



VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Heritage Valley Technical Advisory Committee (HVTAC)
www.goventura.org | www.valleyexpressbus.org
Santa Paula City Council Chambers
970 E. Ventura Street, Santa Paula, CA
Monday, May 11, 2026
11:00 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 RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT**
Recommended Action:
• Receive and file.
Responsible Staff: Matt Miller, Program Manager
- ITEM 7 FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 VALLEY EXPRESS FINAL BUDGET**
Recommended Action:
• Approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Valley Express Budget
Responsible Staff: Matt Miller, Program Manager

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 REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND VALLEY EXPRESS
OUTREACH CONTRACT WITH CELTIS VENTURES**
Recommended Action:
- Approve staff to exercise two option years with Celtis Ventures per section 1.1 of the outreach contract.
- Responsible Staff: Matt Miller, Program Manager**

ITEM 9 ADJOURNMENT

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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
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

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Gerardo called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.
2. **INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS** - None
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None
4. **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS** - None
5. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES** – The Committee accepted the September 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes.
6. **VALLEY EXPRESS TRANSIT REDUCED FARES FOR U.S. MILITARY VETERANS**
Claire Grasty provided information concerning current and recommended reduced fares. To stay aligned and equitable with other agencies staff recommends that HVTAC authorize adding a new category of U.S. Military Veteran to the discounted fare structure, noting that it does not create a huge financial impact.

Action:

Dale Goodman made a Motion to approve U.S. Military Veterans reduced fares on Valley Express Transit Service, seconded by Susanna Arroyo.

Motion passed.

7. **ZERO EMISSIONS VEHICLE TRANSITION PLANNING UPDATE**
Claire Grasty provided an update on the zero emissions plan and charging station at Camarillo rail station. VCTC is requesting consultant support to assist in identifying

locations to build and install charging infrastructure. A proposal has been received from Stantec and will bring this item back to the committee when other quotes are obtained.

Action:

Susanna Arroyo made a Motion to approve retaining consultant support to assist with transitioning to zero emission buses, seconded by Dale Goodman.

Motion passed.

8. UPDATE ON VALLEY EXPRESS CMAQ APPLICATION

Erin Kenneally gave an update on the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) grant application and announced that VCTC was awarded the full amount requested which is enough to cover the service expansion on Fillmore and Santa Paula routes for three years. The goal is to start in the Fall of 2026 or as soon as funds are released and provide updates.

9. RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT

Erin Kenneally provided a ridership report on Quarter 1 comparison between 2025-2026 and previous years, key performance highlights, system-wide, fixed route, and Dial-A-Ride quarterly comparisons, RideCo update and marketing and community outreach.

10. SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN AND DEMAND RESPONSE INTEGRATION PLAN UPDATE

Claire Grasty provided an update on the Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) including outreach completed in the Fall of last year. The Demand Response Integration Plan (DRIP) will go to Transcom in February and please feel free to attend for more information. Will continue to bring this item back for updates and would also recommend taking to your City Councils.

11. ADJOURNMENT - Chair Gerardo adjourned the meeting at 10:04 a.m.



Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 6

DATE: MAY 11, 2026
MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)
FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER – TRANSIT SERVICES
SUBJECT: RIDERSHIP AND OUTREACH REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

- Receive and file.

BACKGROUND

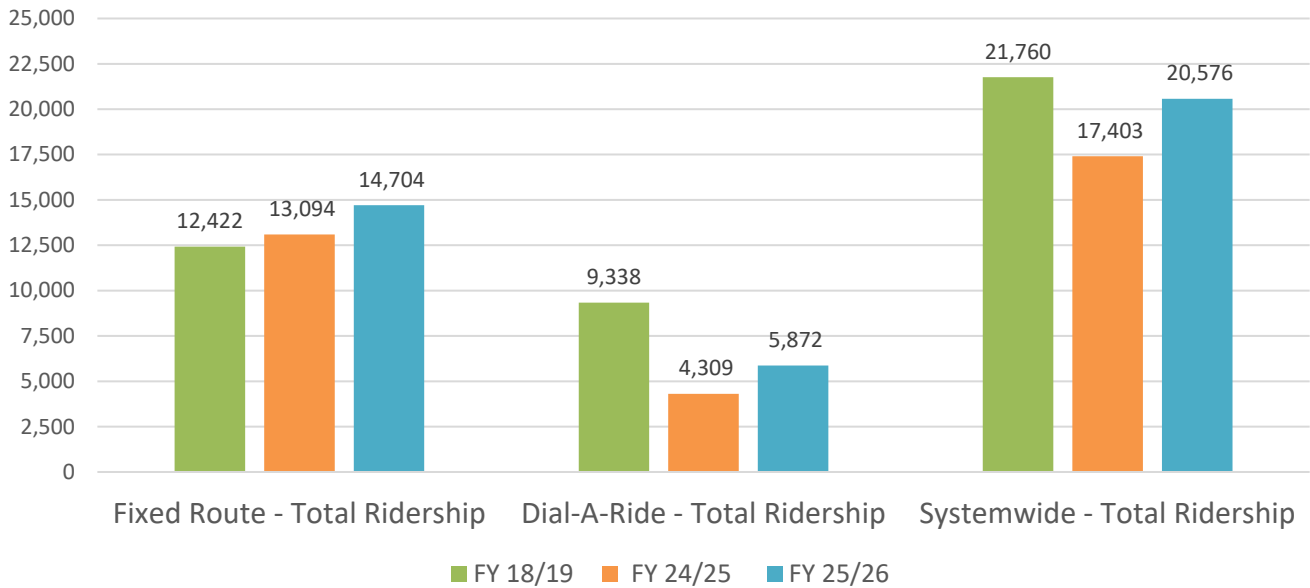
Valley Express service includes five fixed routes, dial-a-ride (DAR) services for the general public, and complementary ADA paratransit serving the cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and the unincorporated area of Piru.

This report provides a Quarter 3 (January, February, and March) 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 Q3 increased on both services over the same quarter last year.

Key Performance Highlights:

- This quarter, Valley Express **fixed route** ridership increased by 12% to 14,704 passenger trips compared to 13,094 in the same quarter of last year.
- The Fillmore-Moorpark Route has now been in service since August 1, 2024 and in Q3 accounted for 21% of all fixed route ridership. Ridership on the route has seen a 61% increase since the same period last year.
- The Piru route, the most utilized route in the system, accounts for 47% of fixed route ridership, however ridership is down 10% versus the same period last year.
- Valley Express **dial-a-ride** ridership increased by 36% to 5,872 trips compared to 4,309 trips in same quarter last year but is costing less to operate due to more efficient scheduling.

VALLEY EXPRESS SYSTEMWIDE BOARDINGS THIRD QUARTER COMPARISON



THIRD QUARTER FIXED ROUTE BOARDINGS BY ROUTE

Route	FY18-19 (Pre-COVID)	FY24-25	FY25-26	% Change from FY24-25	% Change from FY18-19
Santa Paula A	383	202	209	3%	-45%
Santa Paula B	468	290	403	39%	-14%
Santa Paula Tripper	355	78	274	251%	-23%
Fillmore Loop	466	805	1,448	80%	211%
Fillmore Tripper	2,348	2,069	2,294	11%	-2%
Fillmore-Moorpark^	-	1,964	3,156	61%	-
Piru	8,402	7,686	6,920	-10%	-18%
Total	12,422	13,094	14,704	12%	18%

^CMAQ Funded Route Implemented August 2024

THIRD QUARTER DIAL-A-RIDE BOARDINGS BY JURISDICTION

Route	FY18-19 (Pre-COVID)	FY24-25	FY25-26	% Change from FY24-25	% Change from FY18-19
Santa Paula	6,740	3,704	4,550	23%	-32%
Fillmore	2,598	605	1,322	119%	-49%
Total	9,338	4,309	5,872	36%	-37%

3RD QUARTER DIAL-A-RIDE RIDERSHIP BY SERVICE TYPE

Jurisdiction	ADA	Senior	General
County	94	37	125
Fillmore	184	431	594
Santa Paula	746	1,088	2,573
Total	1,024	1,556	3,292

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

FIXED ROUTE - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 3 FY 2024/25	Qtr 3 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Fixed Route	13,094	14,704	12%
Passengers per Mile	Fixed Route	0.26	0.28	7%
Passengers per Hr	Fixed Route	4.54	4.73	4%
Revenue Hours	Fixed Route	2,883	3,106	8%
Revenue Miles	Fixed Route	50,572	53,136	5%
Operating Cost	Fixed Route	\$ 298,009	\$ 334,773	12%
Cost per Hr	Fixed Route	\$ 103.38	\$ 107.78	4.3%
Cost per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$ 22.76	\$ 22.77	0%

Table 2 Fixed Route Quarterly Comparison

DIAL-A-RIDE (DAR) - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 3 FY 2024/25	Qtr 3 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	4,309	5,872	36%
Passengers per Mile	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	0.24	0.28	20%
Passengers per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	1.36	2.11	54%
Revenue Hours	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	3,158	2,789	-12%
Revenue Miles	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	18,293	20,756	13%
Operating Cost	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 329,000	\$ 308,569	-6%
Cost per Hr	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 104.20	\$ 110.64	6%
Cost per Passenger	Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	\$ 76.35	\$ 52.55	-31%

Table 3 Dial-A-Ride Quarterly Comparison

SYSTEM-WIDE SERVICE - Valley Express KPI		Qtr 3 FY 2024/25	Qtr 3 FY 2025/26	Yr over Yr % Change
Ridership	System-wide	17,403	20,576	18%
Passengers per Mile	System-wide	0.25	0.28	10%
Passengers per Hr	System-wide	2.88	3.49	21%
Revenue Hours	System-wide	6,040	5,895	-2%
Revenue Miles	System-wide	68,865	73,892	7%
Operating Cost	System-wide	\$ 627,010	\$ 643,342	3%
Cost per Hr	System-wide	\$ 103.81	\$ 109.13	5%
Cost per Passenger	System-wide	\$ 36.03	\$ 31.27	-13%

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Celtis Ventures, Inc., continues to assist us in promoting the Valley Express service within the Heritage Valley. In the 3rd quarter, Celtis coordinated and completed a photoshoot which included all of our new buses, passengers boarding and paying with the new Tap2Ride system, ADA passengers using dial-a-ride and new digital real-time arrival signs. These new photos will be used for our outreach activities, in printed public information materials, and bus schedules.

OTHER UPDATES

The final four replacement vehicles were delivered in March and put into service. The acceptance and delivery of these vehicles complete the full fleet replacement.

Improvements to bus stops have been completed as well. Digital real-time arrival signs have been installed at the Santa Paula City Hall stop, Fillmore Terminal stop, and the bus stop in Piru on Center Street which has the highest ridership of all stops in Piru. Below is a photo of the digital sign installed at the Fillmore Terminal.





Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 7

DATE: May 11, 2026

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 VALLEY EXPRESS BUDGET

RECOMMENDATION

- Approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Valley Express Budget.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Cooperative Agreement for the Heritage Valley Transit Service, the Heritage Valley Technical Advisory Committee (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 revenue, SB 125 funds, and local funding from the member agencies. In FY26-27 service will be, once again, funded with the same mix of funds except SGR and SB125 funds.

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

1. Contract provider rate increases in FY26-27.
2. Sustained demand for dial-a-ride service.
3. Continuation of CMAQ funded Fillmore to Moorpark Fixed Route for FY26-27.
4. A high cost for fuel.

This year's total budget will be lower than the FY25-26 budget by approximately 13% and is due to no vehicle replacements being needed as that project has been completed. Due to the Iran conflict and its effect on fuel prices, staff has increased the estimated fuel cost for FY26-27. Last year, \$258,125 was the estimated cost for fuel for the entire year. This upcoming year staff is estimating \$300,948 will be needed. The calculation is based on an average price of \$6.10/gallon with 4,111 gallons purchased per month.

Though DAR service hours are higher than last year, so far, they have trended lower than expected. 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 number from the current budget. DAR demand and use is very difficult to predict and can fluctuate from year to year and therefore it is best practice to budget conservatively. Lastly, depreciation of the Valley Express vehicles have been added to the budget to comply with accounting processes however jurisdictions will not need to pay for their cost.

Below is the recommended level of service by jurisdiction. As shown below there is a small increase in the projected hours for Fillmore Loop, Fillmore to Moorpark, and Piru (County) routes. The increase is due to an increase in deadhead hours from the yard to the start of service and from the end of service back to the yard. There is no increase in the number of revenue service hours.

RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SERVICE

	<i>FY 2026-2027</i>	<i>FY 2025-2026</i>
<u>Fixed Route</u>	<u>Projected Hours</u>	<u>Current (Budgeted)</u>
Fillmore	1,762	1,749
Fillmore – Moorpark*	5,328	5,064
Santa Paula	1,783	1,783
County	3,132	3,015
Subtotal Fixed Route	12,006	11,611
<u>Dial-a-Ride</u>	<u>Projected Hours</u>	<u>Current (Budgeted)</u>
Fillmore	7,500	7,500
Santa Paula	10,740	10,740
County	960	960
Subtotal Dial-a-Ride	19,200	19,200
Total All Services	31,206	30,811

*Hours for the planned Fillmore-Moorpark funded by a CMAQ grant with local match.

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.

This budget uses a blend of Federal formula funds, CMAQ grant funds, fare revenue, and local contributions by member agencies. The following is a table of the prior three years’ budgets for reference.

	FY23-24	FY24-25	FY25-26	FY26-27
FTA - Cares Act/CMAQ	\$ 206,077	\$ 566,711	\$ 478,062	\$ 465,545
FTA	\$ 1,081,654	\$ 2,175,076	\$ 1,217,316	\$ 948,198
State of Good Repair	\$ -	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 80,409	\$ -
SB125	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 198,774	\$ -
Local Contribution - Bus Operations	\$ 1,016,319	\$ 1,673,414	\$ 1,972,287	\$ 1,850,357
Local Contribution - TDA Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Local Contribution - Route Guarantee	\$ 228,150	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Local Fee - Contract Administration	\$ 129,100	\$ 133,800	\$ 136,300	\$ 141,000.00
Local Fee - Farebox	\$ 39,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 53,000	\$ 40,000
Totals	\$ 2,700,300	\$ 5,916,000	\$ 4,136,148	\$ 3,445,100
Change from Prior Year		119%	-30%	-17%

Attachment A attached is the draft FY26-27 Valley Express Budget and attachment B is a breakdown of each member agency’s local contribution.

This item is information only. The HVPAC’s comments and revisions will be included in the final budget document that will be presented to the HVTAC in April before being brought back to the HVPAC for final review.

Attachment A: FY2026-2027 VALLEY EXPRESS BUS SERVICE

FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 FINAL BUDGET

FUNDING:

Funding Source	Funding Dollars
FTA, CMAQ	\$1,413,743
Local Contribution – Bus Operations*	1,850,357
Local Fee – Contract Administration*	141,000
Local Fee – Farebox	40,000
VCTC Fund Balance	160,200
Total Funding	\$3,605,300

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

EXPENDITURE COMPARISON:

	Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Actual	Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget*	Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget
Salaries	\$ 52,761	\$ 54,600	\$ 54,300
Fringe and Tax	22,469	23,800	25,700
Indirect Cost Allocation	58,567	57,900	61,000
Mileage	1,284	1,500	1,500
Office Support	685	1,000	1,000
Printing	6,349	10,000	10,000
Bank Fees	0	1,000	1,000
Legal Services	2,059	8,000	8,000
Communications Wi-Fi	6,842	7,000	7,000
Contract Services	2,449,326	2,984,300	3,140,600
Equipment	525	10,000	10,000
Outreach	71,749	70,000	70,000
Professional Services	54,860	55,000	55,000
Vehicle Replacements	1,647,453	1,095,610	0
Depreciation	19,838	0	160,200
Total Expenditures	\$4,394,767	\$4,379,710	\$3,605,300

Attachment B: VALLEY EXPRESS BUDGET (FY2026-2027)

TAC/PAC Budget Cost of Service 2026/27 (31,206 hours)		
Overhead: Staff	\$	141,000
Overhead: Other	\$	163,500
Contractor	\$	3,140,600
Total Costs	\$	3,445,100
External Revenues		
FTA & CMAQ	\$	1,413,743
State of Good Repair	\$	-
SB125	\$	-
Projected Farebox	\$	40,000
Total External Revenues	\$	1,453,743
(1) Total Net Due (Less External Revenues)	\$	1,991,357
(2) Member Agency Share Overhead		
		<i>% Share Overhead</i>
Fillmore	\$	101,500
Santa Paula	\$	101,500
County	\$	101,500
Subtotal Overhead Costs	\$	304,500
(3) Member agency share of Contractor Costs (rounded)		
		<i>% Share of total planned hours (FY26/27)</i>
Fillmore	\$	607,268
Santa Paula	\$	809,691
County	\$	269,897
Subtotal Contract Costs	\$	1,686,857
Total Costs: Member Agency (Overhead Staff + Other & Contractor Cost)		
Fillmore	\$	708,768
Santa Paula	\$	911,191
County	\$	371,397
Total Costs: Member Agency	\$	1,991,357
Member Agency Available FY24/25 Carryover		
Fillmore	\$	194,129
Santa Paula	\$	299,880
County	\$	108,521
Projected Amount Due to VCTC		
Fillmore	\$	514,639
Santa Paula	\$	611,311
County	\$	262,876
	\$	1,388,827



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Valley Express Bus & Dial-A-Ride

Item 8

DATE: MAY 11, 2026

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: MATT MILLER, PROGRAM MANAGER

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM CONTRACT EXTENSION

RECOMMENDATION

- Approve the community outreach program contract extension for two years until June 30, 2028 with Celtis Ventures for \$70,000 per year for a total not to exceed amount of \$350,000 and authorize the Executive Director to negotiate all remaining terms of the contract for the Community Outreach Program in a form and substance approved by VCTC legal counsel.

BACKGROUND

In June 2023, the HVPAC approved award of a three-year contract that allowed for two option years to Celtis Ventures.

VCTC staff released the RFP for a community outreach program, which included an updated scope of work to reflect the evolution of the use of social media in marketing and emphasizes the importance of designing and creating easy to understand public transit information in English and Spanish.

VCTC received proposals from four marketing and outreach firms and utilized an evaluation panel comprised of two VCTC staff members and one Valley Express member agency.

DISCUSSION

Over the past few years and during the previous contract, Celtis has done an admirable job, making improvements to the website, bus book, implementing a Spanish first outreach campaign, expanding the Valley Express social media presence updating the Valley Express branding and logo, designing new bus designs, and bus stop signs. Staff is recommending to utilize the two year contract extension and continue working with Celtis Ventures to conduct outreach and promote the Valley Express service.