

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation

FROM: Christy Wegener, Executive Director

DATE: December 1, 2025

Action Requested

The Projects and Services Committee requests the Board approve the FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation and Resolution 32-2025.

Background and Discussion

Since August, LAVTA has been studying a fare increase for its Wheels fixed route and paratransit services to help address a structural budget deficit. At its October meeting, the Board took action to open the public comment period and set the public hearing date for November 3, 2025 to hear comments on a potential FY26 fare increase. The staff report from October 6, 2025 is included as Attachment 1.

The public comment period has now closed and staff are now returning to the Committee with a recommendation for a FY26 fare increase.

Public Comments Received

Six comments were submitted online during the comment period, and one commenter provided comment during the November 3 public hearing. Additional comments were captured during the November 5, 2025 Tri-Valley Accessible Advisory Committee (TAAC) meeting. A full list of comments is included as Attachment 2. A letter from TAAC Committee Chair Herb Hastings is included as Attachment 3.

Based on the comments received, staff presented the following fare increases to the Projects and Services Committee at their November 24 meeting:

	Regular Single Ride	Regular Day Pass	Regular Monthly Pass	Senior/ADA Single Ride	Senior/ADA Day Pass	Senior/ADA Monthly Pass	Youth Fare (Clipper)
Current Fare	\$2.00	\$3.75	\$60	\$1.00	\$1.75	\$22	\$1.60
Final Rec.	\$2.50	\$4.00	\$70	\$1.25	\$2.00	\$25	\$2.25

	Paratransit
Current	\$3.75
Final Rec.	\$4.00

Day Pass

Staff recommend increasing the price of the Day Pass to \$4.00. Technically, this will only be applicable to the cash price as the Clipper Day Pass price (\$3.75) is jointly set by the East Bay Operator Group, which includes County Connection, WestCat, Tri Delta Transit and LAVTA. When the region fully transitions to Clipper 2 in Spring 2026, LAVTA will have additional flexibility to set its own Day Pass price in Clipper; however, doing so would mean LAVTA would no longer be able to participate in the East Bay Operator Group shared pass. Once additional transfer data becomes available from the Clipper 2 system, staff can make a recommendation to the Board about remaining in the East Bay Operator Group for the shared Day Pass product on Clipper, or setting the price for a LAVTA-only Clipper Day Pass.

Age of the Senior Discount

At the October Board meeting, staff were directed to follow up on a request to lower the age one is eligible for a senior discount from the current age of 65 years to 62 years or younger (55 years). While LAVTA *does* have the ability to lower the senior age for applicable senior discounts on Wheels-only services, staff does not recommend doing so primarily due to the age required for the Senior Clipper card.

Senior Clipper cards are available to seniors aged 65 years and older; Senior Clipper cards unlock 50% or greater discounts throughout the Bay Area's transit systems. If LAVTA were to modify the senior age for Wheels-only services, it would only be applicable on cash products only. Senior Clipper cards would not offer the fare discount to anyone under 65 years old, potentially leading to passenger and operator confusion, as well as a reduction in Clipper card use. It would also put LAVTA out of alignment with the region for age-related fare discounts, which is something the region has been working to align over the last several years.

Title VI Considerations

Any fare increases are required to follow LAVTA's Title VI and Public Hearing Policy. During the public comment and review period, LAVTA published notices regarding the nature of the proposed changes and the public comment process in The Valley Times legal classifieds zone of the East Bay Times in English, Spanish, and Mandarin (Simplified) Chinese. Staff also solicited multi-lingual passenger input via the following channels: signage on all buses, postings at the Livermore Transit Center and at Wheels headquarters, dedicated landing pages on the wheelsbus.com website, and posts across all social media channels. An online form hosted at wheelsbus.com was also available for feedback.

Staff presented the item to the Committee at their November 24, 2025 meeting and the Committee advanced staff's recommendations with no modifications. The Committee would like staff to look for ways to relieve the fare burden for the highest need paratransit riders, including looking into resurrecting the former paratransit scholarship program.

Staff is now bringing the item to the Board for consideration and action.

Next Steps

If approved by the Board, staff will work to implement the fare changes on April 1, 2026.

Recommendation

The Projects and Services Committee recommends the Board approve the FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation and Resolution 32-2025.

Attachments

1. October 6, 2025 Public Hearing Staff Report
2. FY26 Fare Increase Public Comments Received
3. Letter from TAAC Chair Herb Hastings
4. Resolution 32 - 2025

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

S T A F F R E P O R T

SUBJECT: FY26 Fare Increase Proposal: Open Public Comment Period and Set the Public Hearing

FROM: Christy Wegener, Executive Director
Tamara Edwards, Director of Finance

DATE: October 6, 2025

Action Requested

It is requested by the Projects and Services Committee, and the Finance and Administration Committee that the Board of Directors open the public comment period for the FY26 fare increase proposal and set a public hearing for the November 3, 2025 Board meeting.

Background

At the August Committee meetings, and at the September Tri-Valley Accessible Advisory Committee meeting, staff presented the justification for pursuing a FY26 fare increase. The presentation included the background of LAVTA's fare increases since 2000 and information about how LAVTA fares compare to those of other Bay Area transit agencies. Staff presented four different fare increase scenarios to the Committees during the meetings:

Scenario	Regular Single Ride	Regular Day Pass	Regular Monthly Pass	Paratransit
<i>Current</i>	\$2	\$3.75	\$60	\$3.75
1	\$2.25	\$4.50	\$67.50	<\$4.50
2	\$2.50	\$5	\$75	<\$5
3	\$2.75	\$5.50	\$82.50	<\$5.50
4	\$3	\$6	\$90	<\$6

Staff received input on the four scenarios, as well as feedback on discounts for seniors/ADA individuals and students, and the paratransit fare. Staff also received input on the day and monthly pass multipliers.

Following the Committee presentations, staff developed an initial draft fare proposal that was presented to both the Projects & Services and the Finance & Administration Committees at their September 22 and September 23 meetings, respectively. The initial draft FY26 fare increase proposal advanced option 1 (\$2.25 base fare) with associated rates for pass products and seniors/ADA and youth fares. The initial proposal was estimated to generate \$170,000-\$210,000

of additional fare revenue per year. The proposal addressed several comments received from the Committees, including:

- Keeping the day pass multiplier at less than 2x
- Providing more than 50% discount for seniors/ADA riders on monthly pass products
- Maintaining a discounted youth fare on Clipper
- Charging less than the maximum (2x) allowable for paratransit
- Instead of a larger phased fare increase, the initial staff proposal is to consider revisiting the fares every 3-5 years.

After presenting the draft FY26 fare increase proposal to the Projects & Services Committee, the Committee acted to modify staff's proposal and recommended advertising a higher fare increase (option 2: \$2.50) for the public comment period. This would allow LAVTA to capture rider comments on a larger fare increase up to \$2.50, which the Board could then decide to phase in at a later date, or implement immediately if comments are favorable. Additionally, a larger fare increase would likely provide more fare revenue to address LAVTA's structural budget deficit and farebox revenue funding requirements.

At the Finance and Administration Committee meeting, staff briefed the Committee on the action taken by Projects and Services; the Finance and Administration Committee also acted to modify staff's proposal and recommended advertising a higher fare increase (option 2: \$2.50) for the public comment period.

Discussion

Based on feedback received from the September Committees, staff is presenting the final FY26 fare increase proposal, requesting that the Board approve opening the public comment period and set the public hearing for the November 3 Board meeting. If approved by the Board, staff will collect feedback on the following potential fare increases:

	Regular Single Ride	Regular Day Pass	Regular Monthly Pass	Senior/ADA Single Ride	Senior/ADA Day Pass	Senior/ADA Monthly Pass	Youth Fare (Clipper)
Current	\$2.00	\$3.75	\$60	\$1.00	\$1.75	\$22	\$1.60
Final Proposal	<\$2.50	<\$4.50	<\$75	<\$1.25	<\$2.25	<\$28	<\$2.25

	Paratransit
Current	\$3.75
Final Proposal	<\$4.50

Staff estimates that between \$170,000-\$330,000 will be generated as a result of a fare increase.

Next Steps

Any fare increases are required to follow LAVTA's Title VI and Public Hearing Policy. During the 30-day public comment and review period, LAVTA staff will at minimum publish notices regarding the nature of the potential changes and the public comment process in The Valley

Times legal classifieds zone of the East Bay Times in English, Spanish, and Mandarin (Simplified) Chinese. Staff will also solicit multi-lingual passenger input via the following channels: signage on all buses, postings at the Livermore Transit Center, dedicated landing pages on the wheelsbus.com website, and posts across all social media channels. An online form hosted at wheelsbus.com will be available for feedback. Staff will also take the proposal to the TAAC at their November 5, 2025 meeting.

After consideration of all public input received during the public comment period, a final staff recommendation will be brought to the Board of Directors in December with an anticipated implementation date of April 1, 2026 if approved. While LAVTA does not have to conduct a Title VI Fare Equity Analysis, staff will estimate the impact of these potential changes on LAVTA's ridership and will include that information in the final staff recommendation.

Recommendation

The Projects and Services Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee recommend the Board open the public comment period on the FY26 fare increase proposal and set a public hearing at the November 3, 2025 Board meeting.

Attachment

1. FY26 Fare Increase Proposal

FY26 Fare Increase Proposal

Fare Category	Current	Fare Proposed
Regular Single Ride	\$2.00	Up to \$2.50
Regular Day Pass	\$3.75	Up to \$4.50
Regular Monthly Pass	\$60.00	Up to \$75.00
Senior/ADA Single Ride	\$1.00	Up to \$1.25
Senior/ADA Day Pass	\$1.75	Up to \$2.25
Senior/ADA Monthly Pass	\$22	Up to \$27.00
Youth (Clipper)	\$1.60	Up to \$2.25
Paratransit	\$3.75	Up to \$4.50

Public Comments Received

Date	Name	Comment	Notes
10/23/2025	Anonymous	The maximum fares proposed are reasonable if that's what it takes to maintain current service levels. Many agencies already have fares at or slightly higher than these levels as a matter of survival. I would suggest the fares be made consistent to agree with the neighboring operators like County Connection. They and other agencies have a \$2.50 cash rate with a 25 or 50 cent discount for Clipper. And honor each others' transfers on Clipper without a surcharge.	Submitted through web form
10/23/2025	Anonymous	With how bad the economy is right now for the common man, this will only make it harder for those struggling to get by to get around.	Submitted through web form
10/24/2025	Anonymous	I depend on the 30R bus daily so would hate to see it affected by budget cuts. The 2.50 fare is ok if that's what it takes to keep the current service going. The \$75 is a bit high for a monthly pass. Maybe \$70, or earn a monthly pass on clipper after a certain # of rides within 30 days. Also, drivers should stop allowing free "courtesy" rides. It's unfair to us hardworking folks who pay our fair share. The repeat offenders who truly can't afford the fares or passes should be encouraged to apply for a Clipper Start card instead of hurting your business.	Submitted through web form
10/30/2025	Anonymous	I depend on the 30R bus to get around. The proposed fares are fair if that's what it takes to keep the service going.	Submitted through web form
10/30/2025	Anonymous	The bus only comes once an hour where I am so I would hate to see it cut out completely. The fare increase is ok as long as the money is well spent to avoid losing service.	Submitted through web form
11/3/2025	Elaine Allen	Subject: Protest Regarding Recent proposed Ride I am writing to formally express my concern and opposition to the r increasing in ride fare. While I understand that operating costs may rise over time, this fare increase places an unfair and unnecessary financial burden	Submitted through web form

		<p>on regular riders, particularly those who rely on this service as their primary means of transportation.</p> <p>Many of us depend on Wheels Paratransit for essential travel—to work, medical appointments, grocery stores, and other vital destinations. For individuals on fixed or limited incomes, this fare hike makes it even more difficult to meet basic daily needs.</p> <p>I respectfully urge to reconsider this decision and explore alternative ways to manage costs—such as operational efficiency improvements, grant funding, or community partnerships—without increasing fares for the riders who can least afford it.</p> <p>Public transportation should remain accessible and affordable to all members of the community. I sincerely hope that you will review the impact of this fare increase and take immediate steps to reduce or reverse a fare increase.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response and to seeing a fair solution that prioritizes the needs of the riders you serve.</p> <p>Sincerely, Elaine Allen</p>	
11/3/2025	Elaine Allen	<p>I am writing to express my strong concern and opposition to the recent fare increase for the [Paratransit / PEX / Wheels service]. While I understand that costs can rise, this increase is coming at a time when service quality has declined and many riders are already struggling financially. Before raising fares, I believe attention should be given to improving operational efficiency. For example, drivers are frequently late, and riders often face up to two-hour waits to be picked up or dropped off. This results in missed medical appointments — and in some cases, being charged as much as \$50 for a missed doctor’s visit due to no fault of our own.</p>	Submitted through web form

		<p>Additionally, some reservation staff are unprofessional and argumentative. Incorrect trip information is sometimes booked, and this makes it stressful and discouraging to even call for a ride. There are also inefficiencies in scheduling: my friend and I have often been placed on two separate vans even though we're going to the same location, which wastes time and resources when we could easily ride together on one larger vehicle. For those of us with mobility challenges, reliable transportation is essential. The PEX program initially seemed like a great solution for same-day rides, but it's disappointing to find that DeSoto Cabs often cannot provide service because the only wheelchair-accessible van is broken down — with no clear repair date. Similarly, Uber WAV rides are frequently unavailable, leaving riders stranded after long waits.</p> <p>To make matters worse, the ongoing government shutdown means that many individuals are without cash or food assistance. This is a difficult and uncertain time for many in our community. It would be far more compassionate and practical to suspend fares temporarily — as was done during the pandemic — and to consider implementing a voucher program for low-income riders similar to the one offered for the regular Wheels bus service.</p> <p>I am grateful for the transportation services provided through Wheels Paratransit, but now is not the time to raise fares when so many aspects of the service need improvement and when so many riders are struggling. I respectfully ask that the fare increase be reconsidered until service reliability improves and the economic situation stabilizes.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention and understanding. I hope you will take these concerns seriously and work with the community to make the service fair, accessible, and dependable for everyone.</p> <p>Sincerely, Elaine Allen</p>	
--	--	---	--

11/3/2025	Elaine Allen	<p>OK, I have it took me long enough to just get into the meeting because the information that was on the website was it was it was not correct. And so basically my whole spill is basically that the service that you guys offer as far as the wheels paratransit is inefficient and it should be upgraded to where it's running better before I believe that any funds should be fare should be increased. The buses are always late. You missed your doctor's appointment and then the doctor's office want to charge you \$50.00 because you get to your appointment late. And it's not even my fault that I get there late. And then the PEX program and the like, the total cab, you think you're going to get a ride from them and they only have one wheel accessible van which basically never is running. And the same thing with Uber you'll, you'll book an appointment with them and they never pick you up. They'll cancel the appointment seeing no vans are available. And so at this time with everything that's going on with the government and it's being shut down, people not getting a SNAP benefits in their calworks. And like for myself, I'm on Social Security disability and my income is only like \$1200 a month. And a lot of my income goes towards riding the vans. And so I just, you know, would prefer if you guys would give us a break and not increase the amount and maybe even do like you did when the pandemic came and let us ride for free for a while. Because I don't know what I'm going to do at this point because my aunts are not meeting as it is. I was trying to find other like a voucher program, you know, for us to be able to ride the vans. You have it for the regular route, but you have nothing for a paratransit. And I'm finished.</p>	Comment submitted during BOD public hearing
-----------	--------------	---	---

11/5/2025	Sue Tuite	Question on the Dial-A-Ride. Why are we going to \$4.50 when it should stay \$3.75. I am just wondering because half of us in here are disabled and on budgets and I don't get why. Safeway is selling Dial-A-Ride. tickets two books for \$75, and we are on tight budgets. I don't get why this is happening.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Carmen Rivera-Hendrickson	We need to do more community outreach. Our incomes are very minimum. In Oakland Dial-A-Ride roundtrip is \$10 and ours would be \$9, but do we need to get that high. A lot of people I know don't use Dial-A-Ride. If you are increasing something, we need to know how many people are really using Dial-A-Ride.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Jeff Jacobsen	I wanted to add we are all concerned with our budgets and on Social Security.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Andrea Renzulli	I echo Carmen's request for more outreach, maybe at the Senior Centers in Dublin and Pleasanton. I heard the November 7th and wanted to see if we can extend the public comment period.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Judith LaMarre	I have hard time with \$3.75 and to go up to \$4.50 is not good.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Kathryn Gilbreth	My question is if individuals are experiencing financial hardship and are unable to afford the proposed increase, is there an application for financial assistance or any grants or scholarships that they can apply for or would be eligible for to receive to help kind of subsidize the increase of what they previously paid versus what the proposed amount is?	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Janeen Rubino-Brumm	My only comment is in light of budgets and government shutdowns and SNAP benefits not being paid, I know this doesn't start till April, if it does start. I'm just worried about the timing because people in and, you know, seniors and	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*

		adults with disabilities and all, you know, they're already stretched so tight, let alone their SNAP cards might not be getting money on them and I'm just very concerned about the timing of this given what is currently going on in our country.	
11/5/2025	Esther Waltz	Many folks are on small budgets. There should be something to soften the blow for disabled or senior citizens.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Herb Hastings	You are literally raising 75 cents for Dial-A-Ride. You are giving fixed route passengers a discount, but you don't give Dial-A-Ride riders anything. Match the single ADA/Senior increase of 25 cents for paratransit.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
11/5/2025	Amy Mauldin	Seeking compromise on price, middle ground.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
*Comments summarized from round table discussion.			

Tri-Valley Accessible Advisory Committee**TAAC**

Livermore Valley Transit Authority
1362 Rutan Drive #100
Livermore Ca 94551

Board Of Directors, this letter is to inform you that the members of Tri Valley Accessibility Committee are in disagreement with the current Fare Incensement proposal that was presented to our committee at our recent meeting on November 5th 2025. We all believe that the increase from the current fare rate of \$3.75 to the purposed new rate of \$4.50 is too high. The committee is asking that you not accept this proposal from staff to a lower valued amount We also ask that you delay your decision until after our next scheduled meeting for January 7th so that we can receive the updated staff report to review.

To explain during our meeting the discussion included several comments from all the members of the committee in attendance who made it very clear and expressed that many Dial Ride riders live on a low income / fixed income and are unable to afford such a large increase in Dial Ride Fares at once. We ask that a \$.25 cent increase only as listed in the Senior / ADA single ride fare purposed for Fixed Route services. Making different incensement amounts is not a proper way of treating people who rely on your paratransit services to do their daily travels as in Medical, Shopping and other community activities that they would not be able to do with such a large fare to ride. A very noticeable and important item regarding the \$4.50 rate is that it will be \$9.00 dollars a person would need for a round trip if you accept the current purposed increase.



Herbert Hastings

Wheels Tri Valley Accessibility Committee Chair

RESOLUTION NO. 32-2025

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
AUTHORIZING THE FY26 FARE INCREASE**

WHEREAS, LAVTA is facing a structural budget shortfall beginning in FY26 and expenses are outpacing revenues and needs to explore increasing fare revenues; and

WHEREAS, LAVTA staff explored several fare increase alternatives ranging from a \$0.25 to \$1.00 increase on base fixed route Wheels fares with associated increases in paratransit and pass products, calculating associated ridership and revenue impacts; and

WHEREAS, staff collected feedback from LAVTA Committees on the fare increase scenarios, fare discounts and pass multipliers in developing a FY26 fare increase proposal; and

WHEREAS, staff finalized the fare increase proposal, and has solicited and received public input on the proposed changes as requested by the LAVTA Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, staff has considered the input received and developed a final FY26 fare increase recommendation that includes several revisions to the original proposal, recommending the following fares:

	Regular Single Ride	Regular Day Pass	Regular Monthly Pass	Senior/ADA Single Ride	Senior/ADA Day Pass	Senior/ADA Monthly Pass	Youth Fare (Clipper)
Final Rec.	\$2.50	\$4.00	\$70	\$1.25	\$2.00	\$25	\$2.25

	Paratransit
Final Rec.	\$4.00

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority that the Board authorizes implementation of the FY26 Fare Increase as described above and in the accompanying staff report, and authorizes staff to implement these changes effective April 2026.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 1st day of December 2025.

Julie Testa, Chair

ATTEST:

Christy Wegener, Executive Director