



VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Heritage Valley Technical Advisory Committee (HVTAC)
www.goventura.org | www.valleyexpressbus.org
Santa Paula City Council Chambers
970 Ventura Street, Santa Paula
Thursday, September 18, 2025
1:00 p.m.

AGENDA

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

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 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 UPDATE ON SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Recommended Action:

- Receive and file

Responsible Staff: Claire Grasty

ITEM 7 RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT

Recommended Action:

- Receive and file

Responsible Staff: Erin Kenneally

ITEM 8 UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES & ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE TRANSITION PLANNING

Recommended Action:

- Receive and file

Responsible Staff: Matt Miller

ITEM 9 REGIONAL TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY UPDATE & APPROVE CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS FOR DEMAND RESPONSE TRIPS

Recommended Action:

- Approve activating credit card payment acceptance through the Valley Express Transit & Dial-A-Ride app for demand response services

Responsible Staff: Matt Miller

ITEM 10 ADJOURNMENT



Valley Express
Bus & Dial-A-Ride



VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Heritage Valley Technical Advisory Committee (HVTAC)
www.goventura.org | www.valleyexpressbus.org
Fillmore City Council Chambers
250 Central Street, Fillmore
Monday, May 5, 2025
1:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susanna Arroyo, County of Ventura (Vice Chair)
Dale Goodman, City of Santa Paula
Veronica Hurtado, MV Transportation

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

- ITEM 1 CALL TO ORDER**
Vice Chair Arroyo called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.
- ITEM 2 INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Claire Grasty announced Cecilia Perez as the new Administrative Assistant at VCTC.
- ITEM 3 PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**
- ITEM 4 AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None**
- ITEM 5 ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
The committee accepted the minutes from the March meeting.
- ITEM 6 VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ PROJECT APPLICATION**
Erin Kenneally updated the committee on the Short Range Transit Plan recommendation for increase to Valley Express fixed route service and she proposed that VCTC apply for CMAQ funds for this project. Claire added that it would be wise to apply at this time. Erin stated that a letter of support would be helpful and is due on May16th.

Action:

Motion to approve by Dale Goodman. Seconded by Susanna Arroyo.
Motion passed.

- ITEM 7 FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 VALLEY EXPRESS FINAL BUDGET**
Matt Miller noted two changes to the draft budget, adjusted hours on Fillmore to Moorpark route and corrected a formula which changed the contractor costs. Claire updated the committee in regard to MV's request to review wages and will be working with them for potential contract changes in the future.

Action:

Motion to approve by Dale Goodman, seconded by Susanna Arroyo

Motion passed.

- ITEM 8 RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**
Erin Kenneally updated the committee on the Valley Express Transit Service ridership and outreach report. Chart was provided that shows comparisons by route. Celtis continues to help with service promotion and making sure all vehicles have appropriate decals. Staff will attend the upcoming Santa Paula Wellness Fair and there will be courtesy shuttle service.

- ITEM 9 UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES**
Matt Miller provided an update on replacement vehicles and stated that 9 out of 15 replacement vehicles have been received. One vehicle is on site for members to see after this meeting. Goal is to have the remaining vehicles in service by June 1st.

- ITEM 10 ADJOURNMENT**
Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

ITEM 7

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2025
MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)
FROM: ERIN KENNEALLY, TRANSIT PLANNER – TRANSIT SERVICES
SUBJECT: RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

- Receive and file.

BACKGROUND

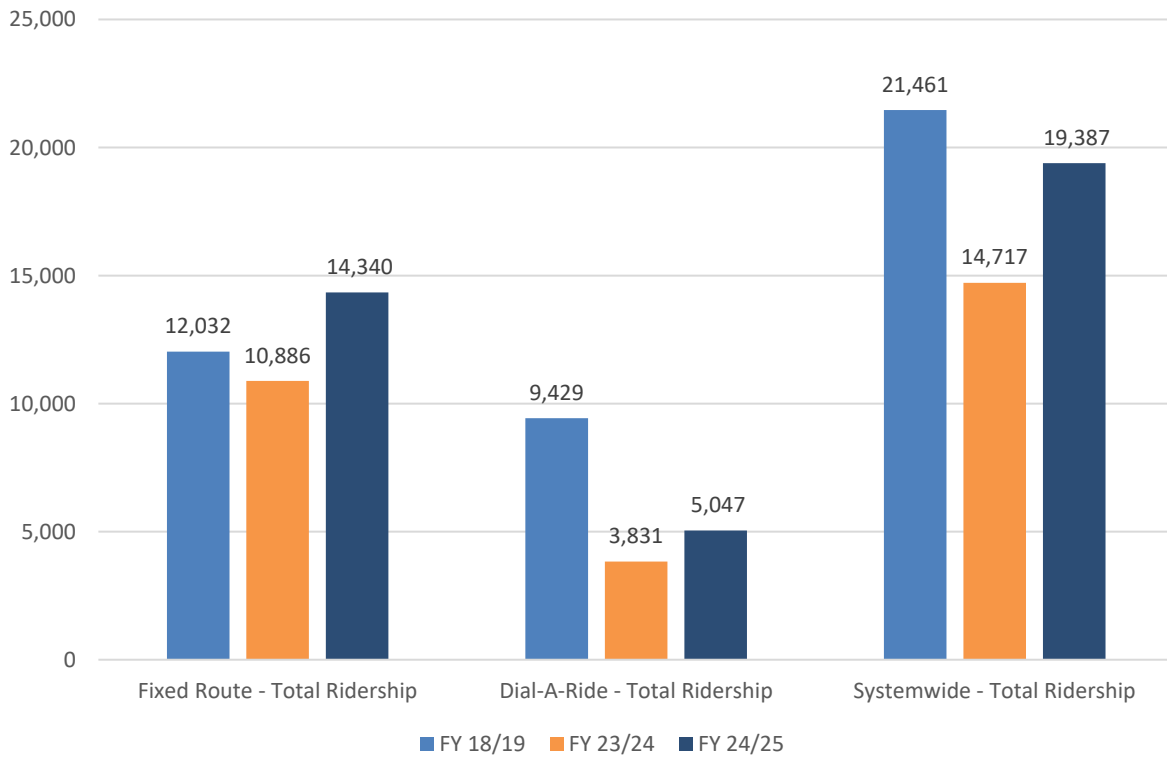
Valley Express service includes five fixed routes, dial-a-ride (DAR) services for the general public, and complementary ADA paratransit serving the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and the unincorporated area of Piru. In August 2024, the fifth fixed route was added to the service connecting the cities of Fillmore and Moorpark.

This report provides a Quarter 4 (April-May-June) comparison between key performance indicators (KPI) in FY 2024-25 and previous years as well as an annual comparison. In addition, this report provides an update regarding the recent marketing and outreach activities for Valley Express. Ridership in Q4 increased significantly on both services over the same quarter last year, due primarily to the new Fillmore-Moorpark Route.

Key Performance Highlights:

- The Fillmore-Moorpark Route began on August 1, 2024. It has now completed its first year in service and consistently accounts for 15% of all fixed route ridership.
- This quarter, Valley Express ridership increased by nearly 32% to 19,387 passenger trips compared to 14,717 in the same quarter of last year.
- Annually, the Piru route currently accounts for nearly two-thirds of fixed route ridership as well as 46% of systemwide ridership. It is currently at 94% of pre-COVID ridership.
- DAR ridership is currently at 44% of pre-COVID numbers. While fixed route ridership exceeded pre-COVID numbers for Q4 (119%), this is primarily due to the addition of the Fillmore-Moorpark route. Without that route it would be at a strong 98%.
- Although DAR ridership has decreased by 13.5% annually, it has seen a significant increase of 31.7% when compared to Q4 of last year. We attribute this increase to the new RideCo software which has made scheduling both passengers and drivers more efficient, which helps to increase capacity.

Valley Express Ridership FOURTH QUARTER COMPARISSON



Quarterly Ridership Comparison by Route

FOURTH QUARTER COMPARISON (April-May-June)

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	874	531	435	-18.1%	-50.2%
Santa Paula Tripper*	229	51	78	52.9%	-65.9%
Fillmore Fixed Route	749	820	1,163	41.8%	55.3%
Fillmore Tripper*	2,327	1,754	1,733	-1.2%	-25.5%
Fillmore-Moorpark Route	n/a	n/a	2,581	n/a	n/a
Piru Fixed Route	7,853	7,730	8,350	8.0%	6.3%
Fixed Route Total	12,032	10,886	14,340	31.7%	19.2%
Santa Paula DAR	6,872	3,030	4,313	42.3%	-37.2%
Fillmore DAR	2,557	801	734	-8.4%	-71.3%
Dial-A-Ride Total	9,429	3,831	5,047	31.7%	-46.5%
Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride Total	21,461	14,717	19,387	31.7%	-9.7%

*Fillmore-Moorpark route launched August 1, 2024

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

SYSTEM-WIDE SERVICE - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 4 FY 2023/24	Qtr 4 FY 2024/25	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	System-wide	14,717	19,387	32%
Passengers per Mile	System-wide	0.29	0.30	3%
Passengers per Hr	System-wide	3.00	3.16	5%
Revenue Hours	System-wide	4,902	6,131	25%
Revenue Miles	System-wide	50,546	64,916	28%
Operating Cost	System-wide	\$ 547,589	\$ 635,854	16%
Cost per Hr	System-wide	\$ 111.71	\$ 103.72	-7%
Cost per Passenger	System-wide	\$ 37.21	\$ 32.80	-12%

Table 2 Fixed Route Quarterly Comparison

FIXED ROUTE - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 4 FY 2023/24	Qtr 4 FY 2024/25	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Fixed Route	10,886	14,340	32%
Passengers per Mile	Fixed Route	0.37	0.28	-23%
Passengers per Hr	Fixed Route	6.69	4.97	-26%
Revenue Hours	Fixed Route	1,626	2,885	77%
Revenue Miles	Fixed Route	29,572	50,773	72%
Operating Cost	Fixed Route	\$ 181,054	\$ 299,032	65%
Cost per Hr	Fixed Route	\$ 111.35	\$ 103.66	-7%
Cost per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$ 16.63	\$ 20.85	25%

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

DIAL-A-RIDE (DAR) - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 4 FY 2023/24	Qtr 4 FY 2024/25	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	3,831	5,047	32%
Passengers per Mile	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	0.18	0.36	95%
Passengers per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	1.17	1.55	33%
Revenue Hours	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	3,276	3,246	-1%
Revenue Miles	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	20,974	14,142	-33%
Operating Cost	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 366,536	\$ 336,822	-8%
Cost per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 111.89	\$ 103.77	-7%
Cost per Passenger	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 95.68	\$ 66.74	-30%

RideCo Update

We are approaching the 1-year anniversary of launching the RideCo system. In a Q4 comparison, passengers per hour increased 33% and cost per passenger decreased 30%. By streamlining pick-ups and drop-offs, our revenue miles have also decreased 33%. Operating costs for Dial-A-Ride have decreased 24% annually despite increased contract costs. The average trip rating in the last 90 days is 4.9 stars, illustrating the outstanding service our operators offer and deliver.

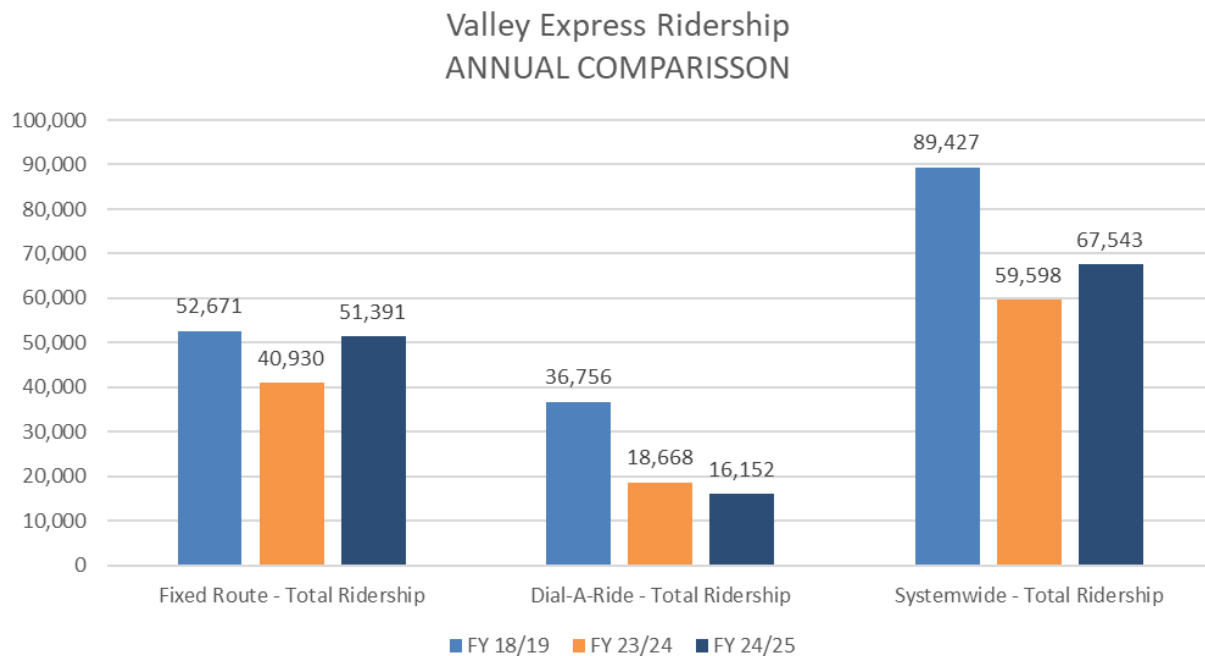
Fillmore-Moorpark Route

The Fillmore-Moorpark route just completed its first year in service. It annually accounts for 15% of fixed route ridership. Nearly three quarters of those rides were taken by youth and students, 61% were taken by college students and another 13% by riders under 18. Over 8,200 rides were taken in the first year.

Youth and College Ride

In FY 2024-25 Valley Express provided over 30,000 rides to youth and college students. Those rides accounted for 45% of all Valley Express ridership. The free fare programs have provided over 66,000 rides on Valley Express to the Heritage Valley community since their launch.

Annual Comparison



ANNUAL COMPARISON

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	4,821	1,987	2,135	7.4%	-55.7%
Santa Paula Tripper*	1,143	362	311	-14.1%	-72.8%
Fillmore Fixed Route	6,004	2,432	3,925	61.4%	-34.6%
Fillmore Tripper*	7,829	5,867	6,375	8.7%	-18.6%
Fillmore-Moorpark Route	n/a	n/a	7,787	n/a	n/a
Piru Fixed Route	32,874	30,282	30,858	1.9%	-6.1%
Fixed Route Total	52,671	40,930	51,391	25.6%	-2.4%
Santa Paula DAR	26,930	14,738	13,446	-8.8%	-50.1%
Fillmore DAR	9,826	3,930	2,706	-31.1%	-72.5%
Dial-A-Ride Total	36,756	18,668	16,152	-13.5%	-56.1%
Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride Total	89,427	59,598	67,543	13.3%	-24.5%

A detailed annual comparison system-wide is shown in the following table.

System-wide Annual Comparison

SYSTEM-WIDE SERVICE - Valley Express KPI		FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	System-wide	59,598	67,543	13%
Passengers per Mile	System-wide	0.27	0.25	-9%
Passengers per Hr	System-wide	2.66	2.94	10%
Revenue Hours	System-wide	22,366	22,980	3%
Revenue Miles	System-wide	217,775	270,403	24%
Operating Cost	Fixed Route	\$ 684,741	\$ 1,171,665	71%
Operating Cost	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 1,684,813	\$ 1,275,358	-24%
Operating Cost	System-wide	\$ 2,369,554	\$ 2,447,023	3%
Cost per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$ 17	\$ 23	36%
Cost per Passenger	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 90.25	\$ 78.96	-13%
Cost per Passenger	System-wide	\$ 39.76	\$ 36.23	-9%
Farebox Revenue	System-wide	\$ 71,971	\$ 68,924	-4%
Fare Revenue per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$ 1.06	\$ 0.91	-14%
Fare Revenue per Passenger	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 1.53	\$ 1.37	-11%
Fare Revenue per Passenger	System-wide	\$ 1.21	\$ 1.02	-15%

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 an update of the Valley Express bus book. The update will include easier to read schedules and maps as well as updated information about using RideCo to book a Dial-A-Ride trip.

We will be attending the Ventura College Community Resource Fair at the Santa Paula campus in early October.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

ITEM 8

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CMAQ FUNDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES & ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE TRANSITION PLANNING

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 original Valley Express fleet vehicles met the end of their useful life benchmark and are being replaced. In FY 2024-25, 11 of 15 vehicles were replaced. In FY 2025-26, the remaining four will be replaced. The original fleet vehicles were purchased in 2015 and consisted of five 12 passenger cutaway buses, five 16 passenger cutaways buses, and five 26 passenger low-floor cutaway buses.

DISCUSSION

The FY 2025-26 Valley Express budget includes a total of \$852,048 in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5339 capital grant funds, State of Good Repair (SGR) grant funds, local match and SB 125 to purchase four replacement vehicles. As stated above, the original fleet was 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, last fiscal year, five Promaster Braunability (8 passenger + 2 wheelchair position) vans that are equipped with ramps were introduced into the fleet. These vans were used to replace five of the original 12 passenger cutaway buses. All five vans were placed into revenue service in June 2025. These vans have a useful FTA life benchmark of five years.

Next, six Glavel 22 foot 14-passenger cutaways with wheelchair lifts were received and placed into service in June 2025. These 14-passenger vehicles make up the bulk of our fleet and were chosen due to their ability to be used as both fixed route and DAR vehicles. These cutaways have a FTA useful life benchmark of seven years.

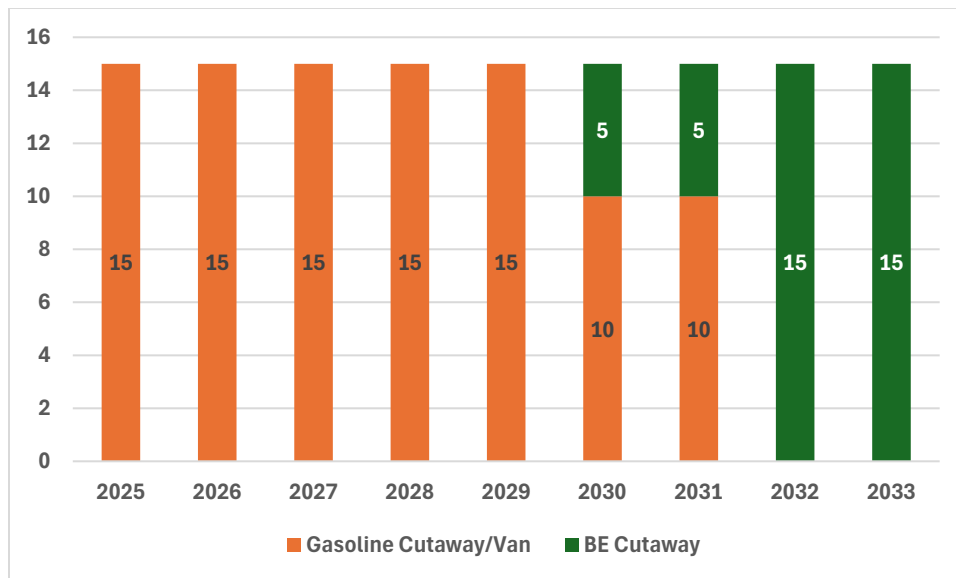
The remaining four vehicles will be replaced with four 24-passenger ARBOC cutaways that are scheduled to be delivered in October of this year. Once delivered, VCTC and MV staff will inspect the vehicles for defects, manage defects with the supplier, install all onboard technology items and prepare them for service within six-weeks of delivery. These cutaways also have a FTA useful life benchmark of seven years.

Once the remaining four vehicles are delivered and accepted, VCTC staff will begin the process of retiring the original fleet which includes removing reusable equipment and sending the vehicles to auction. Once sold, any proceeds will be returned to the Valley Express budget for use where appropriate.

Zero-Emissions Vehicle Transition

The California Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) rule requires all public transit providers to transition to zero-emissions vehicle technology by 2030 and stipulated that all transit agencies submit a zero-emissions bus transition plan to California Air Resources Board (CARB). In May 2023, VCTC, with assistance from Stantec Consulting, submitted the transition plan recommending that Valley Express transition its vehicles to battery-electric.

The table below displays the recommended fleet acquisition schedule for Valley Express vehicles based on our recent fleet procurement. This plan was developed by accounting for fossil fuel vehicle retirement and the ICT purchase requirement. The acquisition schedule assumes the first purchase for Battery Electric vehicles in 2030.



Now that the replacement of the original Valley Express bus fleet is mostly complete, it is time to begin planning for the battery-electric transition which needs to include planning for charging infrastructure. Discussions about charging locations have taken place at previous HVTAC meetings with little progress being made. Ideas that previous TAC members have presented include partnering with the school districts to share charging infrastructure, partnering with private companies like Fillmore Area Transit Company (FATCO) and partnering with the City of Santa Paula to develop a city owned parcel that could include charging infrastructure and a maintenance and operations building. Additionally, ideas about installing charging infrastructure at Valley Express' current facility have been discussed but were considered infeasible due to the facility being leased and not wanting public funds invested on a property that the member jurisdictions do not own.

The ideas presented are a good start to the planning process and staff will begin outreach efforts to obtain more information and assess the feasibility of partnering with other entities. However, it is critical that staff also receive input from the TAC on other possible solutions and support while assessing the feasibility of those solutions.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 9

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: REGIONAL TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY UPDATE & APPROVE CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS FOR DEMAND RESPONSE TRIPS

RECOMMENDATION

- Receive and file an update on regional transit technology projects implemented on the Valley Express service.
- Approve activating credit card payment acceptance through the Valley Express Transit & Dial-A-Ride app for demand response services.

BACKGROUND

Valley Express Transit has been a recipient of several regional transit technology initiatives led by VCTC. VCTC's Regional Transit Technology program assists agencies with modernizing their transit fleets and coordinates and manages regional transit technology projects. Currently, three of four major transit technology projects are underway across the county and at Valley Express.

DISCUSSION

Real Time Bus Arrival Information – Rider Tools & Apps

In 2019, VCTC implemented an Automatic Vehicle Location system across all fixed-route transit buses in the county including Valley Express vehicles. The system produces live vehicle positions and schedule information for the Valley Express routes. The live data and schedule information allows riders to use apps like GOVCbus, Google Maps or Transit app to see where their bus is and/or when the next one will be arriving in real time.

Most of the new Valley Express buses have been outfitted with the newest system and equipment and our contractor, MV, is assisting us with making sure bus drivers are signing into the system so that the public can use the apps for trip planning.

VCbuspass – Closed Loop Account Based Fare Payment System

In 2021, VCTC launched VCbuspass contactless fare payment system across all transit buses in the County, including Valley Express. VCbuspass allows passengers to load money or monthly passes onto a tap card or app to pay their transit fare. Contactless payment systems speed up boarding time and reduce fare collection costs.

VCbuspass is available on all Valley Express fixed routes and on the dial-a-ride vehicles. When a passenger pays for their fare with VCbuspass, a free transfer is automatically placed on their card which they can tap on another agency vehicle within 2 hours of the first trip.

In 2026, the system will be used for the College Ride program to get ridership by school to determine costs for the programs by school.

Demand Response Scheduling System & Rider App

In 2024, VCTC procured a new demand response (Paratransit, Senior Dial-a-Ride, General Purpose Dial-a-Ride) scheduling and dispatching system on behalf of all transit operators in Ventura County. Valley Express was among the first Ventura County agencies to launch the new system which featured new tools for reservationists and dispatchers to use to manage operations in real time. Since implementing the new system, passengers per hour and on-time performance have both increased.

The system also came with a public facing app that passengers can use to book and pay for their paratransit, senior dial-a-ride or general-purpose dial-a-ride trips. The app also allows passengers to receive real time vehicle updates, so they always know where their vehicles are and when their ride is scheduled to arrive at their pickup location.

One feature of the system that staff is recommending be activated is allowing passengers to pay for their trips using a credit/debit card through the Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride App. Allowing passengers to choose to pay their fares this way can lead to easier and quicker boarding times, improve on-time performance, and faster travel times for all users of the system. This feature also allows passengers to securely save the card information so that it can be used for future trips without having to reenter their card information.

Tap2Ride – Open Credit & Debit Card Fare Payment System – COMING SOON

Tap2Ride is the latest regional transit technology improvement that will be implemented on Valley Express fixed-route vehicles. Tap2Ride is a contactless fare collection system that allows passengers to pay their fares with a credit/debit card or digital wallet on their phone or watch. The system also allows passengers to use Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay to pay for fares.



The system will have reduced fares for disabled passengers, seniors 65+ and veterans matching what Valley Express currently offers. The system will also be able to offer discounts like fare capping which will “cap” a passenger’s fare within a given period. For example, if there is a daily fare cap of \$4, a passenger will never pay more than \$4 in a day to use transit for the whole day.

The benefits of Tap2Ride are that it makes it easier to use transit by removing the “how to pay” barrier that may prevent would be riders from taking a trip on transit. The system will also speed up boarding and offer a familiar retail payment experience. There are also more opportunities to increase ridership and provide a seamless transit travel experience in the Heritage Valley, through Ventura County and to other counties like Santa Barbara whose buses are also outfitted with a credit/debit card payment system.