



DATE: JANUARY 24, 2018

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVTAC)

FROM: AARON BONFILIO, PROGRAM MANAGER – TRANSIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: FARE MEDIA POLICY

RECOMMENDATION

- That the Committee consider acceptance of VCTC 10-ride Fare Media and migrate existing monthly flash passes to magnetic strip (electronic) fare media and provide HVTAC recommendation to the HVPAC.

BACKGROUND

VCTC and MV staffs are in the process of implementing new CardQuest farebox system technology (System) that will enable the electronic collection of ridership data as well as pass validation. The System was installed on the Valley Express fleet shortly after the Thanksgiving Holiday. Since that time, configuration, testing and training has occurred. Staff anticipates the System will be ready for go-live beginning March 1, 2018, following additional testing to take place between now and then.

As previously discussed at TAC and PAC meetings, at initial implementation the System will be used to:

- Manually record cash paying riders,
- Manually record passengers using bicycles, wheelchairs and children under 5
- Manually record riders using existing Valley Express “flash passes;”
- Electronically accept the VCTC transfers, single ride tickets and 31-day passes, and
- Electronically issue transfers

This item is to propose consideration of acceptance of the other fare media sold and utilized by VCTC Intercity, including the 10-ride tickets, as well as to formally approve adoption of migrating the existing Valley Express “monthly flash passes” to rolling “31-Day” period passes.

Migrate Flash Passes to Rolling 31-Day Passes

One of the primary purposes of the new farebox technology is to provide increased reporting and pass validation capabilities. The System will provide exact accounting with respect to boardings, reject invalid passes, and include added convenience for riders by shifting pass validity from the monthly cycle to a rolling cycle. As well this includes cost savings to VCTC/Valley Express in printing and staff resources.

The Rolling Pass

Rather than be valid for a single specified month only, passes purchased would be valid for the 31-day period following first use. For example, passengers could buy their pass on the 15th of the month and use it for the next 31-days. Presently passengers which buy their pass mid-month receive the benefit of the pass for the remaining days of that month only. Almost no passes are sold after the first week of the month and the passes that go unsold and are discarded at the end of the month. This shift would potentially increase sales opportunities throughout the month and eliminate expenses associated with unsold passes, i.e. reduce printing and stocking expenses. In addition, the fare media itself is less costly to produce due to the security features of the electronic media vs. those required of the “secure” serialized flash passes utilized today.

Cost comparison between pass types, including design and printing costs:

Current flash pass production price is approximately \$0.86/pass

-vs-

Electronic 31-day magnetic stripe pass price is approximately \$0.34/pass.

This cost-savings is even greater when reduced staff time for restocking, travel between sales locations and lost value in unused passes is considered.

Assuming production of 6,000 passes per year, anticipated savings on pass production (not including staff time) is approximately \$3,120 per year.

Lead time for electronic fare media is approximately 8 weeks. To control costs associated with the required reprinting of other collateral such as schedules, brochures, etc., staff recommends that if approved, the new Valley Express rolling 31-day electronic Fare media be implemented to coincide with the start of the 2018 Fall School start, which shifts some of the associated expenses into the new fiscal year, as new collateral is developed each school year. Pass pricing would remain the same. The structure is proposed follows:

Pass Category	Current Structure and Price	Proposed Structure and Price
Fixed Route - Full	Monthly Pass - \$20.00	31-Day Pass - \$20.00
Fixed Route - Reduced	Monthly Pass - \$10.00	31-Day Pass - \$10.00
Super Pass - Full	Monthly Pass - \$30.00	31-Day Pass - \$30.00
Super Pass - Reduced	Monthly Pass - \$25.00	31-Day Pass - \$25.00

Super Pass is accepted on all Valley Express modes, Fixed and Dial-a-ride

Acceptance of VCTC Intercity Fare Media

Currently the Valley Express accepts the use of VCTC 31-day passes, the CSUCI ID-card (on fixed route) as well as the Social Service Agency “Single Ride tickets”. These fare media are accepted on the VCTC, Gold Coast, Thousand Oaks Transit, Moorpark and Simi Valley Transit, as well. In addition, Camarillo Area Transit accepts the Single Ride ticket and CSUCI ID-card. Acceptance of these fare media for Valley Express is challenging due to the lack of electronic fareboxes. While work-arounds are in place, the ability to accept the fare media electronically as planned will greatly improve data collection, financial accounting and accuracy in pass validation. More and more, the collection of transit operators in Ventura County are adopting VCTC’s fare media, which should again lead to ease of use of the multiple systems, ala a single piece of fare media much like VCTC’s discontinued GoVentura Smartcard. This System will further assist the Valley Express with this effort to improve the passenger experience.

In addition, brought on by the implementation of the System, is the possibility that the Valley Express accept the VCTC 10-ride passes. These passes are popular among casual or less frequent riders of transit as the passes do not expire, i.e. the ten rides are only deducted when used.

The proposed VCTC 10-ride fare media policy is specified in the table below. The proposed fees and acceptance policies follow those Valley Express policies already in place today for single ride tickets as well as VCTC transfers. The policy for proposed fees is based on the per-trip fare pricing currently in place for both systems (Valley Express and VCTC). If the price of the VCTC 10-ride tickets and thus potential value disbursed to Valley Express upon use changes, this pricing scheme would need to be reassessed.

Pass Category	Current Ten Ride & Per Trip Value	Proposed VE Fixed Route Acceptance	Proposed VE DAR Acceptance*	Value to Valley Express upon use
Zone 1 - Ventura County - Full	\$11.00 & \$1.10/trip	Accept as is, no additional charge	Accept + additional \$0.50 up-charge	\$1.10
Zone 1 - Ventura County - Reduced	\$5.50 & \$0.55/trip	Accept as is, no additional charge	Accept + additional \$0.50 up-charge	\$0.55
Zone 2 - Intercounty - Full	\$27.00 & \$2.70/trip	Accept as is, no additional charge	Accept as is, no additional charge	\$2.70
Zone 2 - Intercounty - Reduced	\$13.50 & \$1.35/trip	Accept as is, no additional charge	Accept as is, no additional charge	\$1.35

**A cash "up-charge" would be required for usage of 10-ride passes on the more expensive VE Dial-a-ride, similar to the up-charge for VE/VCTC Transfers and single ride tickets on Dial-a-ride.*

Full and Reduced passenger eligibility would match those definitions currently defined by Valley Express. For example, reduced fare eligibility for Valley Express Fixed route include both youth (under the age of 18) and seniors and people with disabilities and Medicare recipients. Reduced fare eligibility for Valley Express Dial-a-ride is limited to seniors and people with disabilities and Medicare recipients. In addition, while reduced fare eligibility on Valley Express Fixed route service includes youths, it does not on the VCTC Intercity.

Staff proposes implementing acceptance of the above VCTC 10-Ride fare media as described, at the same time as the Valley Express 31-day fare media would be implemented. If approved by the TAC and PAC, the policy change would be presented to the full Commission with respect to acceptance and use of this additional fare media by the Valley Express.