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**VCTC Executive Director Martin Erickson named California Transit Association's
Transit Professional of the Year**

Martin Erickson, executive director of the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), has been named Transit Professional of the Year by the California Transit Association's Small Operators Committee.

The committee presented the award to Erickson on Nov. 5, during the association's 60th annual Fall Conference & Expo in Long Beach. CTA is an advocacy organization for public transit, with more than 200 member organizations across the state, including VCTC.

Erickson was recognized for his leadership and oversight as VCTC implemented programs to simplify and improve the transit experience for passengers. In June, the agency launched Tap2Ride, a contactless payment system that allows VCTC Intercity passengers to pay fares using contactless debit and credit cards, mobile wallets and smart watches. Also this year, VCTC added several new Intercity buses with features to improve accessibility and safety for people with disabilities.

Erickson has been instrumental in the success of VCTC's free-fare programs, including Youth Ride Free and College Ride. Since 2018, these two programs have provided more than 5 million free rides to college students and youths 18 and younger across Ventura County, connecting younger riders to education, jobs, recreation and social activities.

In addition, Erickson has helped expand VCTC's role in emergency response in Ventura County. After the Thomas Fire and Montecito debris flow disrupted travel in January 2018, Erickson and several regional agencies collaborated to create the Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plan (TEPP). VCTC now holds a seat in the Ventura County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Center, and just in the past year, VCTC Intercity buses have helped residents evacuate during wildfires and transported passengers to safety after rail incidents.

“On behalf of the Commission, I would like to congratulate Martin on being named Transit Professional of the Year. Every day, through his work at VCTC and through partnerships with Ventura County’s other operators, Martin demonstrates his commitment to improving public transit for everyone,” said VCTC Chair and Simi Valley Mayor Pro Tem Mike Judge.

“I am deeply honored to receive this award from the California Transit Association, and I’m grateful to my Commission and amazing staff for what VCTC has accomplished to improve transit throughout Ventura County,” Erickson said.

About the Ventura County Transportation Commission

The Ventura County Transportation Commission is the regional transportation planning agency committed to keeping Ventura County moving. Program information is available at goventura.org.

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