

Planning

Funding secured for suicide prevention barriers

Planning staff, in partnership with Caltrans, helped to secure funding and assisted in planning for the Arroyo Simi bridge suicide prevention barrier project. In October, the California Transportation Commission allocated \$10.7 million to allow construction to begin. VCTC staff also helped deploy community-based suicide awareness prevention training in partnership with Caltrans, the City of Moorpark, and Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services.

Funding boosts safety, emergency response

The Motorist Aid Services Program provided \$355,852 to help fund safety-enhancement projects through the Incident Responder Grant Program, including emergency traffic signal pre-emption systems in the cities of Camarillo and Oxnard that will improve emergency vehicle response times.

New trails to enhance connectivity

Planning for two active transportation projects along VCTC's Santa Paula Branch Line railroad got underway in 2024, with outreach and financial support from VCTC. In the City of Ventura, a 4-mile Class I trail will provide direct bike and pedestrian access for residents of Saticoy, Montalvo and Cabrillo Village. In Santa Paula, the Trail Connectivity Project will add up to 2.5 miles of bike pathways to the city's existing 2.5-mile trail.

Sespe Creek repairs complete

Planning staff facilitated completion of emergency repairs to stabilize the west bank of the Sespe Creek Overflow and planning and engineering to reconstruct the Sespe Creek Overflow railroad bridge on the Santa Paula Branch Line.

2024 TRANSIT STATS



More than 1.3 million youth rides in 2024



More than 457,000 college rides in 2024



3,242 Fillmore-Moorpark Route rides in the first five months of service



SR-150 emergency shuttle provided 1,260 free rides from March through July 2024

What riders say about VCTC Intercity

“Gracias. Me encanta el servicio.”

“Thank you. I love the service.”

“Thank you Ventura County Transportation Commission for sharing and communicating these great event transportation options to the community.”

“I love this bus because it’s so nice to sit in the seats. And it also takes me to Camarillo.”

“Me gusta abordar el bus. Gracias. Excelente servicio.”

“I like boarding the bus. Thank you. Excellent service.”

March 2025

Annual Community Impact Report

Ventura County Transportation Commission

goventura.org

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Message from the Executive Director

Meeting transportation needs through the power of partnerships

By Martin Erickson

At the Ventura County Transportation Commission, we recognize and value the role that strong partnerships play in achieving our goals and in implementing strategies to keep Ventura County moving. Reflecting on VCTC's challenges and successes of the past year, I am reminded of President John F. Kennedy's observation that "partnership is not a posture but a process – a continuous process that grows stronger each year as we devote ourselves to common tasks". VCTC's five-year strategic plan, adopted in 2023, identifies partnerships as key to meeting the area's transportation needs. We know that by working together, we can better serve more of our region's residents.

The strong leadership of VCTC's 17-member Commission and the support of our partners across the county and region helped lead to significant accomplishments in 2024. In October, VCTC helped secure a \$10.7 million allocation from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for the construction of barrier fencing on the Highway 118 Arroyo Simi Bridges that is designed to help prevent suicide attempts. That project is the result of months of collaboration among VCTC, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the City of Moorpark, the County of Ventura and the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center. In March, when a landslide covered State Route 150, VCTC worked closely with the County of Ventura, Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, Caltrans,



Thomas Aquinas College and others to provide emergency shuttle service between Santa Paula and Ojai. Similarly, we saw transit ridership continue to increase across the county, highlighting that VCTC's successful Youth Ride Free and College Ride programs would not be possible without the support of regional transit operators.

In 2025, VCTC will continue to build on those partnerships to bring even more transportation solutions to our area. VCTC and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) are finalizing plans to start a morning train between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, a service that is expected to launch in the fall. Using input from transit operators and the community, VCTC will complete the Short-Range Transit Plan, which will help improve bus service across the region. These are just a few of the exciting projects we'll be working on in 2025, and none would be possible without the support of others. We are thrilled by these recent accomplishments, and we look forward to creating a more connected resilient, equitable and user-friendly transportation system for Ventura County.

Programming

Design begins for SB1 projects

Staff worked with project sponsors to move forward on design of congestion reduction projects to be funded by a state Senate Bill (SB) 1 grant. Projects funded by the \$74.9 million grant include a pedestrian undercrossing at the Camarillo Metrolink station and electric vehicle charging units at rail stations.

Funding to construct Rice Avenue grade separation finalized

Planning staff finalized state funding for construction of the Rice Avenue Grade Separation project at Rice Avenue and

Fifth Street in Oxnard, enabling the City of Oxnard to award a construction contract. Once completed, the separation will elevate Rice Avenue over Fifth Street and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks to eliminate the at-grade railroad crossing.

Wheelchair-accessible transit program extended

Staff completed plans extending into 2025 the Access for All on-demand wheelchair-accessible service that began in 2023, providing service countywide.



Transit

New Fillmore-Moorpark Route

Valley Express Bus & Dial-a-Ride, which is managed by VCTC, introduced the Fillmore-Moorpark Route, a direct, one-seat ride between the two cities. The route provides service to Moorpark College, the Moorpark Metrolink Station and the Moorpark Marketplace shopping center. It also connects riders to eight existing bus lines, as well as Amtrak and Metrolink service. The service started Aug. 1.

Free emergency shuttle

When a major landslide shut down State Route 150 between Santa Paula and Ojai, VCTC and Valley Express

launched an emergency shuttle to help residents travel between the two cities. The shuttle provided Monday-Friday service at no cost to riders from March through July.

Paratransit scheduling platform

VCTC helped launch RideCo, a paratransit and demand response scheduling platform, among county operators, including Camarillo Area Transit, Thousand Oaks Transit and Valley Express Bus & Dial-a-Ride. The self-scheduling app has led to improved scheduling and on-time performance. Simi Valley Transit will implement RideCo in 2025.

Finance

2024-2025 budget approved

The Commission approved the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget in June. The total annual budget is \$131.6 million. It is a balanced budget with no bond debt obligation.

VCTC budget wins Government Finance Officers Award

VCTC received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers

Association (GFOA). VCTC had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation that assess how well VCTC's budget serves as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and a communications device. Budget documents must be rated "proficient" in all four categories and in the 14 mandatory criteria within those categories.

Outreach

Boys & Girls Club art contest

For the sixth year, VCTC partnered with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Ventura County for an art contest. Members of five clubs created vibrant drawings for VCTC buses based on the theme "Journeying through the County: Exploring Ventura County by Bus."

VCTC in the community

VCTC staff participated in numerous community events throughout the year, including the Port of Hueneme

Banana Festival, CSU Channel Islands EV Showcase and Clean Air Day event in Camarillo, and the Metrolink Holiday Express Train festivities in Simi Valley.

Government & Disability Summit

VCTC staff participated in the County of Ventura's first Government & Disability Summit, sharing information about transportation options for people with disabilities and transportation emergency preparedness.

