

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation

FROM: Christy Wegener, Executive Director

DATE: November 24, 2025

Action Requested

Forward the FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation and Resolution 32-2025 to the Board of Directors for approval.

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.

Based on the comments received, staff recommends approval of the following 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 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 recommends 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.

LAVTA presented the proposal to the TAAC at their November 5, 2025 meeting.

Next Steps

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

Recommendation

Forward the FY26 Fare Increase Recommendation and Resolution 32-2025 to the Board of Directors for Approval.

Attachments

1. October 6, 2025 Public Hearing Staff Report
2. FY26 Fare Increase Public Comments Received
3. Fare Increase Approval Resolution 32-2025

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

		on regular riders, particularly those who rely on this service as their primary means of transportation. 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. 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. 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. 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. Sincerely, Elaine Allen	
11/3/2025	Elaine Allen	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.	Submitted through web form

		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. 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. 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. 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. Sincerely, Elaine Allen	
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11/3/2025	Elaine Allen	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.	Comment submitted during BOD public hearing
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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*
	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*
	Jeff Jacobsen	I wanted to add we are all concerned with our budgets and on Social Security.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
	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*
	Judith LaMarre	I have hard time with \$3.75 and to go up to \$4.50 is not good.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
	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*
	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.	
	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*
	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*
	Amy Mauldin	Seeking compromise on price, middle ground.	Comment submitted during TAAC meeting*
*Comments summarized from round table discussion.			

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

