



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, CA
Friday, January 16, 2026
9:30 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 VALLEY EXPRESS TRANSIT REDUCED FARES FOR U.S. MILITARY VETERANS

- Approve U.S. Military Veterans reduced fares on Valley Express Transit Service

Responsible Staff: Matt Miller, Program Manager

ITEM 7 ZERO EMISSIONS VEHICLE TRANSITION PLANNING UPDATE

- Consider approval of retaining consultant support to assist with transitioning to zero emission buses

Responsible Staff: Matt Miller, Program Manager

ITEM 8 UPDATE ON VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ APPLICATION

- Receive and file

Responsible Staff: Erin Kenneally, Transit Planner

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- ITEM 9 RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**
- Receive and file
- Responsible Staff: Erin Kenneally, Transit Planner**
- ITEM 10 SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN AND DEMAND RESPONSE
INTEGRATION PLAN UPDATE**
- Verbal update
- Responsible Staff: Claire Grasty, Director of Public Transit**
- ITEM 11 ADJOURNMENT**



Valley Express
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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.

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Georgie Gerardo, City of Fillmore (Chair)
Susanna Arroyo, County of Ventura (Vice-Chair)
Dale Goodman, City of Santa Paula
Thomas Conlon, MV Transit
Veronica Hurtado, MV Transportation
Teresa Torres, MV Transportation

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Gerardo called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
2. **INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS** - None
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None
4. **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS** - None
5. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES** – The Committee accepted the May 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes.
6. **UPDATE ON SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN**
Claire announced that there have been presentations on the Short Range Transit Plan in Santa Paula and Fillmore. Currently scheduling three more outreach meetings, one virtual, one in Fillmore and Camarillo. Website will be updated with current and updated bus stops, maps, and social media updates.
7. **RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**
Erin Kenneally gave an update on Valley Express Quarter 4 comparison, annual comparison, some highlights on ridership and possible fare increases. Bus maps are being revised to match intercity along with some other marketing updates and VCTC will be attending the Ventura College community resource fair at the Santa Paula campus in October.

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

Matt Miller gave an update on replacement vehicles. Eleven of fifteen vehicles have been replaced and four are in the process of being completed and projected to be delivered in mid-November. Charging infrastructure and options will need to be discussed and will need guidance from the committee.

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

Matt Miller discussed the real time bus arrival information and technology system that is currently implemented which allows for live vehicle data and schedule information for riders. In October the RideCo scheduling system primarily used for Dial-A-Ride will be updated which has a feature that allows riders to schedule trips themselves and pay using a credit or debit card at time of boarding.

Action:

Motion to approve activating credit card payments for Demand Response Trips by Chair Gerardo and seconded by Susanna Arroyo.

Motion passed.

10. ADJOURNMENT - Chair Gerardo adjourned the meeting at 1:39 p.m.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 6

JANUARY 16, 2026

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: VALLEY EXPRESS TRANSIT REDUCED FARES FOR U.S. MILITARY VETERANS

RECOMMENDATION

- Approve U.S. Military Veterans reduced fares on Valley Express Transit service.

BACKGROUND

VCTC is currently leading the Tap2Ride project to implement credit and debit card readers to pay fares on every fixed-route transit operator in Ventura County. On Tuesday, December 9th VCTC Intercity launched reduced fares for Seniors 65+ and Medicare card holders on the Tap2Ride system, matching those categories already offered for passengers paying with cash. Passengers eligible for reduced fares must first register their card with the system using a link on the VCTC website. To maintain a single point of registering a credit or debit card for reduced fares for the entire County all agencies must be aligned in offering the same reduced fare categories.

DISCUSSION

VCTC, and the regional operators, want to make it as simple and easy as possible for passengers eligible for reduced fares to pay using the Countywide Tap2Ride system. This includes receiving their discounts by creating a single point of card registration for the entire County. To accomplish this, all transit agencies must align with the discount categories. Currently all transit agencies offer reduced fares to ADA, Seniors 65+, and Medicare Card holders, while Gold Coast Transit District also extends reduced fares to U.S. Military Veterans. Utilizing TRANSCOM meetings, VCTC staff and the operators

agreed to work to expand their discount categories to include Veterans to gain 100% alignment in transit fare categories throughout the county.

Currently, Valley Express provides discounted fares to Seniors 65+ and ADA/Medicare cardholders. Staff is recommending the HVTAC authorize adding a new Category of U.S. Military Veteran to the fare structure.

Current and recommended fares are below.

Category	Fare
Adults 18 & over	\$1.25
Seniors 65+, Medicare Cardholder, ADA	\$.60
College Students and Youth 18 & under	Free
<i>U.S. Military Veterans - NEW</i>	<i>\$.60</i>

Providing reduced fares to U.S. Military Veterans reflects our agency's commitment to equity, accessibility, and community values. Veterans have served our nation with distinction, and many live on fixed incomes or face mobility challenges. Offering discounted transit fares ensures they have affordable access to essential services, employment, and healthcare, supporting their reintegration into civilian life. This policy aligns with broader social equity goals and demonstrates our appreciation for their service while fostering goodwill within the community.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

ITEM 7

JANUARY 16, 2026

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: ZERO EMISSIONS VEHICLE TRANSITION PLANNING UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

- Consider approval of retaining consultant support to assist with transitioning to zero emission buses.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation went into effect, which requires all public transit agencies to gradually transition to a 100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2040. A small transit agency (such as Valley Express) was required to submit a board-approved Zero-Emission Bus Rollout Plan (Rollout Plan) to CARB by June 30, 2023, describing the transit agency plans to achieve full transition to ZEB technologies. VCTC hired Stantec, Inc. to complete a transition and rollout plan for Valley Express which recommended Valley Express transition to battery-electric vehicles. In December 2022, the HVPAC agreed with the recommendation and voted to move forward with battery-electric as the preferred technology path mostly due to the cost and unavailability of Hydrogen Fuel Cell technology for cutaway buses.

DISCUSSION

Since adoption of the plan three years ago, there has not been any change in the ICT rule and transit agencies will still be required to transition to zero emission vehicles. VCTC staff and the Valley Express member agencies have been working together to find potential charging locations. While there may be some opportunities, the options have been few and far between, VCTC is utilizing Stantec Consulting to update the ZEB Plan for VCTC Intercity and help with ZEB bus deployment and infrastructure implementation. VCTC staff recommends retaining consultant support to assist in identifying locations to build and install charging infrastructure and how to manage the implementation of electric vehicles. Additionally, they will be updating the transition plan to include current conditions.

If the TAC is agreeable, staff will request quotes for this effort. There should be enough funds available within the budget but will only bring an item forward to the HVPAC for approval once confirmed after quotes are received.

Attachment 1: Ventura County Transportation Commission ZEB Rollout and Implementation Plan



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 8

JANUARY 16, 2026

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: ERIN KENNEALLY, TRANSIT PLANNER – TRANSIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ APPLICATION

RECOMMENDATION

- Receive and file.

BACKGROUND

On May 5, 2025, VCTC staff submitted a CMAQ application to support implementing some of the recommendations outlined in the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP). The proposed improvements included expanding fixed-route service in Santa Paula and Fillmore by increasing weekday and weekend trips, extending service hours, and adding school tripper coordination to make the fixed-route network the backbone of transit service in the Heritage Valley.

DISCUSSION

On December 4, 2025, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council approved the FFY 2026-27 & FFY 2027-28 STBG/CMAQ award recommendations. VCTC and Valley Express were awarded \$1,169,000 in CMAQ funding to cover three years of expanded service. This award will allow us to implement the planned service enhancements. The jurisdictions will still provide the required local match of 11.47%, proportionate to their share of service.

More information regarding post-award guidance including a timeline for receiving the funds is set to be released in February 2026. This successful grant award represents a major step toward improving transit accessibility and sustainability in the Heritage Valley. VCTC Staff has set an implementation planning meeting with MV to discuss route details, scheduling, and operational requirements to launch the expanded service.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

ITEM 9

JANUARY 16, 2026

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

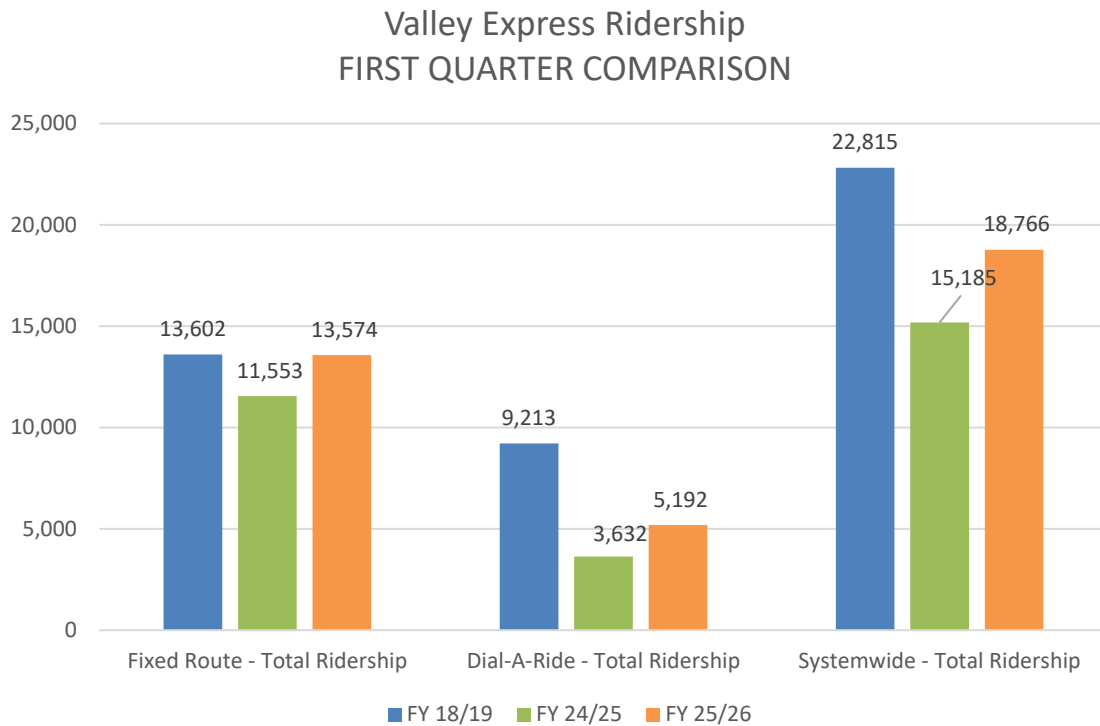
Valley Express service includes five fixed routes, dial-a-ride (DAR) services for the general public, and complementary ADA paratransit serving the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and the unincorporated area of Piru.

This report provides a Quarter 1 (July-August-September) comparison between key performance indicators (KPI) in FY 2025-26 and previous years. In addition, this report provides an update regarding the recent marketing and outreach activities for Valley Express. Ridership in Q1 increased significantly on both services over the same quarter last year.

Key Performance Highlights:

- The Fillmore-Moorpark Route began on August 1, 2024. It has now completed its first year in service and in Q1 accounted for 20% of all fixed route ridership.
- This quarter, Valley Express ridership increased by nearly 24% to 18,766 passenger trips compared to 15,185 in the same quarter of last year.
- Annually, the Piru route currently accounts for just over half of fixed route ridership as well as 40% of systemwide ridership. It is currently at 94% of pre-COVID ridership.
- DAR ridership is currently at 56% of pre-COVID numbers. While fixed route ridership matched pre-COVID numbers for Q1, this is primarily due to the addition of the Fillmore-Moorpark route. Without that route it would be at 80%.

- DAR ridership has seen a significant increase of 43% when compared to Q1 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.



Quarterly Ridership Comparison by Route

FIRST QUARTER COMPARISON (July-August-Sept)

Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride	FY 18/19	FY 24/25	FY 25/26	% Change from FY 18/19	% Change from FY 24/25
Santa Paula Fixed Route	2,114	582	455	-78.5%	-21.8%
Santa Paula Tripper	242	71	132	-45.5%	85.9%
Fillmore Fixed Route	2191	934	1,363	-37.8%	45.9%
Fillmore Tripper	1141	1,011	1,415	24.0%	40.0%
Fillmore-Moorpark Route^	***	1,209	2,755	***	127.9%
Piru Fixed Route	7914	7,746	7,454	-5.8%	-3.8%
Fixed Route Total	13,602	11,553	13,574	-0.2%	17.5%
Santa Paula DAR	6942	2,786	4,426	-36.2%	58.9%
Fillmore DAR	2271	846	766	-66.3%	-9.5%
Dial-A-Ride Total	9,213	3,632	5,192	-43.6%	43.0%
Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride Total	22,815	15,185	18,766	-17.7%	23.6%

^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 1 FY 2024/25	Qtr 1 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	System-wide	15,185	18,766	23.6%
Passengers per Mile	System-wide	0.24	0.28	19.1%
Passengers per Hr	System-wide	2.82	3.06	8.5%
Revenue Hours	System-wide	5,392	6,142	13.9%
Revenue Miles	System-wide	64,272	66,699	3.8%
Operating Cost	System-wide	\$ 592,323	\$ 654,464	10.5%
Cost per Hr	System-wide	\$ 109.85	\$ 106.56	-3.0%
Cost per Passenger	System-wide	\$ 39.01	\$ 34.88	-10.6%

Table 2 Fixed Route Quarterly Comparison

FIXED ROUTE - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 1 FY 2024/25	Qtr 1 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Fixed Route	11,553	13,574	17.5%
Passengers per Mile	Fixed Route	0.27	0.27	0.9%
Passengers per Hr	Fixed Route	4.81	4.74	-1.6%
Revenue Hours	Fixed Route	2,400	2,866	19.4%
Revenue Miles	Fixed Route	43,440	50,575	16.4%
Operating Cost	Fixed Route	\$ 261,598	\$ 306,431	17.1%
Cost per Hr	Fixed Route	\$ 108.99	\$ 106.93	-1.9%
Cost per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$ 22.64	\$ 22.57	-0.3%

Table 3 Dial-A-Ride Quarterly Comparison

DIAL-A-RIDE (DAR) - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 1 FY 2024/25	Qtr 1 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	3,632	5,192	43.0%
Passengers per Mile	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	0.17	0.32	84.7%
Passengers per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	1.21	1.58	30.5%
Revenue Hours	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	2,992	3,276	9.5%
Revenue Miles	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	20,832	16,124	-22.6%
Operating Cost	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 330,725	\$ 348,034	5.2%
Cost per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 110.55	\$ 106.22	-3.9%
Cost per Passenger	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 91.06	\$ 67.03	-26.4%

RideCo Update

We are approaching the 1-year anniversary of launching the RideCo system. In a Q1 comparison, passengers per hour increased just over 30%. By streamlining pick-ups and drop-offs, our revenue miles have also decreased 23%. Despite operating costs for Dial-A-Ride increasing by 5% due to increased contract costs, both cost per passenger and cost per hour saw a decrease. The average trip rating in the last 30 days is still 4.9 stars, illustrating the outstanding service our operators offer and deliver.

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Celtis Ventures, Inc., continues to assist us in promoting the Valley Express service within the Heritage Valley. Celtis is currently finalizing an update of the Valley Express bus book. They recently launched a Valley Express Instagram account and are slowly building a following. In 2026 they will be focusing on promoting TAP2RIDE, which went live this week, as well as assisting to update all Valley Express bus stop signage.