



DATE: FEBRUARY 1, 2018

MEMO TO: HERITAGE VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HVPAC)

FROM: AARON BONFILIO, PROGRAM MANAGER – TRANSIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: FARE MEDIA POLICY

RECOMMENDATION

- Recommendation: That the Committee consider migrating existing monthly flash passes to magnetic strip (electronic) fare media.

BACKGROUND

At the January 24, 2018 Heritage Valley Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the TAC received a status report regarding the implementation of the fare media system, the Genfare CardQuest farebox readers (System). The System was installed on the Valley Express fleet shortly after the Thanksgiving Holiday, November 2017. Since that time, VCTC, Genfare and MV have been involved in configuring routes and fare information, system testing and staff training. Staff anticipates the System will be ready for “go-live” beginning March 1, 2018 and system acceptance will occur during February 2018.

This item is to review final steps with the migration of existing Valley Express “monthly flash passes” to electronic fare media, and to formally approve the issuance of rolling “31-Day” period passes and adopt the corresponding fare media policies.

At initial implementation (Go-live) the System will:

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

Beginning this Summer, August 1, 2018 the System will:

- **ELECTRONICALLY** accept Valley Express “31-Day Passes,”
- Manually record cash paying passengers,
- Manually record passengers using bicycles, wheelchairs and children under 5,
- Electronically accept the VCTC transfers, single ride tickets and 31-day passes, and
- Electronically issue transfers

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Migrating the Valley Express Monthly 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 the pass usage "window" from the monthly cycle to a rolling 31-day cycle. As well this includes cost savings to in printing and staff resources.

The Rolling Pass

Rather than be valid for a single specified month only, passes are valid for the 31-day period following first use. For example, passengers buy their pass on the 15th of the month and can 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 unsold passes are discarded at the end of the month. This shift would potentially increase sales opportunities throughout the month-period and eliminate expenses by reducing 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.

Assuming production of 6,000 passes per year, anticipated savings on pass production (not including staff time) is approximately \$3,120 per year.¹

Planned Migration:

Lead time for electronic fare media is approximately 7-9 weeks once the order is placed. 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, beginning sales / acceptance on August 1, 2018. This provides ample time for promotion, pass design and inventory distribution, and coincides with the planned schedule change that takes place annually, as new collateral, brochures, etc., are developed each school year and the updated fare media policy would require reprint of almost all printed Valley Express passenger materials.

Pass Pricing:

Pass pricing would remain the same. The price structure is proposed follows:

Pass Product	Current Prices	Proposed Prices
Fixed Route - Full Fare	Monthly Pass - \$20.00	31-Day Pass - \$20.00
Fixed Route – Reduced Fare	Monthly Pass - \$10.00	31-Day Pass - \$10.00
Super Pass – Full Fare	Monthly Pass - \$30.00	31-Day Pass - \$30.00
Super Pass – Reduced Fare	Monthly Pass - \$25.00	31-Day Pass - \$25.00

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

¹ This reflects cost of pass production only and does not include the additional savings associated with staff time, for example.

Acceptance Matrix for Valley Express 31-Day Fare Media

The Valley Express 31-day fare media would be accepted using the same policies as the existing monthly Flash passes.

The proposed acceptance by mode and type of pass is described below.

Pass Product	Mode	Passenger Eligibility	Type of Pass
Fixed Route – Full Fare	Fixed Route	Adult	31-Day Period
Fixed Route – Reduced Fare	Fixed Route	Youth , Senior, Disabled, Medicare	31-Day Period
Super Pass – Full Fare	Dial-a-ride	Adult, Youth	31-Day Period
Super Pass – Reduced Fare	Dial-a-ride	Senior, Disabled, Medicare	31-Day Period

Next Steps:

Following approval by the PAC, staff will design necessary materials, complete training of operations and sales staff, and conduct outreach and promotion regarding the change. The new fare media will take effect with the start of this new school year, beginning August 1st. Printed materials will be prepared for distribution early Fiscal Year 2018/2019. New reports using data collected through the System will be presented to the TAC and PAC committees following the anticipated Go-live on March 1, 2018. Lastly, staff will continue to present opportunities related to increased integration of fare media as VCTC continues to work toward a more fully-integrated countywide fare media system and transit policy framework.