45 p.m. This will allow the route to better align with the Fillmore-Moorpark and Piru routes. We would also add five weekend trips (8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.). This would be a 40% increase to existing fixed route service.



Though there are many details of this potential service that need to be finalized, if this project is not submitted in this call, the expansion will have to be fully funded by the appropriate jurisdictions unless another funding opportunity becomes available. The next CMAQ call for projects is not scheduled until 2027. Even with many items to be determined, staff feels we have enough information to submit an application. We propose requesting \$1,319,933 which should be enough to cover three years of expanded services.

All federal funds, including CMAQ, must include an 11.47% match in non-federal funds. It is expected that the match for the CMAQ grant would be paid by the jurisdictions who benefit from the service, proportionately to the amount of service they have. The local match amount would be \$151,396. The split between jurisdictions is provided below.

Jurisdiction	Percentage of Service	Share of local match
Santa Paula	51%	\$77,266
Fillmore	36%	\$54,275
County	13%	\$19,855

Last week, Many Mansions approached VCTC about a potential collaboration on transit projects that could be included in their application to the Strategic Growth Council's AHSC Round 9 program. After meeting with them it was determined that the planned Fillmore route expansion would meet the requirements for inclusion in their application. Final funding costs are still being determined but the funding will be for 10 years and there is no local match. The final funding request will be communicated to the HVPAC.

VCTC has determined that the best course of action is to include the project in both the CMAQ and AHSC applications in order to optimize the opportunity to secure funding. If both projects are funded, we would accept only the portion of the CMAQ funds slated for the Santa Paula expansion. The balance would be reallocated to other projects and the local match shares would decrease accordingly.



# Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

ITEM 9

**DATE:** MAY 14, 2025  
**MEMO TO:** HERITAGE VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVPAC)  
**FROM:** MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

## **BACKGROUND**

VCTC, on behalf of Valley Express, received CMAQ funding for a complete fleet replacement.

The Valley Express fleet vehicles have met the end of their useful life benchmark and will be replaced in the fiscal year 2024-25 and 2025-26. The current fleet vehicles were purchased in 2015 and consist of five 12 passenger cutaway buses, five 16 passenger cutaways buses, and five 26 passenger low-floor cutaway buses.

## **DISCUSSION**

The FY 2024/2025 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 planned for the replacement of these vehicles, we were focused on passenger accessibility, ease of boarding for all passengers, and operational efficiency. As such, five Promaster Braunability (8 passenger + 2 wheelchair position) vans have been introduced into the fleet that are equipped with ramps. These vans will be used to replace five of the 12 passenger cutaway buses. All five of these have now been delivered with graphics installed. Next steps include validating that all onboard technology has been installed and working correctly and that all factory defects have been repaired by the supplier. All five will be in service by the end of May.

Regarding the other 10 cutaway buses, these will be replaced with six Glaval 14 passenger cutaways with wheelchair lifts and four ARBOC cutaways that seat 24 passengers and are equipped with ramps.

The six 14 passenger Glaval cutaways were delivered on April 29<sup>th</sup> with graphics installed. The next steps are to inspect the vehicles for defects and to install and validate all onboard technology items. Staff estimates that the vehicles will be in service in June. Photos of the vehicles are included below.

Lastly, the four 24 passenger ARBOC cutaways are on schedule to be delivered in October of this year. Once delivered, VCTC and MV staff will inspect the vehicles for defects, manage repairs with the supplier, install all onboard technology items and prepare them for service.

#### 14 Passenger Glaval Cutaway





