



SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT

TITLE VI FARE EQUITY ANALYSIS JANUARY 2024

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OVERVIEW

Periodically, the City of Santa Clarita Transit adjusts transit fares in order to generate revenues to help sustain the rising cost of service operations. Santa Clarita tries to keep in line with other LA County regional fares and these new proposed fares are structured to encourage frequent riders to use the Transit Access Pass (TAP) smart card when paying for their fares. The TAP card can be loaded with stored value and serve as a transit fare payment wallet. When a passenger taps their TAP card on the farebox the correct fare is deducted from their pre-paid wallet. A TAP card also allows riders to access other benefits and discounts such as interagency transfers, discounts on their one-way fare, and daily and weekly fare capping.

United States Federal Law, as described in the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B, requires any recipient of FTA grants that operates 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service in an area with population of 200,000 or more to evaluate any fare changes and any major service change at the planning and programming stages to determine whether those changes have a discriminatory impact on minority or low-income populations. As a recipient of financial assistance, Santa Clarita Transit must ensure that major service changes and any fare change comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states:

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

The mechanism by which transit agencies evaluate for potential Title VI issues is a fare equity analysis. The fare equity analysis does not address whether or not the agency can increase fares, but whether or not the agency does so in a fair and equitable manner. The purpose of this Fare Equity Analysis is to define a threshold for determining whether potential changes to existing transit fares will have a discriminatory impact based on race, color, or national origin, or whether a potential fare adjustment will have a disproportionately high or adverse impact on low-income populations.

The City intends to both adjust fares as well as introduce new fare categories and products that will make the service more accessible and equitable to riders. The new fare categories and products include a daily fare cap for local service, a weekly fare cap for local service, a weekly fare cap for commuter service, and a discounted one-way fare when using a TAP card or mobile payment application. In order to qualify for daily and weekly fare capping, the rider must pay their fare using a physical or virtual TAP card.

The following table outlines Santa Clarita Transit's proposed fares for local and commuter services. The proposed changes will be implemented on July 1, 2024.

TABLE 1: PROPOSED FARE CHANGES

FARE TYPE	EXISTING FARE	PROPOSED FARE
Local Fixed Route Service		
One-Way Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$1.25
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$1.00
Monthly Pass	\$34.00	Discontinue
Daily Pass	\$2.50	Discontinue
Daily Fare Cap	Not Available	\$3.00
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$10.00
Go! Santa Clarita On Demand Service		
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$3.75
One-Way Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$2.75
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$3.50
One-Way Reduced Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$2.50
Guests	3 free per paying rider	1 free per paying rider
Dial-A-Ride Service		
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25
One-Way Low-Income Fare	\$0.60	\$0.75
One-Way Cash Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$2.00
North Hollywood		
Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.50
Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.75
TAP Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.00
Reduced TAP Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.50
Monthly Pass	\$110.00	Discontinue
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$55.00	Discontinue
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$30.00
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$15.00
Warner Center		
Cash Fare	\$4.00	\$4.50
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25
TAP Fare	\$4.00	\$4.00
Reduced TAP	\$2.00	\$2.00
Monthly Pass	\$150.00	Discontinue
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$75.00	Discontinue
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$40.00
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$20.00
Downtown Los Angeles and Century City		
Cash Fare	\$4.50	\$5.00
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.25	\$2.50
TAP Fare	\$4.50	\$4.50
Reduced TAP	\$2.25	\$2.25
Monthly Pass	\$170.00	Discontinue
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$85.00	Discontinue
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$45.00
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$22.50

OUTREACH PLAN

Santa Clarita Transit launched an extensive outreach plan and public comment period to educate riders and the general public about potential fare changes and to collect public feedback on the proposed changes. As part of the public participation plan, the marketing team will employ a robust notification strategy to ensure the public is aware of the opportunity to comment during the comment period. Table 2 below illustrates the types of notification and communication tools used to educate the public and solicit feedback during the comment period. All formal comments were emailed to transit@santa-clarita.com or by phone to (661) 295-6300.

Table 2-Communication and Outreach Tools Used by the City

Date	Notice	Detail
4/13	Website/Twitter/ Monitors	Home page, Monitor posts and Tweet fare change announcement and comment period beginning
4/13	Rider Alert	Post proposed fares at Senior Ctr, comm ctr, metrolinks, TC and pass outlets
4/15	Handout	Advise operations (MV) on proposed fares at expanded staff meeting
4/27	Take-Ones	Handout on all buses notifying patrons of proposed fares and comment period
5/4	E-Blast	Send to all email recipients advertising proposed fares and comment period
5/4	Social Media	Reminder Tweet and Website update
5/22	City Website	public hearing notice
5/28	City Website & Press Release	public hearing notice
6/9	Public Hearing and comment deadline	Approved at City Council Meeting
6/10	Handout	Advise operations (MV) on now approved fares at staff meeting
6/11	Tweet and Website	Reminder on approved fares with effective date of 7/11
7/3	Tweet & Press Release	New fares starting next Saturday
7/10	Tweet	Reminder of new fares starting Saturday
7/11		New fares begin

SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

In the spring of 2023, SCT updated its Title VI Program, which received concurrence by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the fall of 2023. The program outlines agency policies, definitions and procedures for complying with Title VI and performing equity analyses. This includes the agency's major service change, disparate and disproportionate impact thresholds.

MAJOR SERVICE/FARE CHANGE POLICY

Santa Clarita Transit is required to develop a Major Service Change Policy that identifies what constitutes a "major service change" for its system. Transportation decisions that occurred on or after April 1, 2013 at the level of a "major service change" require a service equity analysis.



In accordance with industry standard practice, SCT defines any proposed fare increase or major service reduction that reduces service hours and/or miles by 20 percent of the entire system, as a “Major Service Change”.

DISPARATE AND DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT THRESHOLD

For any proposed fare change that requires a fare equity analysis, SCT will determine if the change would create a disparate or disproportionate impact to minority and/or low-income populations, respectively.

Determination of whether a proposed fare adjustment has either a disparate or disproportionate impact is based on minority and/or low-income populations bearing a fare rate change of greater than **ten** percentage (10%) points as compared to the non-minority and/or non-low-income populations.

DATA SOURCES

In the Spring of 2023 the City of Santa Clarita began an update of the 2019 Transportation Development Plan (TDP). This effort was undertaken as a result of the changing operational, funding, and demand for Transit services within the Santa Clarita Valley and northern Los Angeles County.

The TDP is a five to seven year plan that outlines short-term and mid-term operational, financial and capital improvements for the City of Santa Clarita’s transit program. As part of this effort, the City’s consultant completed extensive community outreach including customer and community surveys.

The TDP customer surveys provided data on the income levels of the local and commuter riders. On local fixed-route, the most frequent response (14.6 percent) was a household income level of under \$15,000 a year, with 28.5 percent reporting an annual income of \$25,000 or less. On Commuter routes, the majority of respondents (69 percent) cited a household income of \$50,000 or more annually. This was unsurprising given the relatively modest level of ride-dependence as demonstrated by vehicle availability. For purposes of this fare equity analysis, low-income is defined as under \$25,000 a year.

According to the City’s Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan, the highest number of persons Santa Clarita Transit serves or encounters with is Spanish speakers (64.62%). The TDP surveys also provided data on what languages were spoken at home, other than English. For purposes of this Fare Equity Analysis, any survey who responded with a “yes” to a language spoken at home, other than English, or any survey that was completed in the Spanish language, were considered minority riders. Of the survey respondents, 61.63 percent spoke a language at home other than English, and 53.71 percent said they spoke Spanish at home.

The surveys provided data on what fare payment method was used, and what age the respondent was. All of these data sources from the TDP surveys were used to determine whether or not the proposed fare changes had either a disparate or disproportionate impact of greater than ten percent as compared to the non-minority and/or non-low-income populations.

FARE PROPOSAL AND USAGE

Table 1 below outlines the proposed fare changes by fare type, as well as the number of low income and minority riders that reported using each of the fare categories.

As the data indicates, the majority of riders paid cash or used stored value on a TAP card to pay the one-way cash fare. This trend was mirrored among low income and minority riders. This is a major change compared to previous survey results in which most riders reported using a monthly pass. This shift is due to changing travel patterns resulting for remote work and school opportunities following the pandemic.

The 2023 survey data indicates that 102 low income and 147 minority respondents paid the one-way cash fare on the local fixed route service. Additionally, 29 low income and 45 minority riders paid the cash fare using a TAP card.

While the trend of paying the one-way fare most frequently continued on the commuter services, a greater number of low income and minority riders preferred to pay their fare with a TAP card. Of the low income and minority riders using the commuter service, 16 reported paying their fare in cash while 18 riders paid with a TAP card. This indicates that riders are not opposed to using a TAP card and that their preference may be based on the amount of cash they have to carry.

To get the greatest value from a traditional monthly pass, the pass should be purchased no later than the first day of the month and used multiple times on a daily basis. This requires the rider to pay the full cost of a pass in advance. While it is less of a financial burden to purchase a \$34 local monthly pass compared to the commuter monthly passes which start at \$110 and increase to \$170 per month, depending on the service, it does require a financial commitment and the confidence that they will use the service with enough frequency to justify the cost. This large financial commitment at the beginning of the month can be a barrier for riders and contribute to growing use of the one-way cash fare.

This assumption is supported by the fact that of the commuter bus riders with an income over \$50,000 per year, 25 percent purchased monthly passes compared to 5.26 percent who paid their fare in cash. Based on the data, this fare change would have the greatest impact on low income (12.83 percent) and minority riders (18.49 percent) who pay their fare in cash.

To mitigate the impact of the fare increase, the City will be offering a discount to riders who pay with a TAP card. The discount would reduce the fare to the pre-increase levels. The new fare structure will also introduce fare capping on the local and commuter services. The fare capping will allow riders to enjoy the benefits of a monthly pass without having to pay the full cost of the pass in advance.

CONCLUSION

The majority of the fare adjustments being proposed affect less than the 10 percent of minority and low-income riders as compared to overall riders. The one change that will impact this group is the increase to the cash fare. To mitigate this, the City will offer a discounted fare that reduces the cost of a one-way fare to the pre-increase level when the rider pays with their TAP card. Additionally, the City has participated in a number of outreach efforts during which free TAP cards were distributed to riders. For riders who prefer not to purchase and carry a physical TAP card there is the option of download the TAP application to a mobile device and load a free

virtual card to their account. The virtual TAP card has all the same features and benefits as a physical TAP card including the discounted fares.

Given the minimal impact and the mitigation efforts undertaken by the City we have determined that the fare changes outlined in this document do not have a disparate impact on minority riders nor is there any disproportionate burden to low-income riders.

Table 3 – Proposed Fare Increase and Usage by Fare Category

FARE TYPE	EXISTING FARE	PROPOSED FARE	ABSOLUTE CHANGE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE	LOW INCOME USAGE	MINORITY USAGE	OVERALL USAGE
Local Fixed Route Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$0.25	25.00%	102	147	321
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	0.00%	29	45	122
Monthly Pass	\$34.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	17	22	62
Daily Pass	\$2.50	Discontinue	NA	NA	13	15	49
Daily Fare Cap	Not Available	\$3.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$10.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Go! Santa Clarita On Demand Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$3.75	\$1.75	87.50%	N/A	N/A	N/A
One-Way Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$2.75	\$1.75	175.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$3.50	\$1.50	75.00%	NA	NA	NA
One-Way Reduced Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$1.50	150.00%	NA	NA	NA
Guests	3 free/paying rider	1 free/paying rider	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dial-A-Ride Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$0.25	12.50%	50	29	86
One-Way Low-Income Fare	\$0.60	\$0.75	\$0.15	25.00%	19	11	33
One-Way Cash Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0	0	0
North Hollywood							
Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.50	\$0.50	16.67%	1	12	13
Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$0.25	16.67%	0	0	0
TAP Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$0.00	0.00%	2	6	14
Reduced TAP Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$0.00	0.00%	0	0	0
Monthly Pass	\$110.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	0	2	8
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$55.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$30.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$15.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Warner Center							
Cash Fare	\$4.00	\$4.50	\$0.50	12.50%	1	1	2
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$0.25	12.50%	0	0	0
TAP Cash Fare	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0	3	6
Reduced TAP Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0	0	0
Monthly Pass	\$150.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	0	1	1
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$75.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$40.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$20.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Downtown Los Angeles and Century City							
Cash Fare	\$4.50	\$5.00	\$0.50	11.11%	0	1	1
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$0.25	11.11%	0	0	1
TAP Cash Fare	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$0.00	0.00%	0	7	18
Reduced TAP Cash Fare	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$0.00	0.00%	0	0	0
Monthly Pass	\$170.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	0	5	12
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$85.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$45.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$22.50	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 4 – Proposed Fare Increase and Percentage of Use by Fare Category

FARE TYPE	EXISTING FARE	PROPOSED FARE	ABSOLUTE CHANGE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE	LOW INCOME USAGE	MINORITY USAGE	OVERALL USAGE
Local Fixed Route Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$1.25	\$0.25	25.00%	12.83%	18.49%	40.38%
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.00	0.00%	3.65%	5.66%	15.35%
Monthly Pass	\$34.00	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	2.14%	2.77%	7.80%
Daily Pass	\$2.50	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	1.64%	1.89%	6.16%
Daily Fare Cap	Not Available	\$3.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$10.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Go! Santa Clarita On Demand Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$3.75	\$1.75	87.50%	N/A	N/A	N/A
One-Way Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.00	\$2.75	\$1.75	175.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A
One-Way Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$3.50	\$1.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
One-Way Reduced Fare Using TAP	\$1.00	\$2.50	\$1.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Guests	3 free/paying rider	1 free/paying rider	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dial-A-Ride Service							
One-Way Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$0.25	12.50%	6.29%	3.65%	10.82%
One-Way Low-Income Fare	\$0.60	\$0.75	\$0.15	25.00%	2.39%	1.38%	4.15%
One-Way Cash Fare Using TAP	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
North Hollywood							
Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.50	\$0.50	16.67%	0.13%	1.51%	1.64%
Reduced Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$0.25	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
TAP Cash Fare	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0.25%	0.75%	1.76%
Reduced TAP Cash Fare	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Monthly Pass	\$110.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	0.00%	0.25%	1.01%
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$55.00	Discontinue	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$30.00	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$15.00	NA	NA	N/A	N/A	N/A
Warner Center							
Cash Fare	\$4.00	\$4.50	\$0.50	12.50%	0.13%	0.13%	0.25%
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$0.25	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
TAP Fare	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.38%	0.75%
Reduced TAP	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Monthly Pass	\$150.00	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$75.00	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$40.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$20.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Downtown Los Angeles and Century City							
Cash Fare	\$4.50	\$5.00	\$0.50	11.11%	0.00%	0.13%	0.13%
Reduced Cash Fare	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$0.25	11.11%	0.00%	0.00%	0.13%
TAP Fare	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.88%	2.26%
Reduced TAP	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$0.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Monthly Pass	\$170.00	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reduced Monthly Pass	\$85.00	Discontinue	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$45.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reduced Weekly Fare Cap	Not Available	\$22.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A